

Henrietta / Annie

ANNIE. Because I don't need a title to do the work.

HENRIETTA. But the boys need your work to keep their titles. And eventually one of us *has* to be a ... what was it?

WILLIAMINA. Mighty oak.

HENRIETTA. Mighty oak! You deserve it.

ANNIE. Neither of you are getting a raise and that's final.

HENRIETTA. I don't want a raise.

WILLIAMINA. I do.

HENRIETTA. I want a model. Miss Cannon, if they won't give you what you deserve, they're never going to give it to any of us.

ANNIE. What do you want them to give you?

HENRIETTA. A *chance*. To show them what we can do.

ANNIE. Which means what?

HENRIETTA. (*Breath.*) I'm seeing things.

ANNIE. Which *means what*?

HENRIETTA. I'm spotting more and more of the blinking stars, the variables? I'm working on the Small Magellanic Clouds and I'm tracking these stars that pulse.

ANNIE. Cepheid stars?

HENRIETTA. I think so. Some of them blink once a week, some take a month.

ANNIE. The fact that Cepheids pulse is not new.

HENRIETTA. I know. It's the amount of them. The large amount I'm finding.

ANNIE. Actually they're quite rare to find.

HENRIETTA. Not if you're doing it right. (*She looks for approval.*)

ANNIE. Continue.

HENRIETTA. I put together a simple comparative that lets me analyze the plates *quickly*. The *same* star field at different times — and you can see that some of the stars are much brighter. And I'm seeing them in most of the plates. Now if these are true Cepheids, and if there're as many of them as I'm starting to see, it could be a big clue.

ANNIE. To what?

HENRIETTA. I don't know. But it's got to be important.

ANNIE. No it doesn't.

HENRIETTA. But my instincts are telling me that —

ANNIE. Dr. Pickering does not pay for those instincts.

HENRIETTA. He doesn't really pay me at all.

ANNIE. Then do the work you're assigned or don't work. (*Williamina throws a paper ball at Annie. Annie concedes, turns back to Henrietta.*)

You may, however, stay *after* hours if you'd like, Miss Leavitt.

HENRIETTA. What.

ANNIE. If you're quiet.

HENRIETTA. *Really? REALLY?!*

ANNIE. Only rule was "quiet."

HENRIETTA. Understood. Thank you. (*She does a little silent*

cheer. Annie thinks this is stupid and walks past Williamina — who grabs her and kisses her cheek. Annie exits. Williamina too. Margaret appears in a letter. Still annoyed.)

MARGARET. Henrietta, Daddy was wondering if you'd received the book. Or if you'll come home for Christmas? Write back.

HENRIETTA. (*In a letter light.*) Dear, Margie. Sorry we fought. Here's a book for Michael from his favorite aunt. Could you send sweaters? Love, H. (*Margaret gives up, folds some sweaters during the transition ...*)

MARGARET. (*Singing.*)

*For the joy of human love,
Brother, sister, parent, child ...
Friends on earth and friends above ...
For all gentle thoughts and mild.*

*Lord of all to Thee we raise
This our hymn of grateful praise ...*

END

Henrietta / Margaret

HENRIETTA. Margie, I'm sorry but I cannot sit still right now.
MARGARET. The only thing you have to do in church is sit still. Now tell me what's going on or come inside.
HENRIETTA. I've been trying to tell you all week but you're busy and you're barking and —
MARGARET. (*Bark-like.*) *I don't bark.* I'm running the house, and Daddy's running the church, and *you* — What are you doing? Staying up all night? In the cold? Like a moth?
HENRIETTA. What is wrong with you this morning, Miss Jumpy.
MARGARET. I'm not jumpy —
HENRIETTA. I'm not a moth —
MARGARET. Why are we still outside?!
HENRIETTA. *Because.* They have a job for me at Harvard. At the Observatory. Actual astronomy.
MARGARET. Since when were you even looking for a job.
HENRIETTA. Since they offered. Margie, this is an extraordinary thing. They need mathematicians and they asked me specifically —
MARGARET. Harvard asked *you*?
HENRIETTA. Yes and please don't hold back your tone of shock.
MARGARET. This is shocking — I am shocked.
HENRIETTA. And I'm ... leaving. I'm taking the job and I'm leaving. (*Holding out a letter. Beat.*)
MARGARET. You've always been leaving.
HENRIETTA. Next week.
MARGARET. Next...? Oh Henri. Now wait. We need to discuss this as a family.
HENRIETTA. Margie, this could be my best life and it's right in front of me.
MARGARET. And I'm still freezing. (*Turns to go.*)
HENRIETTA. Margie, talk to me —
MARGARET. Fine — yes — I know that we were never going to be grow-old-next-to-each-other kind of sisters, and the way you drive me crazy makes that for the best — but — Henrietta this is extreme.
HENRIETTA. Exactly. Come with me. (*Small pause.*)
MARGARET. Oh, Henri, please.
HENRIETTA. Both of us. Come on.
MARGARET. What are you talking about? That's absurd.
HENRIETTA. Only a little! You're the only person who understands me, and you're always up for an adventure, and I *do* want to get old and scrappy with you.

