

Open House REMIX

Open Source Theater
By Aaron Landsman

Open House is
a comedy of romantic failure,
a real estate pitch for a collapsing city,
a neighborhood meeting about
the way we live now.

You can read it in your very own
Home, use it as source code, or
ask us to remake it for your city.

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WELCOME TO OPEN HOUSE REMIX

This is the script for the original version of *Open House*, a play by Aaron Landsman that is performed in peoples' homes. We are hoping you'll get pleasure and provocation out of reading it, either to yourself or aloud. Maybe you'll want to stage it in your city.

Here are three ways we've thought of to use *Open House*. There might be others, you never know:

1. Read it together in a house. Invite some friends over, see what it sounds like, and maybe have a talk afterward about what it might mean or do. If you do this, please be sure and take a picture or just drop us a line about how it went or what happened. We're curious. *You'll need at least four people – one for each character and one for the stage manager and stage directions.*
2. Use it as source code. Take the text, situations and setting and make something new, more relevant to you, more appealing to now or where you are. If you do this, please send us some kind of documentation of what you did, so we can be psyched about it, too.
3. Do a production. *Open House* was written for New York City, but it could be adapted to almost any city. You could do this yourself, or we could do it with or for you: aaron@thinaar.com.

Whatever you do, please record pictures, video and sound. Send us links!

Please enjoy *Open House*.

Thank you,



Aaron Landsman
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For instance – characters were written as having a specific gender, or name. You could change that.

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HISTORY AND SET-UP

Open House was commissioned and produced by The Foundry Theatre, in 24 NYC apartments, in spring 2008, about six months before the economic crash.

Here's how it was presented each night.

Before the run, Foundry staff and designers made a site visit to the house. Landsman interviewed the hosts to get a sense of their history in the dwelling, the feel of their neighborhood, and to get a list of neighborhood landmarks (everything from parks to bars to neighbors' homes), so that each location could be woven into the script when the show happened there. The actors had a crib sheet for each house that they drew on during the show.

On the day of the show, the stage manager drove a van to each apartment on the afternoon of the show, set up hidden speakers and replaced household lights with our own lamps, which made it possible to simulate a power outage at one point during the play. He also brought a cart with a sound and light board on it. A microphone was hung outside a window, and the sound of outside, mixed with intermittent sounds like a loudspeaker in the distance, a storm, and other ambient noises, were played through the hidden speakers.

The actors arrived about 5PM to stage their scenes for each house. Audience members began arriving at 7:30, greeted by the character of THREE, who asked them to fill out questionnaires. From 7:30-8:00, THREE circulated and made conversation, casually, with each audience member, interjecting comments that would later manifest in the show. In this way, what seemed like "pre-show" is actually part of the play. Audiences ranged from 20-60, depending on the home.

SCENARIO

Characters:

Three: A real estate broker, early 30's. Energetic, friendly.

Rick: mid-30's, a woodworker.

Jane: mid-30's, partner, a personal trainer

David: The Stage Manager of the show

Time/Place:

New York City – an apartment. 10 or 20 years from now, though this is not announced at the start of the show.

In the original production, Melanie Joseph directed. Efran Delgadillo designed the lights and visuals environment. Jane Cox designed sound. The cast was Raul Castillo (Three), Heidi Schreck (Jane) and Paul Willis (Rick)

Notes:

RICK and JANE hold up signs in between their scenes, which correspond to neighborhoods in New York where they are forced to move as their current area gets more expensive. At several points, Rick and Jane step out of their scenes to tell the story directly to the audience. Throughout their scenes, THREE is a spectral presence, seen walking through the shadows, overheard trying out the faucets, making quiet interjections.

Part of the goal of *Open House* is to juxtapose Rick and Jane's quotidian intimacies, complaints and inactivity against the calamity described by THREE in the second half of the play. By the end we realize that we are actually a number of years in the future. The calamity itself is not dwelt on so that it can take the audience by surprise, and so that we can treat it as a metaphor for forces operating on the city now, and a real event that may be political, or environmental.

