

And the Evening and the Morning
were the First Day

by
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1 w. 1 m/w

Based loosely on the story of Adam, Eve,
an apple and a traveling salesman

CHARACTERS

EVE - a 1950s homemaker

STAN/SHEILA - a traveling salesperson

Casting can be either played by a man or
woman

SCENE ONE

At rise: This scene is performed in shadow or blackout. We may only see the outline of a figure sleeping. We hear a whispering, seductive voice overlapping EVE's sleepy responses until she sits up wide awake.

O.V

Are you happy?

EVE

What...

O.V

(very slowly and articulated)

Are-you-hap-py?

EVE

What?

O.V

Are you happy!

EVE

What!

BLACKOUT

SCENE 2

At rise: EVE is sitting at the kitchen table putting food in a lunchbox with the name ADAM on it. EVE wears a 1950's pastel housedress with apron and whistles or sings something cheery like "Hi Ho,Hi Ho,It's off to work we go" as she makes her sandwiches. STAN/SHEILA enters. S/he wears a wide laped suit with wide-brimmed hat, spins a walking stick and carries a suitcase that reads "ACME SALES". When s/he sees EVE s/he breaks out singing an exaggerated rendition of "My Melancholy Baby".

STAN/SHEILA

Come to me, my melancholy baby.
Cuddle up and don't be blue
All your fears are foolish fancies, maybe
You know, honey, I'm in love with you
Every cloud must have a silver lining

Just wait until the sun shines through
 Smile, my honey dear,
 While I kiss away each tear
 Or else I shall be melancholy too

EVE

I am really getting sick of that song.

STAN/SHEILA

I didn't think you got sick of anything.

(STAN/SHEILA snatches one of
 the sandwiches.)

EVE

You're wrong - as usual.

STAN/SHEILA

I don't remember being wrong and I certainly don't remember
 anything being "as usual" around here except these. Adam
 eats these bologna on white bread with mayo everyday?

EVE

He's happy, I'm happy and that's the end of that.

(EVE takes back the sandwich)

Nice belt.

STAN/SHEILA

Snakeskin.

EVE

Of course he eats these sandwiches everyday. And he loves
 them.

STAN/SHEILA

So what else is new in Eden?

EVE

I mean I'm really happy Stan/Sheila.

STAN/SHEILA

So you're *realllly* happy Eve, who's asking?

EVE

That's not what you said last night.

STAN/SHEILA

What about last night! You weren't there.

EVE

I was right here sleeping when you asked me if I was happy.

STAN/SHEILA

I didn't ask nothing of nobody last night. I was out.

EVE

Heaven?

STAN/SHEILA

Almost. West Virginia.

EVE

So you were out there again.

STAN/SHEILA

Look, I don't ask you where you go and you don't ask me. That's our arrangement and it works just fine. Right?

EVE

Wrong. I don't go anywhere. I don't leave, you're the one who's never here.

STAN/SHEILA

So, how 'bout let's make up with a nice little game of Three Card Monte.

(STAN/SHEILA turns his sales case upside down and sets up like a Carnival "con" game.))

EVE

Will I always win?

STAN/SHEILA

I don't know. If you win, you win. It's a game. Sometimes you win, sometimes you don't. Wanna play?

EVE

Okay, what's the deal?

STAN/SHEILA

I got three slightly folded cards. One of these cards is an Ace.

EVE

And the other two?

STAN/SHEILA

It doesn't matter since your job is to guess which one's the Ace.

EVE

If I guess I win?

STAN/SHEILA

Double your money if you're right. Nothing gained if you don't.

EVE

Except I lose.

STAN/SHEILA

It's a game honey. You don't always win when you play a game.

EVE

I always win at solitaire.

STAN/SHEILA

Well, you're not supposed to.

EVE

I was taught so I would always win.

STAN/SHEILA

Who taught you to play a crazy way like that?

(EVE looks up and points to the sky. STAN/SHEILA follows her gaze, then grabs a bottle from inside his/her coat pocket. Takes out a glass from the other pocket and fills the glass with water from the pitcher on her table)

EVE

What's this game?

STAN/SHEILA

It's called "I got a head the size of West Virginia."

(Listens to it begin to fizz.)

AHHHH, music to my ears. (raises his glass) Here's lookin' up your old address. (swallows it quickly)

EVE

No more Three Card Monte?