MARGARET. I did not say scrappy.
HENRIETTA. You should come with me and fire up your heart!
MARGARET. What are you talking about?
HENRIETTA. The edge of the wide world!
MARGARET. It's Boston.
HENRIETTA. A blaze of learning!
MARGARET. A *blaze*?
HENRIETTA. A blaze! And Radcliffe is nearby and they have a music school.
MARGARET. Henri. Slow down.
HENRIETTA. You don't have to stay here. You can be happy, you can loose yourself —
MARGARET. *Loose* my — ? No. Stop. Do not start wearing bloomers.
HENRIETTA. Margie.
MARGARET. *Wait.* There are women these days, and they wear pants, and it's ridiculous. Now I have to play the hymns for the service that started ten minutes ago, and thank you, sister, my fingers are numb.
HENRIETTA. *I need you to convince Daddy to give me my dowry.* (*This stops Margie cold.*) I'm serious. Very. Please talk to him.
MARGARET. *Why do I get all the yelling jobs?*
HENRIETTA. You're so good at it.
MARGARET. This is your future, Henrietta. You know for certain that you'll never marry, you'll never fall in love — people do that. Uncoordinated, unplanned emotion — Just the word "spinster," Henrietta, please.
HENRIETTA. I need to start my life ... with Daddy's money.
MARGARET. Next the bloomers. Whiskey with suffragettes.
HENRIETTA. I'm not a cowboy.
MARGARET. You know what I'm talking about.
HENRIETTA. I'm talking about astronomy. You keep talking about terrible pants.
MARGARET. *It starts with pants.* It's a changing world. And some things should be sacred. And I'm not saying you shouldn't go — but I worry. It's far away, that place, and it's crowded, and you're still here in my sight and I worry.
HENRIETTA. I'll be doing math. Don't worry.
MARGARET. Why not stay here and live with us and ... teach?
HENRIETTA. No.
MARGARET. Like every other girl with your temperament.
HENRIETTA. *I like my temperament* and I don't want it stuffed in a

START

schoolhouse. I have questions, I have fundamental problems with the state of human knowledge! Who are we, why are we — where are we?!
MARGARET. Wisconsin.
HENRIETTA. In the universe!
MARGARET. Still Wisconsin.
HENRIETTA. *Margie*, I am not just curious I am charged and poised and you *know* that I'll just get more and more annoying until I go — You know this — You know this. (*Margie knows this. Pause.*)
MARGARET. One day there will be a word for you. Just — for me, for our father, who will only after much snorting approve of this — when you go? Take a Bible.
HENRIETTA. I think Harvard has those.
MARGARET. You know what I mean. We look in the same direction — (*Points up.*) but our understanding is ... distinct.
HENRIETTA. I love you. It's too cold for God.
MARGARET. That's why we keep Him inside.
HENRIETTA. *Margie*, come with me.
MARGARET. *I can't.*
HENRIETTA. Why not?
MARGARET. Because Father counts on me, and if you leave I can't leave, and I don't want to leave and ... Samuel proposed. (*Moment.*)
HENRIETTA. What.
MARGARET. To marry.
HENRIETTA. Who?
MARGARET. Henri.
HENRIETTA. I mean, "when."
MARGARET. This morning, thank you for noticing.
HENRIETTA. Aha, jumpy.
MARGARET. Yes. Other people's lives are also in progress.
HENRIETTA. Is he...?
MARGARET. Inside looking very attentive until the service ends. And I answer.
HENRIETTA. What's your answer?
MARGARET. Of course I will.
HENRIETTA. To Samuel?
MARGARET. Well I wanted to talk to you first.
HENRIETTA. You'd leave me for Samuel?
MARGARET. You just said you're leaving me!
HENRIETTA. Not for Samuel!
MARGARET. He is very good and ... (*Small pause.*)

