

Now I've Gone and Caused an Accident

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Character:

SALLY: A young woman who has just had an accident. She is small and wears a big sweater that almost trails on the ground. Various articles of costume jewelry clatter whenever she moves.

SCENE:

A dark stage interrupted by the screeching of a car's brakes.

Lights up.

A lone highway in the late evening. "Headlights" light the stage from offright. A young man is in the center, lying flat on his back with his eyes closed.

SALLY:

(Offstage)

Oh. Oh. Oh.

SALLY's head peeks in from stage right, a hand on her forehead. She looks around for a second before spotting the young man. There is a long pause.

...Um, Hello?

SALLY creeps on stage slowly. Her head tilted up as she tries to get a good look.

...Excuse me?

...Sir? Excuse me?

...Excuse me, sir, are you alright?

Beat.

...I'm afraid that was me...

That just hit you

With my car.

She gets a little closer.

It's just, I didn't see you
and then you were there.
Right in the middle of the road.

If I'd've known you were there I would have done something else.
I'd have swerved!

Or, if I'd have known even earlier, I would have driven slower.
That way you'd have already crossed the road by the time that I got to this spot.

Or I could've sped up,
Then I'd have been gone before you got here at all.

But I don't like speeding.

She gets a little closer.

I could've taken a different road. There are many.
Or just not driven at all today.

...Really I'd have done any one of these things for you if only I'd have known.

Sally looks at the ground. She plays with her jewelry for a moment. She raises a hand to her forehead.

I hit my head on the steering wheel when it happened. It hurts a little, but I think I'll be ok. I thought I'd broken some jewelry, but it's all alright.

She sways and the jewelry clatters.

I'm a big fan of jewelry. I make it myself.

Beat.

You made a real thwack when you hit the windshield.
It's not the sound I thought it'd make. It was snappy.
Like a flyswatter hitting a table.

She looks back at her car.

My car looks ok if that means anything.
It doesn't look like you dented it.
Or I didn't dent it?
Or we didn't dent it?

Or we could say that neither of us dented it, which is true.

She gets much closer to the point that she's standing over the young man.

My name's Sally. What's...OH! OH!! HEAD! HEAD!! HEAD!!!

She points to his head, and then her head, and then his head again while mouthing "HEAD" over and over again.

Finally, she can speak again.

Your head!! Oh nononononono.....

... It doesn't look good.

...It looks like it hurts.

SALLY leans a little closer, squints, and looks deeply.

Or does it always look like that?

Maybe that's just how your head looks.

Yes. Yes, I think that's just your head. It doesn't look so bad now.

It's a nice head. It's very handsome.

SALLY looks at him for a long time, taking in his face, then she realizes she's staring.

Can I get you something?

Do you want something?

Actually, you probably need something, right?

Not want something.

Like a doctor, you probably need a doctor.

...If I was a doctor I'd help you.

But I'm not...

...But I really would help you. Someone would yell "Is there a doctor in the house?" and I'd say "Yes, me, I'm a doctor." and everyone would cheer and I'd get my case of tools, kneel down next to you, and say "You're OK, we're gonna get through this together. You're in my hands now, and I'm a doctor, so don't worry a hair on your little head"

And then I'd be a hero.

...But that's not gonna happen cause I'm not a doctor, nor have I ever wanted to be a doctor.

Well, until now.

Beat.

I make and sell jewelry. That's my job.

She shows the jewelry she's wearing.

I made all of this.

It's not hard, exactly, but it takes some skill and patience.

And I like it, it's fun.

The selling is ok. The only people who really like to buy it are wealthy married ladies. They'll invite me and my jewelry over and they'll have a big party with all their friends. They'll have nice foods. Cheeses, little sandwiches, wine.

I'll have a little table I can set up at, and when they're ready, I'll do a little presentation. I'll show them the earrings, the bracelets, the necklaces.

They like it.

The presentation.

Sometimes they giggle.

I like my jewelry and that's what really matters. I hope.

They do buy the stuff, though. Sometimes they even buy it all and I have to spend a lot of time making new jewelry for the next party.

Sally smiles at the man and then purses her lips and her eyes go wide.

OH!

OH!!

I should've called someone! That's my job, that's what I'm supposed to do. I'm so sorry!

SALLY walks off to her car and walks back with a phone.

Hello?

Yes, I'm fine, thank you for asking.

And you?

Good.

Yes, well I'm calling to report an accident.

Yes, I seem to have hit someone with my car.

A man.

...Young.

He's on the ground.

Is he moving...?

Sally watches the man for a second. He doesn't move.

...No
Is he...WHAT!?!?

...No, I don't think he's dead!
...No, he hasn't spoken.
...No, I haven't checked.

SALLY walks over to the young man and nudges him with her foot. He rocks. Slowly and with effort, she gets down and puts an ear to his chest. She continues to hold the phone up to her other ear.

Yes, I think...I think I hear it.
Listen.

*She puts the phone to his chest for a moment.
She puts it back to her ear.*

That's good, right?

Now what?
Where are we?
...Oh, well, we are...

She looks around in every direction.

We're...
I think...
I'm not sure actually...
Landmarks?

Well,
I see a lot of corn.
And my car.
And the young man.
And if I wasn't me,
I guess I'd see myself,
too.

That doesn't help?
Well, there's not much else.

A pause as she listens.

...Ok, I'll wait.

...Thank you.

She puts her phone away and turns to the young man. She walks up to where his head is and looks straight down at it.

That was the police.

They said they will be here when they'll be here.

She looks up.

I wish I had a chair.

She begins to pace around the young man in a tight circle.

...I really am sorry that I hit you.

I hope you realize that.

I've never been in an accident,

and it wasn't like I was trying to hit you.

...I think.

...Well...

...To be honest...

And I hope you don't take this the wrong way!

To be honest, I did try to hit you.

For a second!

And then I stopped trying, but it was too late. I couldn't stop.

So I am sorry about that.

You just looked like someone I know

Or met

Really just saw.

You just looked like that sonofabitch son of the lady who was hosting that party last month.

She was nice.

He was not.

It was just like it always is. I set up. The ladies were eating little sandwiches with cream cheese, and I was waiting for them to finish so I could begin my presentation. But this lady's son, he kept walking around. I could tell he was bugging the ladies, but they weren't going to do anything. It's probably how he always acts. He picked apart the sandwiches, ate most of the cheese, and I caught him sneaking some of the wine. I didn't say anything about that part, that's not my place.

So, finally, everyone gathers and I start to present.

I begin to show the bracelets and he interrupts me. Yelling from the back of the room. Behind the ladies gathered around my table.

He says it looks like cheap shit. Like a child made it.

None of the ladies say anything, so I try to keep going but he keeps going.

Keeps saying it looks like junk, how he couldn't see how anyone would want to buy it.

Eventually, his mom tried to get him to leave, kept giving him the keys to the car saying he could be out as late as he wanted as long as he left.

But he wouldn't go.

And he comes right up to my presentation and he grabs the nice tablecloth that the food and jewelry is on, my jewelry, and he yanks it out.

Everyone left. They were embarrassed. No one helped me clean up.

My jewelry isn't nice. I know that.

It's ok at best.

And I know that the ladies only have me over because they feel bad.

That they don't actually wear the stuff they buy.

That's fine.

But if someone makes a mess you help clean up, don't you?

That's why I wanted to hit you.

And I guess I did.

And, unfortunately, I feel much better.

It's out of my system.

So I should probably thank you.

Thank you

And I'm sorry.

A long pause.

*She walks over to the young man, kneels, and puts an ear to his chest.
She listens for a long time.*

Lights out.