

Excerpt from *Trouble on Planet Earth*, written by Finegan Kruckemeyer. Not to be presented without official licensing. To enquire, please go to: finegankruckemeyer.com

As the entire play is a choose-your-own-adventure, the full work contains hundreds of scenes and 24 possible endings.

Scene One: The Car Crash

Jane stands, cut, staring at a rotating tyre. A smashed headlight illuminates her.

1: As everything else slowly begins to seep back into your vision, to bleed in just like your head, your knees are bleeding out, you find yourself standing, staring at a tyre as it slows.

2: You do not know how you got out of the car, the upside down car that lies in front of you. You don't even know for sure that you were in it – but it looks like it. That tyre – it just keeps spinning.

1: Feel the wind on your cuts. It breathes against your rips and tears. Look at the long shadows of night trees, towering either side of the skinny road you stand upon. Listen to the wind in the leaves, the dull roar of a distant highway. Listen to your brain rattling round your empty head.

2: But you are alive. Shout this victory to the heavens. Say: 'my name is... and I am alive'.

Jane opens her mouth, but stops, covers it – the shock sets in.

1: Say your name. If you have nothing else, you have that. Shout it.

Silence.

1: Please remember that. Or tell yourself something else, anything: where were you driving from? To? Where were you born? How long ago? Where'd you buy this dress?

JANE: *[Clawing at her head]* My name is... is... Ah! Fuck, fuck, fuck.

She sees the briefcase and runs to it, tries to wrench it open.

2: Yes, your memory is locked in here, you know it. Open it – it is yours to find. But – a combination. Surely, if nothing else you can remember this.

Jane screams and throws the briefcase, then rushes to it and holds it to her.

1: You have forgotten everything – don't throw away what little you have. Now, what to do? A path beside you leads into the woods – in there, you

can find a rock to smash this briefcase open. Ahead, a phonebox glows in the distance – surely with the receiver at your ear, you’ll remember someone’s number... 8-9-4... What is that? And in the distance, a set of headlights. Do you stay where you are, and let your future come to you?

FORCE OPEN CASE – 9

FLAG DOWN CAR – 175 (Revenge Strand)

PHONE – 11

Phone

The phone rings, then is answered.

JACK: This is Jack Callahan, Bay City Police. What can I help you with?

JANE: The police? I’m... I think I’ve misdialled.

JACK: Jane!? Is that you? Jane Douglas. Where are you, girl?

JANE: Jane Dougla... I’m out here in... the country. I’m next to a phonebox.

JACK: You were meant to be here for the line-up a while ago. We’ve been worried they got to you.

JANE: I’m... okay. Jane Douglas. I’m okay.

JACK: Look, you sound pretty knocked around. Give me some details of where you’re standing and I’ll come pick you up.

JANE: I don’t know, okay! I... I’ve got no clue where I am.

JACK: Now you said you’re beside a phonebox in the country: well, there’s only so many of those. Can you see the lights of the city? They north, south, west of you, what?

JANE: South. They’re to the south of me. Along the freeway.

JACK: You can see the freeway.

JANE: Yeah, just where there’s a bridge crossing it. The road I’m on comes out just under the bridge.

JACK: Easy. That’s Highway 81. You’re on the Chatanooga side road. Listen, I can’t legally keep these animals waiting much longer ‘fore I’ve got to set them all free, so I’ll pick you up in a few minutes and take you straight here, okay.

JANE: Okay, it’s just my head... I’ve been in this accident.

JACK: Yeah, we'll get you all sorted, no problems. You can trust me Jane – I'm a cop. I'll see you soon.

He hangs up.

1: There's nothing for it but to wait. But for how long? And why should you trust this man? What did he say that anyone couldn't have? And what line-up?

2: But you're close. You can feel it – you're close to finding answers, even if they come in a strange package. A line up...

A car is heard approaching.

1: This is something else. Fate seems to want to have fun with you tonight. The car driving towards you is slowing down, you notice.

2: But the cop said wait. And you do want to know who's in the line-up that you need to know about.

1: But the woman in the car – she's calling you over. And it is getting cold.

The sound of a second car is heard.

2: Jack's almost here, Jane Douglas. No rest for the wicked.

FLAG DOWN CAR – 175 (Revenge Strand)

LINE UP – 20