

# SOMETHING

By: Savannah Phelps

© 2019 Savannah Phelps

3186 Lang Road

Magnolia, MS 39652

601-695-7572

[Savannah.phelps@msabrookhaven.org](mailto:Savannah.phelps@msabrookhaven.org)

CAST OF CHARACTERS

JULES.....Thirty-six-year-old husband and father.

BRENELLE.....Waitress in her late twenties.

SETTING: Almost 1:00 a.m. in a small-town diner.

AT RISE we see JULES reading a newspaper at a booth and drinking a cup of coffee. BRENELLE is wiping down tables. The diner is otherwise empty. JULES chuckles abruptly, catching BRENELLE's attention.

BRENELLE

What's so funny?

JULES

These comic strips. Been reading them since I was a kid, and they never cease to get me.

BRENELLE

Oh yeah! My dad and I would spend every Sunday morning reading them. Always a great start to a new week.

JULES

Were you a *Garfield* or *Peanuts* kind of girl?

BRENELLE

I enjoyed both, but I was wildly fascinated by *The Wizard of Id* series. The stupidity cracked me up, and I hated *The Wizard of Oz*. Anything that made fun of it caught my attention.

JULES

Well now I'm hurt.

BRENELLE

Why's that?

JULES

I happen to really enjoy *The Wizard of Oz*.

BRENELLE

You're kidding right? The movie is bupkis compared to the book, and so much went on behind the scenes that it's impossible to be a feminist and appreciate that movie.

JULES

You're a feminist, huh?

BRENELLE

Well, yeah.

JULES

JULES's phone rings. He denies the call.

What happened?

BRENELLE

BRENELLE gives him a confused look.

Huh?

JULES

On set of the movie. What happened to make it so horrible?

BRENELLE

Oh. Uhm... for starters, the witch caught on fire in real life. Had to live with burn scars for the rest of her life, and they used terrible make-up that stained hers and the tin-man's skin for decades.

(JULES doesn't take the complaint very seriously.)

JULES

Really?

BRENELLE

Yeah.

JULES

The good witch or the bad witch?

BRENELLE

The bad witch.

JULES

I see. What else?

BRENELLE

You know Judy Garland, right?

JULES nods his head as he sips his coffee.

BRENELLE (Cont.)

She went through a lot on that set. They made her stay skinny in really bad ways, so she looked young enough to play the part, she was shunned and ignored by her co-stars, and-

JULES's phone rings again, cutting BRENELLE off. He looks at his phone, sighs, and lets it ring.

JULES

And?

BRENELLE

Are you gonna answer that?

JULES

It's not important. Continue, please.

BRENELLE

Uh... well, she was treated really bad by a lot of people during that time... She was only sixteen when they made that film.

JULES looks a little uneasy as he sets the paper down. He takes a long sip of his coffee, looks at it, grimaces, and sets it back on the table. BRENELLE slides into the opposite side of the booth, facing JULES.

What's your name?

JULES

Jules.

BRENELLE

Jules, do you have a daughter?

JULES

JULES nods his head.

Yeah.

BRENELLE

How old?

JULES

One is eight. The other is two.

BRENELLE

Those two girls are going to have a hard time growing up. They are going to be expected to do certain things, look a certain way. Guys are going to pressure them. Other girls are going to pressure them. You know that?

JULES stares at BRENELLE, nodding slightly.

BRENELLE (Cont.)

My father was a great man. He was my best friend, much like Judy Garland's father was to her. He never gave me the opportunity to doubt myself. He made sure that I knew how to smile, rather it be with Sunday's comic strips or really bad impressions. But before anything, he made sure I was aware that this world is ugly, and that people will hurt me every chance they get. My father didn't allow me to be naïve...

BRENELLE looks at her hands for a moment, taking a deep breath before meeting JULES's gaze again.

The world took him from me when I was thirteen. A couple men mugged him and shot him dead in an alley. That is when I understood why he told me the things he did, why he taught me joy and fear in the same breath. It is important for girls, no matter how young, to understand happiness and love, and it is equally important for them to know how to cope and stand for themselves in the face of danger or tragedy.

JULES

Why are you telling me all this?

BRENELLE

You walked into this diner at 10 p.m. and stared at that newspaper for two and half hours. You've drank four cups of coffee and haven't ordered a single plate of food. Your phone has rung twice; both calls were ignored. You're avoiding something, maybe your wife or your kids. Maybe something bad happened today at work, and you can't bring yourself to admit it to your

family. I don't know, I can only assume. What I do know is that a man with two daughters shouldn't be laughing at comic strips alone.

JULES

I lost my job. How can I face them when I have nothing to give them? Jenily is learning how to talk now. Lina is dressing herself and washing her own hair. My wife has this mommy blog that she writes, and it makes her so happy. I'm thirty-six years old with a family and a house and all the responsibilities that go along with them. When I go home, I have to look those three beautiful girls in the face and tell them I can't provide for them.

BRENELLE

Providing for your family isn't just about money. Providing for your family is being there and cheering them on, giving them support and love when no one else is paying attention. Jobs will come and go, but you never have to stop providing for them. They need their husband and father, not the check he brings in.

JULES

I just... I don't want to let them down.

BRENELLE

Then don't. If a job is what you're worrying about, then I'll give you an application and get you started here, even if it's temporary, but the only way you will let them down is by not going home tonight.

(Pause)

JULES

You know, I don't think I've ever paid much attention to *The Wizard of Id* comics.

BRENELLE shakes her head and smiles, taking JULES's mug.

BRENELLE

That so? Do you want more coffee?



JULES

JULES shakes his head.

Or thought about what actors go through behind the scene.

BRENELLE

Well, there is an infinite number of things to know about life and the world, but we can't know everything. What is important that you take what you learn, and you share it.

JULES

Help someone get closer to knowing everything.

BRENELLE

The impossible.

JULES

What's the odds that I come across someone who makes me think the one night I can't get my thoughts together?

BRENELLE

Maybe it's fate, maybe it's not. The odds don't really matter as long you pull the card that you need.

JULES

I suppose you're right.

JULES stands up from the booth, reaching into his pocket.

How much do I owe you for the coffee?

BRENELLE

Don't worry about it. It's on the house.

JULES

You sure?

BRENELLE

Yeah.

JULES

Can I have one of those applications?

BRENELLE

Do you have a criminal record?

JULES

JULES raises his eyebrow and laughs gently.

Uh, no.

BRENELLE

You start Thursday morning at nine. Be here early so I can give you your uniform.

JULES

Are you the manager or something?

BRENELLE

My dad built this diner, after he died my mother took over until I was old enough to handle it myself.

JULES

Irony.

BRENELLE

Or fate.

JULES

Something.

BRENELLE

Something.

JULES

I miss my girls.

BRENELLE

Go home. Kiss them on the head. Hold your wife and talk about her blog.

JULES

I will.

BRENELLE

Good.

JULES

And *The Wizard of Oz* will no longer play in my living room.

BRENELLE

No, play the movie, but when they're old enough, tell them what she went through and make sure they never go through it.

JULES

JULES walks to the door, nodding his head.  
He pushes it open and freezes, turning to  
look at BRENELLE.

I never got your name.

BRENELLE

Brenelle.

JULES

Thank you Brenelle.

BRENELLE

Get out my diner so I can close.

JULES

Yes, ma'am. See you Thursday?

BRENELLE

See you Thursday.

JULES walks out, the door shuts behind  
him. BRENELLE smiles to herself as she  
wipes off the table he was sitting at. She  
looks around and chuckles to herself as the  
lights fade out.

THE END