SCRIPT

In a New York apartment, THREE greets audience members as they enter. He is dressed in a slightly ill-fitting suit jacket and black jeans, black button-up shirt. He is cheerful, charming, earnest, welcoming. He introduces the HOST to audience members, makes small-talk, and directs them to the coat rack, the bathroom, and the forms they are to fill out.

Each viewer is given a copy of the questionnaire on the next page.

It's the kind of form that people fill out when they are shopping for an apartment or house.

There should be about half an hour during which people can arrive, see the apartment, have a little conversation and fill out their forms. This is part one of the show.

INTAKE FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

How long have you lived at your present address? _____

Occupation/Trade _____

Previous Employment _____

Cash On Hand _____

Emergency Contact/Next of Kin _____

Credit or FICO Score, if Known _____

Bank Accounts; (Savings) _____

(Checking) _____

(Other) _____

Health Concerns _____

QUESTIONNAIRE:

How is your neighborhood changing?

What did you love most about the city?

Do you have an exit strategy?

What have you given up to stay here?

The following lines are examples of the kind of small-talk THREE makes with individual audience members and the HOST, as audience fills out forms. These lines can be improvised, paraphrased, altered as necessary.

THREE

(to audience member) Did you get a form? *(to Host)* Did she get one?

(to audience member) This is for you to fill out. You can have it back at the end if you want. If you're worried about your information. I'm Three. And [HOST] is the person who owns this place. S/he can show you around. The bathrooms are there

He indicates the directions of the bathrooms.

As audience begins to look over questionnaires and fill them out, THREE continues to welcome new people while also looking over the shoulders of those already working.

He says the following lines to individual audience members as he moves about the room.

THREE

(to audience member) Coats go on this chair/the bed in the room off to your left/etc.

THREE

Did you stop for dinner before you got here? Did you go to [NAME OF LOCAL ESTABLISHMENT]? I love that place.

(about the questionnaire to audience member) There are no right answers on this thing.

(looking around – to audience member(s)) This is such a New York apartment, you know?

He also makes comments specific to each apartment, such as:

'I Love how she's made the books into a sort of wall covering,' 'that color is amazing on the wall. I could never get away with that.' 'make sure you check out the view out the living room.'

(to DAVID) Is that light too bright on the couch?

(to audience member) Did you grow up in this neighborhood? I would love to have grown up in a place like this.

(to the last person arriving) You made it! Great. Take one of these.

He also says things like this to seed thematic or storylines that will appear later:

(To audience member) Did Sully send you over here? I didn't think so but I had to ask, you know.

When half the audience has arrived, he signals RICK and JANE to come into the main room from the bedroom or hallway, where they have been relatively inconspicuous. RICK and JANE are vaguely coupleish with each other, hipsters in dress, and also welcoming. They work comfortably with THREE, but they are also of their own style and demeanor. Less invested in the Audience, they have clearly been brought in by THREE to help.

THREE reads over their shoulders, or discusses their answers with them or uses the following pre-fab comments.

THREE

(re: the "Employment" question) Some people there isn't enough room to fill in all their jobs, they changed so much.

I always have that problem of how to bill yourself, you know? What do I say I am. One guy had done everything from ESL to catering to bike messengering. I would list myself as 'entrepreneur.'

(re: bank account questions)

You can totally fill this in at the end, if you want. It's so funny, sometimes people just pony that stuff up you know. "Here's my mutual fund account number, would you like the routing number?" I'm thinking, you barely know me, man, what life have you led that has made you so trusting? It's one of the first things they teach you when you're training with Fidelity, any of the big guys, don't accidentally disclose the customer's information. Can you believe there's a Chase opening right around the corner?

(re: "How is your neighborhood changing:")

A guy yesterday said that he knew his neighborhood had really changed when Kmart came in, which made the property values go up. I think he called it a "market beacon." I think he was also a broker. One guy said they no longer have a gang problem.

