

*Beat.*

*The warmth between them becomes awkward again.*

SHARON

So what do you do?

ROBYN

Me?

SHARON

Uh. You.

ROBYN

Well. I do a lot of things.

*Sharon waits. Robyn drinks more almond milk coffee.*

SHARON

Oh. Well. Like what do you do? For example.

ROBYN

Well. (beat) I'm a poet.

SHARON

A poet!

ROBYN

Yes, I write poetry.

*Beat.*

SHARON

That's great! I love poetry! I was an English major!  
(*beat – honest*) I don't really understand poetry.

ROBYN

I write slam poetry.

SHARON

I don't know what that is.

ROBYN

I write poems and then I perform them.

SHARON

And what do you write...about?  
*A pause.*

ROBYN

I do other things too.

SHARON

Oh?

ROBYN

I grow things. I like to grow things.

SHARON

I never had much of a green thumb but that's wonderful! What do you grow?  
*A pause.*

ROBYN

What do you do?

SHARON

(*completely off-balanced*) Me? I mean. I live here. Obviously.

ROBYN

Yeah...

SHARON

I'm a mother...

ROBYN  
Right.

SHARON  
I'm retired!

ROBYN  
From what?  
*Beat.*

SHARON  
My marriage.

ROBYN  
*Oh.*

SHARON  
Yeah. So.

ROBYN  
I'm sorry?

SHARON  
Don't be.

ROBYN  
Then I'm not.  
*Beat, Robyn smiles, then Sharon does. A shared moment.*

SHARON  
I'd love to hear some of your poems.

ROBYN  
*Oh.* I don't think so.

SHARON  
Maybe you could explain them to me.

ROBYN  
Poetry can't really... be explained.

SHARON  
That's probably why I don't like it. Oh! Sorry! I didn't mean...

ROBYN  
No. No no. It's OK. I don't like poetry either.

SHARON  
You don't?

ROBYN  
I like mine. But I don't have a lot of patience for other people's.

SHARON  
I think I feel that way about children.

ROBYN  
I think I feel that way about most things. Another shared smile.  
*Beat.*

SHARON  
So...why Iowa?

ROBYN  
Why not Iowa?

SHARON  
Do you know anybody here?

ROBYN  
You.

SHARON  
Me?

ROBYN  
You now. Now I know you.  
*This pleases Sharon.*

SHARON  
Well what would you like to *do* here? There's the University, there's adult classes (there's poetry!) or hot yoga on North Clinton Which I've never taken but I see everybody through the window when I go by, and they all look so Healthy and Happy, you sort of want to injure them but yeah, so, there's yoga... My son thinks Iowa City is boring but if he just visited me more often he'd see that now it's very cultural here, Iowa City is actually very [cultural] I mean I sort of haven't [been involved] but you might want to [be involved]

ROBYN  
I thought maybe I'd raise bees.

SHARON  
Bees.

ROBYN  
And maybe a sheep or a cow or something.

SHARON  
A..sheep.

ROBYN  
I don't know, I imagined wide open skies, I think and rising at dawn... A sort of ...restorative manual labor...

SHARON  
Oh... hmm... We could have a garden...?

ROBYN  
My grandmother was from Iowa.

SHARON She was?  
*Robyn has surprised them both with this revelation. A moment.*

ROBYN  
I didn't know her. But. I heard she was from Iowa.

SHARON  
*(beat - a little wistfully)* I guess everybody wants to start over. Just burn it all down and start over.

ROBYN  
*(a genuine question)* Do you?

SHARON  
I don't know...

ROBYN  
You said "everybody." So... don't you?

SHARON  
I guess I do. Sometimes.

ROBYN  
Maybe you already did.  
When you...retired...from your marriage.

SHARON

No, that didn't feel like a...glorious blaze.

It just feels—

*felt* very sad.

And cold. And then there was nobody to talk to in the mornings. (*beat*)

He retired before I did. Actually. From the marriage. But he didn't tell me that, so I had to find it out myself.

ROBYN

Another woman?

SHARON

No He just started spending all his money on models of things airplanes, trains, cars and he'd spend all his time with those mini-things instead of with me, in our normal-sized life. (*beat*)

Ha!

Maybe I'll write a... "slam" poem about that and you can perform it.

*Beat.*

ROBYN

I've retired from slam poetry. But you should do it anyway.

SHARON

I've never written a slam poem before. (*beat*)

If you're no longer a poet or a potter what *are* you?

*A beat. Robyn gets up.*

ROBYN

It'll probably be bad, all first poems are bad poems. There's a great liberty in being bad.

*She leaves the kitchen. Sharon stares after her, struck to the heart by this wisdom.*