

Before Sunset – On the boat

Céline: I'm sorry! (Walks slowly to the bow of the boat as it pulls away from the dock while Jesse speaks on the phone.)

Jesse: (On telephone.) Yes, is this Philippe? Yeah, Philippe, this is Jesse Wallace...uh yeah. Listen, I'm...I'm ah, on one of those boats, right? Um and we're gonna arrive at...uh...Henry Four...at Port Henry Four, you know, you know what that is? Alright, gre...And you have my bags, right? Yeah, so will be there in...I don't know it's the next stop. OK. Au revoir. (Heads to the bow of the boat and sits down next to Céline, facing the back of the boat.)

Céline: OK?

Jesse: Yeah, yeah.

Jesse: (Looks up at Notre Dame Cathedral behind the boat.) Oh, wow! Notre Dame...man, check that out!

Céline: Oh, wow!

Jesse: I heard this story once, about when the...the Germans were occupying Paris and they had to retreat back, they wired Notre Dame to blow. But they had to...they had to leave one guy in charge of hitting the switch and the guy, the soldier, he...he couldn't do it. You know, he just sat there, knocked out by how beautiful the place was. And then, when the Allied troops came in, they found all the explosives just lying there...and the switch unturned and they found the same thing at...Sacre Coeur...Eiffel Tower...a couple of other places, I think.

Céline: Is that true?

Jesse: I don't know... I always liked the story, though.

Céline: Yeah, that's a great story. But you have to think that Notre Dame will be gone one day. There used to be another church or cathedral at the same...right there.

Jesse: What, right in the same spot?

Céline: Yeah. Yeah, this is great, I've never done this!

Jesse: Yeah.

Céline: I forget about how beautiful Paris is.

Jesse: It's not so bad being a tourist, you know.

Céline: Thank you for getting me on the boat.

Jesse: Well, you're welcome. You know, I think that book that I wrote, in a way, was like building something. So that I wouldn't forget the details of the time that we spent together. You know like, just as a reminder that...that once we really did meet, you know, that this was real. This happened.

Céline: I'm happy you're saying that because...I mean, I always feel like a freak because I'm never able to move on like (snaps her fingers) this! You know? People just have an affair or even...entire relationships...they break up and they forget! They move on like they would have changed brand of cereals! I feel I was never able to forget anyone I've been with. Because each person have...their own specific qualities. You can never replace anyone. What is lost is lost.

Each relationship when it ends really damages me; I never fully recover. That's why I'm very careful with getting involved because...it hurts too much! Even getting laid - I actually don't do that. I will miss of the person the most mundane things. Like I'm obsessed with little things.

Maybe I'm crazy, but...when I was a little girl, my mom told me that I was always late to school. One day she followed me to see why. I was looking at chestnuts falling from the trees rolling on the sidewalk or...ants crossing the road...the way a leaf casts a shadow on a tree trunk...little things. I think it's the same with people. I see in them little details so specific to each of them that move me and that I miss,

and...will always miss. You can never replace anyone, because everyone is made of such beautiful specific details.

(Smiling directly at Jesse.) Like I remember the way your beard has a little bit of red in it. And how the sun was making it glow that...that morning, right before you left. I remember that and...I missed it! I'm really crazy, right?

Jesse: Alright, now I know for sure. You wanna know why I wrote that stupid book?

Céline: Why?

Jesse: So that you might come to a reading in Paris, and I could walk up to you and ask, "Where the fuck were you?"

Céline: (Sits down close to him.) No, you think I'd be here today?

Jesse: I'm serious, I think I...I wrote it in a way to try to find you.

Céline: OK, that's... I know that's not true, but that's sweet of you to say it.

Jesse: I think it is true. What do you think the chances were of us ever meeting again?

Céline: After that December I'd say almost zero. If we're not real anyway, right? We're just...characters in that old lady's dream. She's on her death bed fantasizing about her youth...so of course we have to meet again!

Jesse: Oh, God! (Sighs loudly as he walks to the side of the boat, and looks back at her.) Why weren't you there in Vienna?

Céline: (Hesitantly.) I told you why!

Jesse: Well, I know why, I just (pounds his fist into his hand twice) I wish you would've been! Our lives might have been so much different!

Céline: You think so?