STAN/SHEILA

Not now. All this talking has reminded me I don't feel so good.

EVE

Why did you ask me if I was happy last night and why is that music to your ears?

STAN/SHEILA

I didn't -- and this is.

EVE

What's wrong with your ears?

STAN/SHEILA

My head, I told you, it's the size of....oh, forget it.

EVE

Why do you go out there and I stay in here?

STAN/SHEILA

Don't even think about it.

EVE

What do you really do when you're out there?

STAN/SHEILA

Look, Eve, honey, we're friends, right?

EVE

I guess. What's a friend?

STAN/SHEILA

Friends. Buddies. Amigos. Right?

EVE

Okay, so we're Amigos..

STAN/SHEILA

Amigos help each other out when they need it.

EVE

What do you need?

STAN/SHEILA

At this very moment I need to get rid of my head problem and you obviously need something.

EVE

I need to learn something new.

STAN/SHEILA

Really?

EVE

I'm sick of solitaire and bored with winning every time. I want something else desperately. Maybe a new game. You know lots of games. Teach me something.

STAN/SHEILA

I can teach you fish, gin, even canasta in a pinch.
(starts to shuffle the cards)

EVE

Something exciting?

STAN/SHEILA

Oh. That kind of new.

EVE

Maybe even a little....risky.

STAN/SHEILA

Risky? Where'd you learn that.

EVE

What do you think. You must have something up your sleeve.

STAN/SHEILA

Blackjack!

EVE

I like the name. Blackjack. How do I play?

STAN/SHEILA

Sometimes called twenty-one. Very fast. With a little luck, a lot of skill and maybe a touch of risk, you could win big. I can feel it. You got the touch and the head. Yes, you could definitely be a winner.

EVE

Would I always win?

STAN/SHEILA

I told you that's not the way game's are played. You willing to take a chance and maybe even lose a little?

EVE

It wasn't Adam's voice, I'm sure of that. And it wasn't (points upward) so it had to be you. I don't know why you insist it wasn't.

STAN/SHEILA

Maybe it was you.

EVE

How could it be me? You see, I was here sleeping when I could hear this voice asking over and over, "Are you happy?" (Pause. Very pronounced) Are-you-hap-py? (Pause) Are you happy!" It wasn't pleasant at all. It woke me up and I couldn't get back to sleep. It was you.

STAN/SHEILA

You're tough, I'll say that. You don't give up.

EVE

Then admit it.

STAN/SHEILA

Look, to be perfectly honest, happiness is not my thing. I figure you are or you ain't. I don't ask.

EVE

But how couldn't I be happy?

STAN/SHEILA

Is this a test? One of those standardized jobs you have to take with a number Two pencil 'cause I think I'm gonna flunk.

EVE

Look at me. If I'm not happy who is?

STAN/SHEILA

One of those rhetorical questions you get when you ask the question but you're really just killing time til I figure out the answer you know already.

EVE

Stop it. Stop it right there!

STAN/SHEILA

What'd I say wrong now?

EVE

"Kill-ing time." I don't understand what it means to kill anything and I'm not even sure I know what time is.

STAN/SHEILA

Relax, it's just an expression.

EVE

How can I relax. This is an expression.
(makes a face of sadness)

Or this.
(makes another face of
happiness)

Or....

STAN/SHEILA

A little existential idea if you get my drift, nothing to get upset about.

EVE

I don't get your drift and that's my point and I am getting upset. I want it to make sense.

STAN/SHEILA

To be perfectly honest, we're not talking flesh and blood killing here which isn't my style at all. I'm really a pussy cat at heart. I just meant that in the end --

EVE

What end? Whose end? Don't assume anything.

STAN/SHEILA

"THE end" baby. The opposite of "In the Beginning."

EVE

What's the end of anything much less the beginning and why should I care?

STAN/SHEILA

You shouldn't. I mean you don't need to.

EVE

I want to.

STAN/SHEILA

I can see that. You are really serious.

EVE

Completely.

STAN/SHEILA

That puts a whole new light on the matter.