HENRIETTA. Yes. He is.
MARGARET. He is. And I'm happy.
HENRIETTA. Then ... I am too. (*They hug — marriage! Yay!*)
Come with me.
MARGARET. Just ... come back. (*Squeezes Henri's hand and runs inside.*)
HENRIETTA. And so. I go. (*Preps herself as ... The Harvard Observatory falls into place around her ... We hear Margaret singing "For the Beauty of the Earth."*)
MARGARET.
*For the beauty of the Earth,
For the glory of the skies;
For the love which from our birth,
Over and around us lies;*

*Lord of all, to Thee we raise
This, our hymn of grateful praise.*
(*Margaret fades away. Transition ...*)

Scene 2

Henrietta stands in the vacant room of the Harvard Observatory — A small wooden room like an attic — desks, file drawers, and boxes fill the room.

Peter — unintentionally handsome, a bit bumbling — enters briskly, a pencil behind his ear, charts, papers.

HENRIETTA. Excuse me, is this the Observatory office?
PETER. Oh — yes — Hello. You must be my ten o'clock. Miss Leavitt. You are Miss Leavitt?
HENRIETTA. I am. Henrietta Leavitt and I'm thrilled to —
PETER. Good. We'll make this quick. It's not that complicated.
HENRIETTA. May I just say how pleased I am to meet you, Dr. Pickering. I am so honored —
PETER. No.

Henrietta / Williamina

ANNIE. Every single one.

WILLIAMINA. Every scattered sneeze of them.

ANNIE. *Will*, don't be crude

WILLIAMINA. They look like ground pepper till you get the hang of it.

ANNIE. Williamina is our best photometer, from whom you'll learn much if she doesn't get herself fired. (*Williamina smiles, Annie glares.*)

WILLIAMINA. I used to be her boss.

ANNIE. You still *are*. We share leadership of this department —

WILLIAMINA. She outdid me with those letters.

ANNIE. I did no such thing —

WILLIAMINA. The star classifications were her idea.

ANNIE. A *collective* effort, I assure you.

HENRIETTA. Star classifications? That's your work?

WILLIAMINA. Oh yes indeed, the sky was a riot until Miss Cannon coded it. *I* wanted to give every star a number based on color — but *she* insisted on labeling stars with *letters* based on *temperature* —

ANNIE. Ladies —

WILLIAMINA.

HENRIETTA.

OBAFGKM.

OBAFGKM —

Yes.

HENRIETTA. You created a ... standard, Miss Cannon. My goodness. I'm so honored. I'm sure you'd laugh, but my professors made us memorize your letters using this ridiculous phrase —

WILLIAMINA. She also made up that ridiculous phrase.

ANNIE. But I didn't mean for it to find its way into textbooks.

HENRIETTA. "Oh Be A Fine Girl, Kiss Me." You did that too?

WILLIAMINA. She had a muse.

ANNIE. *Miss Fleming.*

WILLIAMINA. She thought it would be best for the boys. That's all they think about anyway.

ANNIE. Let's get back to work please.

WILLIAMINA. (*To Henrietta — whispering.*) Because she's the boss.

ANNIE. *I wouldn't have to be if you'd take this seriously, which is a ridiculous request of a woman who started the department.* (*To Henrietta.*)

You know Will was the first woman to ever hold the title "curator" in astronomy? And the Draper Catalogue is *all* her work — She discovered stars, and nebulae, novae — She's the reason that I'm here, and even if she has far too much fun I am the first to admit that she is fundamental to this institution.

WILLIAMINA. (*To Henrietta.*) And that, new friend, is how you introduce yourself without boasting.

ANNIE. I quit.

WILLIAMINA. (*To Annie.*) "Oh Be A Fine Grandma."

HENRIETTA. It's a great phrase.

ANNIE. We have WORK. TO DO. And Dr. Pickering is a very particular man.

WILLIAMINA. He calls us his *harem*.

ANNIE. He's joking.

WILLIAMINA. He's not. He measures a project in "girl hours."

ANNIE. He's joking.

WILLIAMINA. He's not. Sometimes "kilo-girl hours."

ANNIE. The point is, we're busy because we're essential.

WILLIAMINA. We're the dirt. (*Annie glares. Correcting ...*) From which mighty oaks grow.