Jesse: I actually do...

Céline: Maybe not, maybe we would have hated each other, eventually.

Jesse: Oh, what, like we hate each other now?

Céline: (Follows him to the side of the boat.) You know, maybe we're...we're only good at brief encounters, walking around in European cities, in warm climate!

Jesse: Oh, God, why didn't we exchange phone numbers and stuff? Why didn't we do that?

Céline: (Puts a finger to her mouth in a sarcastic gesture.) Because we were young and stupid?

Jesse: You think we still are?

Céline: I guess when you're young...you just believe there'll be many people with whom you'll connect with. Later in life you realize it only happens a few times.

Jesse: Yeah, you can screw it up! You know, misconnect...

Céline: (Circles from his left to his right.) Well, the past is the past. It was meant to be that way.

Jesse: What, you really believe that? That everything is fated?

Céline: Well, you know, the world might be less free than we think.

Jesse: Yeah?

Céline: Yeah, when given this exact circumstances, that's what will happen every time. Two part hydrogen, one part oxygen, you'll get water every time.

Jesse: No, no...no, I mean, what if your grandmother had lived a week longer, you know? Or passed away a week

earlier, days even, you know. Things might have been different, I believe that!

Céline: No, you can't think like that.

Jesse: I mean...I know you shouldn't on most things, but...it's just...on this one it seemed like something was off! You know, I mean...in the months leading up to my wedding, OK, I was thinking about you all the time. I mean, even on my way there. I'm in the car, and a buddy of mine is driving me downtown, and I'm staring out the window, and I think I see you - not far from the church, right – folding up an umbrella and walking into a deli on the corner of...13th and Broadway. And I thought I was going crazy, you know? But now I think it probably was you.

Céline: (Quietly.) I lived on 11th and Broadway.

Jesse: You see?

Céline: So, (sigh) what is it like to be married? You haven't talked much about that. (Circles back to Jesse's left and leans on the front railing.)

Jesse: I haven't? (Sarcastically.) How weird?! I don't know, we met...you know when I was in college...and uh...we broke up and got back together, for a period of years, and then...um...what...we were sort of back together, and she was pregnant...so, marriage.

Céline: What is she like?

Jesse: She's a great teacher, a good mom. Ahh, she's smart...pretty...I remember thinking at the time, that so many of the men that I admired most, you know, that their lives were...were dedicated to something greater than themselves.

Céline: So you got married because men you admired were married?

Jesse: No, no, it...it's more like I have this...this idea of my best self! You know? And I wanted to pursue that...even if it might have been overriding my honest self! You know what I'm saying? I mean, it's funny like...in the moment I remember thinking that it didn't much matter the "Who?" of it all...I mean that...that nobody is gonna be everything to you...and that ultimately it's just a simple action of committing yourself, you know meeting your responsibilities that...that matters. I mean what is love, right, if it's not respect, trust, admiration...and I...I felt all those things! So cut to the present tense, and I feel like I'm running a small nursery with somebody I...used to date, you know. I mean, I'm like a monk, you know. I mean, I've had sex less than...10 times in the last 4 years. (Céline breaks into laughter.) What? What, what? Are you laughing at me?

Céline: No.

Jesse: It sounds pathetic?

Céline: What monastery do the monks have sex...uh, 10 times?

Jesse: OK, I'm doing better than most monks, alright? But I do, I feel like if somebody were to touch me, you know, I would (waves his hands for emphasis) dissolve into molecules.

Céline: Well, we're here. (Looking back, and nudging Jesse in the elbow.) We've gotta go. Come on.

Jesse: (Looking back to see they've suddenly arrived.) Shit!

Céline: (To the boat attendant.) Bonsoir! (Good evening.)

Attendant: Bonsoir!

Jesse: Bonsoir.

Before Sunset (2)

Scene IV – Garden Walk A La Promenade Plantée

Location notes: the garden walk takes place at la Promenade Plantée, which is atop the Viaduc des Arts, on Avenue Daumesnil. It is located in the 12th arrondissement, and is therefore a 25-30 min. walk from Le Pure Café, not right around the corner as implied by the editing of the film. Metro: Bastille stop on lines 1, 5, 8.