EVE

All day long I make these sandwiches, talk to the animals, look up at the sky. Everything is the same everyday. Everything is perfect. Then you start talking and I feel like I should understand everything you're saying but I don't and it's making me crazy, whatever that is. See. I'm saying things now and I don't even know what they are much less what they mean. What do I know about being crazy, killing time or whether I'm happy. I was created to be happy. I have no reason not to be happy. What have I got to complain about, I'm in a state of eternal bliss. E-ternal Be-lissss. Right?

STAN/SHEILA

Sounds good to me.

EVE

Does it? And what the hell does eternal bliss mean anyway.

STAN/SHEILA

You got it, I don't. You tell me.

EVE

I know Adam and I have always been happy. He tells me that all the time.

STAN/SHEILA

Just like solitaire.

EVE

Exactly! So if it's this good all the time in here why should I even be thinking about what it's like out there?

STAN/SHEILA

You really want to learn Blackjack?
(STAN/SHEILA starts to deal)

EVE

You'd teach me?

STAN/SHEILA

Sure. Pay attention. You see the object of the game is to draw enough cards in your hand to get as close to, add up but never go over 21 points.

EVE

How do I do that?

STAN/SHEILA

An Ace like this can count as either 1 or 11, it's your choice. The 10, Jack, Queen and King are worth ten. The cards 2 to 9 are worth they're face value. Are you with me?

(EVE nods))

'Cause I know you're a fast learner.

EVE

So the object of the game is to reach 21 points. The 10, Jack, King and Queen are worth 10, the others worth their face value and I can call the Ace either 1 or 11 but I'm not sure why?

STAN/SHEILA

Stay with me. Suppose you start with an Ace first and then you pull a six. This hand can then be counted as either

EVE

7 or 17.

STAN/SHEILA

If you stop there, it will be 17.

EVE

So I could stop with just those two cards but I wouldn't have 21.

STAN/SHEILA

You'd be close.

EVE

But you could win.

STAN/SHEILA

If I drew closer to 21, yes. And being the dealer I go after you. But maybe you got courage. And some luck and a lot of moxie so you decide not to stick with what you got but draw yet another card.

EVE

Why?

STAN/SHEILA

Because you want to win and to win you have to get closer to 21 than me. So let's say you go for another card and that particular card is a 3. Now what's your score?

EVE

(pause) Twenty.

STAN/SHEILA

You got it! That's counting the Ace as 11 of course. But suppose you drew another card which was an 8.

EVE

Ace, 6, 3 and 8.

STAN/SHEILA

Which totals?

EVE

(pause) 15 because I can count the Ace as a one.

STAN/SHEILA

I knew you were smart. You didn't hold your cards you went for it.

EVE

And I could still pick another card.

STAN/SHEILA

Risky.

EVE

Exciting. Deal.

(STAN/SHEILA puts a card up.)

Deal.

STAN/SHEILA

Ace. Good.

EVE

Good?

STAN/SHEILA

Very good.

EVE

Again.

STAN/SHEILA

Okay. Six. But slow down. No need to rush.

EVE

Again.

STAN/SHEILA

Three. Want some more time?

EVE

No. Hit me again.

STAN/SHEILA

You're sure?

EVE

I said I want another card.

STAN/SHEILA

You go over I win --

EVE

Hit me!

STAN/SHEILA

Remember what I said about risk? You got it. Now I can say without equivocation that you seem just a teeny, bit curious about this card?

EVE

(cat meow's offstage.)

I can't be sure since I've never felt exactly this way before. But I like the word. Cur-i-ous. Like the way it feels in my mouth. Rolls off my tongue. Cure-eee-us. Adam says I'm the apple of his eye and I'm sure that's true.

(cat meow's offstage.))

What was that?

STAN/SHEILA

Just how curious would you say you are?

EVE

I want to see that card now.

(Gives her the card)

STAN/SHEILA

(EVE is looking long and hard at the cards in her hand)

Again?

EVE

In the game of black jack what happens if we tie?

STAN/SHEILA

Dealer always wins.

EVE

How do I get to be the dealer?

STAN/SHEILA

It can be arranged. You gotta have some skills.

EVE

You could teach me?

STAN/SHEILA

Not right off the bat. I mean learning a new game, any game, means you got to have some knowledge.

EVE

Where do I get this knowledge?

STAN/SHEILA

It's not so hard. As a matter of fact, I think you could be an outstanding student of the game.

EVE

What does a student do? Would I have to make sandwiches.