HENRIETTA. And do we have a title of some sort?

WILLIAMINA. We do indeed. Congratulations, Miss Leavitt, you are now a computer.

HENRIETTA. What's a computer?

ANNIE. One who computes.

WILLIAMINA. Notate the plates, transfer the data, input the data, process, record, next star.

HENRIETTA. And the plates. How do I read them?

WILLIAMINA. Star Spanking. (*Annie reveals a wire-and-glass paddle like a small fly-swatter. Annie places the spanker over the plate.*)

ANNIE. Align the spanker with a star. The matching dot indicates how bright that star is. Record magnitude, position, date, and repeat until you fill up the logbook.

WILLIAMINA. Or go slightly crazy.

HENRIETTA. And what about working on our own ideas? Using the telescope for our own work?

ANNIE. You don't.

HENRIETTA. Oh. But I thought this was — ?

ANNIE. We collect, report, and maintain the largest stellar archive in the world. And we resist the temptation to analyze it.

HENRIETTA. But you just said how much you discovered here — both of you.

WILLIAMINA. Resisting doesn't always work.

ANNIE. Can you do this job, Miss Leavitt?

HENRIETTA. Of course I can.

END

ANNIE. I need the consistent, not the creative.

WILLIAMINA. She can do it, Annie. She understands.

ANNIE. Good. Please show Miss Leavitt to her station.

WILLIAMINA. Will do, Mr. President.

ANNIE. You make me crazy and you know you make me crazy.

WILLIAMINA. Balance of power, darling. *(Annie exits.)* Alright, you. More questions?

HENRIETTA. Is she mean or just to me?

WILLIAMINA. Oh nono. She's just meticulous. And blunt. And she sings.

HENRIETTA. Sings what?

WILLIAMINA. Like a crow, but still. Shows her humanity — atonal though it may be. You want her on your side. She's always on the right one.

HENRIETTA. Good. Because I have some pressing issues with ... science.

WILLIAMINA. The whole of it?

HENRIETTA. A lot of it. As far as I can tell we do not appear to know where we are. Astronomically. Which is shocking. This is the modern age. We've been looking *up* for millennia and we don't know how far away those stars are? We don't know if the Milky Way is the universe? That's just unacceptable.

WILLIAMINA. You're fun. But here's some perspective. I was Pickering's housekeeper before he brought me here. So we're a lot of things, but at present we are cleaning up the universe for the men. And making fun of them behind their backs. It's worked for centuries. *(Annie enters with more plates.)*

ANNIE. Working isn't talking.

Here we like to say:

WILLIAMINA.

The sky's the limit.

The sky's the limit.

WILLIAMINA. And there's so damn much of it.

ANNIE. And so we work. *(She deposits the plates. The women sit down at their desks and work. As they label each star — a single bright star pops into being in their spare sky, accompanied by a musical note. Rote.)* Star Name —

HENRIETTA. Star Name —

WILLIAMINA. Star Name —

HENRIETTA. Alpha Leonis 3982.

ANNIE. Beta Orionis 1713.

WILLIAMINA. Ninety-five degrees declination.

ANNIE. Seventy-three degrees —

HENRIETTA. Fifty degrees.

WILLIAMINA. Spectral Class B.

ANNIE. Spectral Class B. *(Henrietta takes out her hearing device — The sound of the room softens, dulls. Henrietta and Margaret are normal volume.)*

WILLIAMINA. Magnitude: one-point-two-five.

ANNIE. Magnitude: point-six-five. *(Margaret appears in a letter.)*

MARGARET. Henrietta! We miss you.

HENRIETTA. Star Name —

MARGARET. And I can't stand the conversation since you left.

HENRIETTA. Alpha Andromedae 15.

MARGARET. Everyone is so sensible.

HENRIETTA. Eighty degrees declination.

MARGARET. Please write back.

HENRIETTA. Uh-huh. Thirty-three right ascension. *(Peter enters.)*

PETER. Morning, ladies.

WILLIAMINA. Correct on both counts, Mr. Shaw.

ANNIE. Good morning, Mr. Shaw. Back again?

WILLIAMINA. And so soon.

PETER. Just passing by — Dropping these off — Picking these up.

HENRIETTA. Spectral Class A.

PETER. Hello, Miss Leavitt.

HENRIETTA. Magnitude: two-point — What? Oh. Hello, Mr. Shaw. How are you today?