(re: "Exit strategy")

This one we can deal with later.

Hey, has anyone ever actually made one of those "Go Bags" from the NYC.gov website? They were "Denial Bags," you know? Oh the world's ending - I'll pack the toothpaste!

(to everyone) You can also fill this out at the end, if you want.

THREE and HOST continue to talk and manage the influx of audience into the space. With some hosts, the actor playing THREE will be able to leave and dart around more, with others he should be more near the host to make sure things run correctly. Special cases may necessitate Rick and Jane enlisting to help welcome people, for instance if the host is incredibly shy.

By 8:05 they should have the audience in chairs in the living room. Audience chair face the couch, on which are placed "RESERVED" signs. In front of is is a coffee table.

THREE confers with an audience member, checks the time, tells the viewer:

THREE

We've got to get started.

He then addresses the entire audience as he and HOST are herding them toward chairs. Rick and Jane lurk largely unnoticed in a doorway.

THREE

Folks? We're ready to start. Rick and Jane, could you guys collect everyone's forms? Thanks for your patience. I can't tell you how happy I am to see you all here, really. It means so much to me. To give you an idea of the scope of this thing, we're doing a total of 24 of these over the course of a couple months. We're hitting every borough, and as many neighborhoods as we can. I think next we're in [LOCATION OF NEXT PERFORMANCE], right, Rick?

RICK

That's Right.

THREE

Now, some of you have asked what we're going to do with these forms that you filled out? We won't sell your information to anyone. You can have it back at the end if you decide you don't want to move forward.

He turns to HOST, speaking to both HOST and audience.

I'd like to introduce [HOST] before we go on, in case you don't know him/her, since he/she's been generous enough to let us use his/her place.

HOST

Hi. Thanks for coming. Cellphones off, please. Fire Exits.

THREE

I also asked [HOST] to tell us a little bit about the place, because I figure everyone is curious, right? [HOST], we are all wondering what's your medicine cabinet.

HOST

[HOST EXPLAINS ONE THING ABOUT THE HOUSE/APARTMENT /NEIGHBORHOOD THAT IS SPECIFIC AND QUIRKY (NO SHOES IN THE HOUSE, PET FEEDING SCHEDULE, NEW ADDITION, ETC)]

THREE

Thanks, [HOST]. *(to audience)* Now, let me ask you something: what do you think makes a city? You think it's the government or the subway, or the police?

Audience members throw out suggestions, to which THREE responds, then after a minute or two of this, he segues back into his prepared speech.

Restaurants, people like restaurants. Coffee carts. Nightclubs. Art museums is a biggie, culture, sure. Galleries, theaters. Those all help. You can't do it without them. Parks, playgrounds, a place your kid can run around. I'm sorry if I sound like Mr. Rogers here, but neighborhoods. Am I right? Sidewalks. Somebody yesterday said "Jaywalking." What else? Anyone? (he takes a suggestion or two from the audience) Taxis. Limo's. Buildings that make you feel small. The occasional nutjob - they remind you you're still sane. Hopefully. Garbage trucks. Those groups of little schoolkids walking down the street on a field trip, holding a rope. Bag ladies. Yuppies. Doormen. Sidewalk dominoes games. Hip-hop. Languages. People. It was an eight-million-person blind date. You open your door to your neighbors, and other people you trust. Everyone else you kind of elbow past and hope nothing happens. Here's a stat for you: ten years from now it's gonna be 89% of the world living in cities, so we must be doing something right. Right? That's why this is a great opportunity. Because everyone's going to want to be here soon. Its inevitable. I think it's because of nights like this. The possibility. *(to Stage Manager)* Okay.

RICK and JANE enter the room and stand in front of the couch. They stop for a moment. Rick puts on a wool cap, and Jane a pair of horn-rimmed glasses; when they do this they become prototypical "bohemians." When they sit the lights in the apartment click off and the lamps facing the couch go on, creating an instant 'stage' where they sit. The sound is a barely perceptible rumble played through the hidden speakers. This sound increases slightly over the course of their scenes. DAVID rings a bell signifying the beginning of the scene. Jane holds up a sign that says "Williamsburg"

JANE

It was cool of Barbara to introduce us.