STAN/SHEILA

No. But you'd have to come to some classes, study hard, and bring an apple to the teacher of course, who happens to be me.

EVE

Of course.

STAN/SHEILA

And then we take a little break. You'll hardly notice the time it takes to eat one of those little red beauties.

EVE

Red beauties?

STAN/SHEILA

The apple. We eat them after class.

EVE

Oh.

STAN/SHEILA

You got what it takes honey. I never saw anyone with so much potential.

EVE

What does it take? Really?

Moxey. STAN/SHEILA

Moxey. EVE

Cojones. STAN/SHEILA

Cojones?. EVE

Apples! Put them in your mouth, chew them up and.... STAN/SHEILA

I don't know. EVE

STAN/SHEILA (CONT'D)
Trust me. It's an old tradition. Bring one to the teacher who is me, and try to get as smart as the teacher, which is accomplished by eating said fruit. Evie, I'm just trying to make this work. You were the one who asked me. Don't go south on me just when we were moving along so nice.

Hit me again! EVE

You want another card? STAN/SHEILA

That's right. EVE

You know the rules. STAN/SHEILA

Hit me I said. I want another card. EVE

Okay. It's your game. STAN/SHEILA
(EVE takes her card and smiles.)
You've already learned to keep a terrific poker face.

What's a poker face look like. EVE

You don't want to show the other person what you have by looking too happy so you can get them to bet more. But since in this case we're not betting. STAN/SHEILA

EVE

Betting? You never explained anything about "betting."

STAN/SHEILA

I thought you'd like to just play for the helluva it first.

EVE

I want you to explain what this betting is? Or do you think it's too complicated for my poor little brain? Well think again.

STAN/SHEILA

You're right. There's no reason not to go the whole way. Betting. Let me see how I can explain it. Okay. I put up something of value to me and you put up something of value to you --

EVE

And then if I win I can say what I want to keep and what you have to give up. I like this game. It's very challenging.

STAN/SHEILA

What are you doing?

EVE

I'm making my bet.

STAN/SHEILA

Bologna sandwiches.

EVE

(pause) That's not what you meant was it?

STAN/SHEILA

It's fine. It's your first time. I'm willing....

EVE

No, I hate when Adam starts out with "I'm willing...". I want this to be by the rules. I obviously didn't quite understand what a bet was but I will and then we'll play.

STAN/SHEILA

How about something simple like if you win you don't have to actually EAT the apples and if I win...you would. Unless you don't think that's fair. I do want to be completely fair.

EVE

We would have to actually eat them.

STAN/SHEILA

It's part of the class but you don't have to change your life.

We can forget all about this little conversation and you and we can go back to our lives just the way they were before. That's what friends do. They forget whatever the other person wants them to.

EVE

No! I don't want to forget. I don't want to go back. The problem is that Adam said "No" to apples a long time ago and I agreed I wouldn't eat one either.

STAN/SHEILA

Then that's the answer.
(starts packing his box)

EVE

I gave him my word. I didn't know it was that important when I gave it. I never thought I would ever want to actually eat one of those. It was easy at the time.

STAN/SHEILA

I didn't know we were talking about Adam here. I thought we were talking about you and me. But I certainly understand and respect what you're saying. You don't have to eat the apple.

EVE

But if I don't nothing will change.

STAN/SHEILA

No. Nothing will change.

EVE

I want to learn. I want to be a student. I just don't know about the apple part.

STAN/SHEILA

To tell you the truth I wasn't planning on opening a school. I thought this was just between the two of us.

EVE

Adam and I do everything together.

STAN/SHEILA

He gets to take the lunchbox.

EVE

Almost everything.

STAN/SHEILA

You play solitaire by yourself.

EVE

This wouldn't be solitaire would it?

STAN/SHEILA

No it wouldn't.

EVE

Maybe we could still find a way. I mean it could be something just between you and me and I wouldn't have to mention anything about the apple part to Adam.

STAN/SHEILA

That's up to you.

EVE

There's nothing that says I have to tell him.

STAN/SHEILA

Nothing at all.

EVE

Except I would want to tell him. I would want us to do this together.

STAN/SHEILA

You and me, me and him, me and you and him. The three of us.

EVE

Yes. The three of us.

STAN/SHEILA

And the apples.

EVE

Well?