PETER. Good ... *(Lovely, awkward pause, during which he finds nothing else to say, except.)* Bye. *(He leaves quickly, embarrassed again.)*

HENRIETTA. He's an odd one.

WILLIAMINA. And getting odder.

ANNIE. Star Name —

HENRIETTA. Star Name —

WILLIAMINA. Star Name — *(Time is passing as the sky fills up in swatches. Another letter.)*

MARGARET. Henri! Wish you'd be here for Thanksgiving. Daddy's planning a marvelous sermon on *family*.

HENRIETTA. Uh-huh. Magnitude: two-point-eight.

MARGARET. You missed the news ...

HENRIETTA. Star Name.

MARGARET. I'm pregnant!

HENRIETTA. *(Finally stopping.)* Oh Margie. Oh my goodness.

ANNIE. My gloves. *(Small pause.)*

HENRIETTA. Please don't think I sit here all night crying.

ANNIE. May I see what you sit here all night doing?

HENRIETTA. *(Hands Annie her notebook. Annie reads. Nothing.)*

The Cepheids. Of course.

ANNIE. You certainly have a knack for finding them.

HENRIETTA. But I'm finding that *finding* them isn't really worth much if they don't mean anything. And right now they don't.

ANNIE. They might.

HENRIETTA. I'm going on two thousand of them. And I'm starting to think it's like counting grass. You can count it, but why?

ANNIE. I *do* know the feeling. Show me what you've found.

HENRIETTA. *(Showing the ledger. Annie keeps reading. Nothing.)* The left side is a list of Cepheids arranged by fastest period of brightness. The middle column is their spectral class but I think I need to change it to luminosity because I'm not coming up with anything. There's no pattern.

ANNIE. No there's not.

HENRIETTA. I've wasted so much time on this.

ANNIE. Miss Leavitt —

HENRIETTA. I really thought I could sense something in the numbers. Really feel there was something important we weren't connecting, but no —

ANNIE. Miss Leavitt

HENRIETTA. *Twelve* notebooks packed, staring at me, loose ends & all loose and nothing to show and no meaning and nothing, *nothing* makes any damn sense.

ANNIE. Henrietta.

HENRIETTA. Excuse my language.

ANNIE. You're close. Keep working. Think about how you're thinking. It's in there.

HENRIETTA. Should I ask Dr. Pickering?

ANNIE. No.

HENRIETTA. Mr. Shaw.

ANNIE. Oh no. This one's yours.

HENRIETTA. Thank you.

ANNIE. Miss Leavitt, I think you're in the middle of it.

HENRIETTA. Of what?

ANNIE. That chance. *(She pulls out gloves from her coat pocket and puts them on. Annie leaves. Henrietta smiles, breathes. She takes out a spanker and does some kind of celebratory dance thing. Peter enters.)*

Henrietta / Peter

HENRIETTA. Oh my God.

PETER. Oh my God. Not to worry.

HENRIETTA. This is just —

PETER. Imposition, so sorry.

HENRIETTA. This is —

PETER. My fault completely.

HENRIETTA. This is *so* exciting! She's right, I push through it, charge through it, matter of time — I know the answer is there — I just keep going. Right? Yes! Hi. *(Lovely awkward pause.)*

PETER. Hello. I just came by for my ... hat.

HENRIETTA. Oh.

PETER. My gloves — left my gloves — and I saw the light and I thought, "Well I wonder how all the spanking is going."

HENRIETTA. Might we all agree to another name for that?

PETER. I think that's for the best.

HENRIETTA. Mr. Shaw, I know I shouldn't be here this late.

PETER. Actually I'd prefer it — much prefer it if you called me by my given name. Peter. Would be — nicer, nice.

HENRIETTA. Oh. Henrietta.

PETER. Good. *(Takes his gloves out of his pocket.)* Found them. *(Starts to go but doesn't —)* Miss — Henrietta — I — I don't know anything about you really and — and that's a shame. So. Might I know something about you? Now. Would be nice.

HENRIETTA. Oh. I grew up in Lancaster, family in Wisconsin, my hearing's not great, and I used my dowry to get here, which is why I'm a bit zealous about all this.

PETER. Ah.

HENRIETTA. And I play the clarinet. Not well.

PETER. I play also. Also not well.

HENRIETTA. Then we could be terrible together! I mean — that's not what I mean. I have a habit of blurting.

