

SHAW/REN – ACT 2 SCENE 6

REN

Reverend Moore, I understand what this town has been through...

SHAW

No, I don't think you do. If you did, you wouldn't have provoked your classmates to re-open the wounds we have healed. You—

REN

(Interrupting.)

Those wounds are not healed.

(SHAW reacts.)

If they were, people wouldn't be glaring at me on the street or snubbing my Mom at the market. They wouldn't be boycotting my Uncle's business. And you wouldn't be fixing the vote on the Town Council—

SHAW

(Talking over him.)

I thought it was time to put an end to this nonsense.

REN

"Nonsense?!" All I say is, "Who's up for a little dancing?" And the only thing people here can think about is the Potawney Bridge and four kids—

SHAW

Mr. McCormack--!

REN

--and I know your son was one of them. And I'm sorry for your loss, I truly am, but honouring their memory by shutting out the world isn't working.

SHAW

(Sardonic, heated.)

And I'm sure you have all the answers!

REN

No, I don't, but I—

SHAW

And you're going to set me straight!

REN

I didn't say th-

SHAW

How can you presume to know what I've been through? You don't have a clue!

(Moves to show him the door.)

Good night, Mr. McCormack.

REN

Please! If I could only—

SHAW

Mr. McCormack, I would like to be alone!

REN

(Empathetic)

Sir, you already are!

(That stops SHAW in his tracks. Long pause. REN realizes that his words have stung deeply. Now calmly, kindly:)

REN

We both are. You and me. We've both lost somebody. And even though people say they understand, they don't really. I bet you stop a hundred times a day and wonder "why?" I do. I wonder why'd my Dad leave? Was it something I did? Something I didn't do? Could I have made him stay? Maybe I could bring him back? But I can't.

(SHAW looks up.)

But I don't have to tell you. You know what that's like.

SHAW

(Quietly, defeated)

I do.

REN

So, I guess I came to town frustrated and angry, and it felt really good to kick up a fuss. And I know it got people upset, and I'm sorry for that. But I'm just trying to move on. Cuz I'm so tired of looking back.

(Shrugs)

And I can't stand still.

SHAW

I've noticed.

(BOTH smile; the ice has been broken, but neither knows what to say next.)