RICK

Yeah.

JANE

How long did you guys date?

RICK

Just, like, a couple months, I mean it wasn't really dating even.

JANE

That's what she said too.

RICK

She did?

JANE

She said it was fun but there was no chemistry.

RICK

(says nothing)

JANE

Well you know she's all blunt like that.

RICK

I thought there was some chemistry.

JANE

I think she was just trying to make me feel like it was okay.

RICK

Okay if you and I don't have any chemistry?

JANE

I shouldn't have said anything.

RICK

(says nothing)

JANE

She said she thought it might have been terror-sex related.

RICK

Huh. It's a little weird that she used to live here and now you sublet from her.

JANE

Is it?

RICK

But I mean it's nice. Ted's always at my place with his girlfriend.

JANE

Ted.

RICK

I don't think they know how loud they are, you know? The other night they must've -

JANE

Barbara said she really wanted to keep the place in the family. My last place they kept raising the rent.

RICK

That sucks.

JANE

It was all these trust fund babies.

Pause. A new day, maybe.

RICK

That was fun, but I'm just not sure the protest thing is doing any good any more.

JANE

It feels like we have to do something, doesn't it?

RICK

Voter drives in Pennsylvania ain't it, you know?

JANE

Yeah.

Pause

I liked that movie!

RICK

Me too.

JANE

I forgot how sexy Belmondo is.

RICK

I know.

JANE

I feel like anything you can say about the French, you can say it about Belmondo, too. Like, "The French are allusive and wily..."

RICK

"Belmondo is - "

JANE

" - exactly!"

RICK

Those are good adjectives.

JANE

I totally don't go to Film Forum enough.

RICK

Yeah.

JANE

Do you want to stay over?

RICK

Yeah! Yes.

JANE

Okay.

Pause. They look around.

RICK

Where's the -

JANE

We have to move the table to unfold the couch. It undercuts the spontaneity.

RICK

Where...does it go?

JANE

It collapses. You remember I told you, 'Mostly I'm a total tomboy, like I don't go for girly things, except I always have to have my toes looking good, like, painted?'

RICK

I said, 'I think I'm in love.' Also, I liked your place. It was very clean. I didn't know I would be so attracted to that domestic thing.

JANE

Yeah, me neither.

RICK turns to address the audience.

RICK

I probably should have known we were doomed the night we were at this little club. Not even really a club, more like a bar with a back room. When I first moved to the city I used to pass by it and it was a dry cleaner but then it was a music joint. You'd get someone to take you through the shanties that had sprung up around the train station. You always felt like family when you got there. That bartender would always recognize you, the one you liked. He was never quite shaven but never quite grew a beard? Anyway, A friend of ours' band was playing, or not even really a band, this intense, singer-songwriter but with samples kind of thing? Really beautiful. We knew

everyone there, pretty much. Robert came, which was a surprise, and Tim and Jenny, and Tom, and also Felix, who is, well, not exactly famous, but very well-respected and kind of a pioneer at what he does, but I can't remember what that is right now. We had just moved in together, again. Everyone was kind of rooting for us. At the end of the set, when the mailing list came around for people to sign up on, you signed your email and I was like, "but I get the emails already," like I always told you about the shows, and you said "well just in case something happens, I'll still get the emails, too."

A bell rings. They reposition themselves and flip the sign: "West Bushwick." They play this scene as if they are just moving in together.

JANE

So, the Key Foods? Is kinda rowdy. I went in and asked the guy if they have organic eggs, and he just stared at me.

RICK

I feel like we're playing house.

JANE

I know.

He kisses her.

RICK

Is this how people do it?

JANE

What's that?

RICK

Live with each other?

JANE

Yeah. I like this place.