PETER. And I have a Dachshund. Named Carl. Which is fun. *(He smiles, she smiles. He wants to say ... but doesn't.)* Carl awaits. *(Peter leaves, forgetting his hat. Henrietta smiles. Picks up his hat. Flips it and puts it on her head. Peter returns.)* Sorry. Hat. *(Henrietta hands him the hat. He touches her hand.)* I think that ... you might be quite ... marvelous. I think that. Often. *(Silence. He leaves.)*

HENRIETTA. Oh that is not standard. *(She smiles. Peter enters again. This is an outpouring of pent-up romantic enthusiasm in nearly one breath.)*

PETER. There's an ocean liner leaving tomorrow — You should be on

START

it — I'll be on it — I'm saying come with me — to Europe — For a month — or two? You don't have to decide now — but close to now because the liner leaves tomorrow — I said that — Pack warmly — cold at night — We might stop in Spain — And there's dancing and lobster and water and moonlight and bobbing around and that's romantic — or sickening — Either way there'll be an eclipse. Which is fun.

HENRIETTA. I ... oh my ... yes, that sounds ... very interesting.

PETER. Interesting?

HENRIETTA. Incredible.

PETER. Oh good.

HENRIETTA. If it weren't on a boat.

PETER. You don't like boats? I didn't think of that.

HENRIETTA. No, I just can't leave my work. I'm very close to something and —

PETER. The ladies can't manage?

HENRIETTA. Not *this* work, no. It's my findings and I've worked so hard and —

PETER. You don't have to leave it. I can pack them. You and me *and* work.

HENRIETTA. They crack.

PETER. So they'll be here when we get back.

HENRIETTA. I'm too close to leave — I'm so close.

PETER. But we could meet astronomers all over Europe. Talk about your ideas. See the world!

HENRIETTA. That sounds marvelous but why don't we just go to dinner?

PETER. Because you're always up here!

HENRIETTA. Then I can't go to Europe!

PETER. Henrietta.

HENRIETTA. Peter.

PETER. This is a rather large moment for me so I just want to be clear because it took me three years to get this far. So. Your mind and spirit ... I quite adore ... those things ... about you. And I don't expect you to reciprocate immediately or at all, but I feared combusting if I didn't tell you that you've been the brightest object in my day since we met. And we work with stars. And I know I haven't been the most emotive suitor but I have been a thoughtful one, and I hope that counts for something. And I also hope I do not offend you by expressing how very deeply I ... admire you.

HENRIETTA. Well. I think it's an accurate statement to say that I ... approve.

PETER. You do? That's just tremendous. And a bit shocking, I thought I might have ruined it with that first impression. Or the second. Or this one.

HENRIETTA. Fortune favors the unashamed. But. My work is very important to me and if there is any resistance to that then you might reconsider your adoration promptly.

PETER. I couldn't reconsider if I tried. I know you and I know your work and ... if you can't go with me, I'll stay. Because I cannot walk away from this.

HENRIETTA. What *is* this exactly?

PETER. Well it's — it's love right?

HENRIETTA. I don't know. Is it?

PETER. It's got to be. My heart's beating like a train. That's your fault.

HENRIETTA. *My* fault?! It's *your* fault.

PETER. Yes! See? Love!

HENRIETTA. How, God, *how* do you know that?

PETER. Comparative analysis. Before you: content. After you? Passionate, confident ... idiot. Rounds? Please. An ocean liner? Just to be with you in the widest world. And finally I tell you. And finally you hear. And finally ... (*Eyes connect. Peter takes her hands ... As the Harvard Observatory falls away into ... The deck of an ocean liner — night. Stars ablaze overhead. A band plays somewhere. He spins her into a dance ... Suddenly — Margaret appears in a telegram —*)

MARGARET. Sister — stop. Come home — stop. Father stroke — stop. (*Henrietta stops. The stars go dark. The dream shatters. The Observatory — Peter and Henrietta alone.*)

HENRIETTA. Oh god. Peter, I'm sorry. I have to go.

PETER. Go? Where? What's wrong?

HENRIETTA. My family needs me. My father. Oh god.

PETER. I can help. I can come with you. Whatever you need.

HENRIETTA. My father is sick, my sister's alone.

PETER. I'm coming.

HENRIETTA. You don't need to do that.

PETER. I can help. I want to help.

HENRIETTA. Thank you and I'm sorry but I have to go home and you have to go to dinner in Europe.

PETER. No.

HENRIETTA. Go, Peter.

END