STAN/SHEILA

Okay, you got it!

EVE

You'll do the classes with both of us.

STAN/SHEILA

You know the rules.

EVE

(EVE puts her cards down)

Twenty-one! I win.

(EVE starts to take the cards)

Hey, what're you doing? I had blackjack. You said that's what I needed to win.

STAN/SHEILA

Not if I got twenty-one too.

(STAN/SHEILA deals his last card)

EVE

We both have it?

STAN/SHEILA

It's called a tie and in the tie the dealer wins. Be here tonight with Adam and the apples.

(picks up the case and starts
to sing again as he begins
walking away)

"Come to me, my melancholy baby.
Cuddle up and don't be blue

EVE

You can't walk away from me now. Not like this.

STAN/SHEILA

This isn't the only game in town. I got things to do, places to see -- it's a big world out there. A very big world.

EVE

Listen, we're friends right? Tell me about it.

STAN/SHEILA

Friends don't lie to each other. You got a great place here. You tend your garden, look after all those cute little animals, and make some great sandwiches. Maybe this is where you're supposed to be. Why shake everything up if it's making you this crazy.

EVE

Nice belt.

STAN/SHEILA

You know what they say? You can lead a snake to water but if you can get it to shed its skin, well, then you got a set of luggage.

EVE

I'll come.

STAN/SHEILA

You're sure.

EVE

I'm sure. I'll come and I'll bring Adam and the apples.

STAN/SHEILA

That's the spirit.

EVE

Just one more question.

STAN/SHEILA

What is it?

EVE

What's it really like out there?

STAN/SHEILA

Everything's changing.

EVE

Is it exciting?

STAN/SHEILA

You tell me.

(a la Fred Astaire and Ginger
Rogers STAN/SHEILA takes EVE
in his arms and sings and
dances her through is travels
"out there)

One day you're up.
One day you're down.
Out there.

EVE

Out there.

STAN/SHEILA

First you're on top, then
you're run outta town.
Out there.

EVE

Out there.

STAN/SHEILA

Sometimes you're hot.

EVE

Sometimes your cold.

STAN/SHEILA

You got it. But when everything's right you'll never grow
old.

TOGETHER

Out there.

STAN/SHEILA

It's a race, it's a trial.
It can bring you a frown or
put on a smile.
It's heaven, it's hell.

EVE

But it's never the same?

STAN/SHEILA

Everyday's a new game.

TOGETHER

Out there!

EVE

(seductively) And what's in that beautiful case? Can I look?

STAN/SHEILA

A little of this, a little of that, when things get slow -- whoosh... aluminum siding. I sell things. But you can't look yet.

EVE

Sounds very risky.

STAN/SHEILA

Depends on what you're selling and who's buying. You're a fast learner honey. It shouldn't take any time at all for you to learn everything I know and more.

EVE

Is it good? To learn fast.

STAN/SHEILA

It's very good. You'll see. You need to be fast out there. Can you see it?

EVE

I think so. But is it bliss?

STAN/SHEILA

You're the one with the bliss remember? Not me.

EVE

But it's not like solitaire.

STAN/SHEILA

When you win at this game, it's a whole lot better. But that is just my humble opinion.

(STAN/SHEILA starts to leave.)

EVE

What's wrong?

STAN/SHEILA

Nothing.

EVE

Why are you leaving?

STAN/SHEILA

Nothing more to do here, honey and to tell the truth, you wore me out. See you tomorrow.

(STAN/SHEILA exits whistling
"Come to me my Melancholy
Baby".)

EVE

Tomorrow....and tomorrow....and....

(EVE picks up the lunchbox.
Then she sees the pack of
playing cards left behind. She
starts to play solitaire, then
stops and starts dealing two
hands of black jack. As time
goes by, she's playing both
hands and the lunch box falls
to the floor.)

EVE

Adam? Could I talk to you, honey? Your lunch box is.....

(EVE takes the lunchbox and
sees the apple left behind.
She puts the apple into her
pocket. Her voice is now very
sultry and seductive as she
removes her apron.)

Adam? Oh, Adam? I'm coming.....Ready or not....I'm coming
home, baby.

(EVE abruptly puts the lunchbox
down, takes off apron and
changes her demeanor.)

BLACKOUT

(Cat's meow)

END OF PLAY