

Scene 13

#6b – Wheels on the Bus

Two bus drivers, MICKY and TERRY take a seat. They speak over their shoulders to their passengers, as they shift into gear and drive.

TERRY (ACTOR 7)

Climb aboard.

MICKY (ACTOR 2)

Hop right in! You look some tired.

TERRY

Nothing to worry about now.

MICKY

We'll get you where you're going.

TERRY

I'm guessing you've never heard of Gander before. Well, that's it in the rearview mirror.

MICKY

You'll need to re-set your watches – we've got our own time zone here. Everything happens half an hour later in Newfoundland.

TERRY

You've all seen the airport – used to be the biggest airport in North America. Planes used to stop here to gas up from everywhere.

MICKY

Frank Sinatra. Albert Einstein.

TERRY

Muhammad Ali.

BOTH

The Queen.

TERRY

This is where the Beatles first set foot in North America!

MICKY

And my father once went sledding with Fidel Castro!

TERRY

Then they invented jet planes that can get across the ocean on one tank...

MICKY

So there's no need to refuel anymore...

TERRY

Leaving us with this giant airport.

MICKY

There's talk lately about tearing it down.

TERRY

Lucky for you, we haven't got around to it yet.

THEY brake suddenly, screeching.

MICKY

Now there's the reason I drives slow.

TERRY

That there in the middle of the road.

MICKY & TERRY

Yeah. That's a moose.

EVERYONE faces forward, motionless.

An incredibly long pause.

Even longer than that.

MICKY

She'll move when she's good and ready.

(HANNAH)

WHEN HE COMES THROUGH THE DOOR
AND SAYS, "I'M HOME, MOM"
I SHOULD BE THERE FOR MY SON
BUT INSTEAD

I AM HERE
I AM HERE

BEULAH

She leaves message after message for her son—until there's no more room on his answering machine.

HANNAH

ALL I KNOW
IS YOU ARE THERE
YOU ARE THERE
AND I AM HERE

BEULAH

She finally got some news.

HANNAH

They said it was Kev's day off—but someone else said there were more men down there than were scheduled.
I should be looking for him. He's always there for me—trying to make me laugh. Tells me stupid jokes. He loves jokes—tells them to the kids at the firehouse, while he fixes their bikes.

I should be there.

BEULAH

I know there's nothing I can do to help. But I do know a few jokes. There was a sailor who was stationed in the South Pacific, far away from his wife who he'd just married. And when he was away, he wrote her a letter. He said, "We're going to be apart for a long time—and this island is full of young, attractive native girls. I need something to take my mind off them."

So his wife sends him an accordion and says, "Why don't you learn to play this then?" So finally, he comes home from his tour of duty and says to his wife, "I can't wait to get you into bed." And she says, "First let's see how well you play that accordion."

SHE laughs at her own joke, but sees HANNAH's face and stops.

HANNAH

That was a really stupid joke.

A pause.

Tell me another one.

ROBIN (ACTOR 10)

What's up?

KEVIN T

Every year on September 11th, I close my office and give each employee 100 dollars to go and do random good deeds for strangers. It's my way of remembering what happened.

A REPORTER is interviewing HANNAH and BEULAH.

HANNAH

Beulah and I still keep in touch. She even came to visit me in New York – and I still phone her if I hear a really stupid joke. Hey, Beulah. Why are Newfoundlanders terrible at knock knock jokes?

BEULAH

I don't know, Hannah.

HANNAH

Well, try it. I'll be a Newfoundlander.

BEULAH

Knock knock.

HANNAH

Come on in – the door's open!

BEULAH laughs. JANICE is interviewing OZ.

JANICE

The donation we are most honored by just arrived today.

OZ

It's about four meters long and 12,000 kilograms.

JANICE

Newfoundland is the only place outside of the United States, where we share the steel from the World Trade Center.

CLAUDE steps forward

CLAUDE

On the northeast tip of North America, on an island called Newfoundland, there's an airport – and next to it, is a town called Gander.

Tonight, we honor what was lost. But we also commemorate what we found!