(As of this revision, we do not yet know the exact location of the staircases used by Jesse and Céline to enter and exit the promenade. Please post updates to yahoogroups.)

Jesse: Alright, that sounds better than shopping, actually. I mean, not that I wouldn't do whatever you wanted.

Céline: You know, sometimes I don't even need to buy anything. I just get high on trying on and looking at things.

Jesse: Yeah, well a therapist would tell you...Is this where we're going?

Céline: Yeah! (They begin to climb the stairs.)

Jesse: A therapist would tell you it's all good.

Céline: Really?

Jesse: Yeah.

Céline: Are you ever in therapy?

Jesse: Oh, no. Do I seem like I'm in therapy?

Céline: (Laughs.) I'm kidding. Has it helped your sex problems?

Jesse: My SEX problems?

Céline: No, I'm kidding.

Jesse: No, c'mon, tell me the truth. I mean, we didn't have any problems that night.

Céline: No, I'm kidding! (He brushes her hair away from her eyes.) We didn't even have sex, anyway.

Jesse: But, that's a joke, right?

Céline: No, we didn't! I mean, that was the whole thing.

Jesse: No, of course we did!

Céline: No, no, no, no, we didn't. You didn't have a condom, and I never have sex without one. Especially on a one night thing. I mean, I'm extremely paranoid about my health. There's no way I would have...

Jesse: (Stops climbing the stairs, and holds his hands up. Céline turns to face him.) Whoa, I find this very scary that you don't remember what happened.

Céline: What? (Turns away and starts climbing again. Jesse follows.) No, listen, OK...I didn't write an entire book, but I kept a journal, OK? And I wrote the whole night in it. That's what I mean, you idealizing the night!

Jesse: Alright, listen! I even remember what brand of condom we used.

Céline: OK, that's disgusting. I don't want to hear it!

Jesse: It's not disgusting.

Céline: OK, you know what, when I get home, I'll check my journal from '94, but I know I'm right! (Jesse shakes his head quietly while she pauses for a moment and slows down.) Wait a minute...

Jesse: What?

Céline: Was it in the cemetery?

Jesse: No...no, we went to the cemetery in the afternoon, it was in a park. VERY late at night? In the park.

Céline: (Hand to forehead.) Wait a minute.

Jesse: (Shakes his head in disgust.) I can't...I can't...

Céline: (Shakes her head as if trying to remember.) No...

Jesse: Is it that forgettable? I mean, you really don't remember...(clapping hands together for emphasis) in the park!

Céline: OK, wait a minute. I...I think you might be right.

Jesse: Alright now, you're messing with me, now. Are you messing with me?

Céline: OK, no, I'm sorry! I think you...I mean, you're right, OK? Sometimes, I put things in drawers inside my head, and forget about it. (Jesse covers his eyes to show frustration.) I guess it's less painful to put certain things away than to live with it! I'm sorry!

Jesse: So that...that night was a sad memory for you?

Céline: No, I didn't mean that night in particular. I just meant certain things are better off forgotten.

Jesse: I remember that night better than I do entire years.

Céline: Me too.

Jesse: (Sarcastically.) Really?

Céline: Well, I thought I did...But, maybe I...Maybe I put it away because of the fact that...my grandmother's funeral was the day we were supposed to meet again.

Jesse: Yeah, right, it was a tough day for me, but it must have been worse for you.

Céline: It was unreal. I remember looking at her dead body in the coffin. (Sighs.) Her beautiful hands so warm, so sweet, that used to hold me, that...Nothing in that coffin resembled what I remembered of her. All the warmth was gone. Then I was crying...so confused if I was crying because I was never gonna see her again and never gonna see...(sighs) you again. I'm sorry. I'm sorry to go on like this, I've been a little down this week, I don't know.

Jesse: Why?

Céline: I don't know, nothing bad, just... reading your book, maybe? No, but...thinking about how hopeful I was that summer and fall, and since then it's been kind of a...I don't know. Memory is a wonderful thing, if you don't have to, uh, deal with the past.

Jesse: "Memory is a wonderful thing, if you don't have to deal with the past." Can I put that on a bumper sticker? No, you know what? If you wrote a book about our night, that would be a good title!

Céline: Yeah, it could be a totally different book.

Jesse: Yeah, there'd be no sex scenes. (Céline laughs.)