RICK

It's a little small.

She takes a picture off the wall.

JANE

Are you sure this goes here?

Rick takes it from her.

RICK

I like that there.

JANE

This is a lot more than my studio.

RICK

How much was that place again?

JANE

\$750.

RICK

Right. Wow.

JANE

I had a good deal.

RICK

I was only paying \$450.

JANE

You had to live with Ted for six years. It was like a new meaning for the term "Roach Motel - "

RICK

Jane!

JANE

I wish we could buy something here.

RICK

Well maybe in a couple years.

JANE

It's just now's the time, you know?

RICK

I don't think it's going to gentrify this far out.

He turns to audience.

I said, "I learned refinishing from my dad."

She turns to audience.

JANE

I said, "You dress like a hipster,"

RICK

"Because hipsters dress like people with regular jobs. I'm the one you're imitating." *(to Three)* I learned refinishing from my dad. A friend of his had a shop on the Bowery, so I worked there.

JANE

(to Three) He looked like everyone else, but not. He has great hands.

Rick and Jane pull a blanket from out of a box and lay on the couch as if in bed, entwined. Rick changes the sign to: "Astoria." As the position themselves, a phone in another room seems to ring. This scene is languid, as if they are spending the day making love and napping.

RICK

Do you want to go see Felix's thing?

JANE

Oh. What is it again?

RICK

I can't remember.

JANE

Hmmm.

RICK

Yeah, me neither.

JANE

That friend of Tom's is getting people together at Tom's house. Maybe we should check that out.

RICK

I'd like to be a part of that.

JANE

Sure. Eventually. It's nice to be invited to something like that. It has a name, too.

RICK

This time we're living in is so interesting. I feel like maybe it's the beginning of some kind of, you know, I feel totally dorky saying this, but a 'movement', you know?

JANE

It's about time.

RICK

Right?

JANE

Yeah.

RICK

I mean it's mostly like a movement about what to bring to the potluck.

JANE

What to put in the manifesto.

Pause

RICK

I'd definitely like to be more involved in something though -

JANE

Me too.

Pause.

I'm also just tired, you know? I've been running around all week.

Pause.

RICK

We still have some to-go food options left in this neighborhood.

JANE

That's true.

RICK

Maybe we should check out that chicken place.

JANE

Which? Raoul's?

RICK

No, the other one.

JANE

Chicken sounds good.

Pause

RICK

Discover has to be in the mail Thursday.

JANE

Thursday's the 7th.

RICK

They don't charge a late fee until the 9th.

JANE

Are you sure?

RICK

There's a grace period.

JANE

That means we can do rent Tuesday.

RICK

I'm going to have to let my Public Radio membership lapse.

JANE

That was kind of a pipe dream.

RICK

It felt very adult.

JANE

Yuppie.

RICK

Hush.

They fall asleep. Jane wakes up. She whispers to the audience the following story, while holding a sign that says "Williamsburg."

JANE

After we moved in together, Barbara and Brian did, too, but then they broke up and Barbara kicked the subletter out of her studio so she could move back in. And then, when she and Brian got back together, she needed someone to take over the lease, and we'd just split so I was looking for a place all over again. There was something so inevitable about it. It feels lonely to be with you and then when you go to work it feels lonely.

A bell rings. Rick and Jane have repositioned themselves. They flip the sign to indicate that they are living in a new neighborhood: "Bed-Stuy" Rick stands stage left with a moving box as if unpacking - he hands Jane a book.

JANE

I can't believe we ended somewhere smaller and further out.

RICK

I know, but it's cheaper. You said you needed something cheaper. Anyway, No one at our last place was this nice. I walk around here and it's like, no one looks the same as me but people are like me. It's unsettling. I like it. I feel like a misplaced demographic so much of the time. This woman at the bakery, she knows me already. I've been there twice.

JANE

You bring it out in people.

RICK

Oh, I invited Olga and Win over for dinner...

JANE

(says nothing)

RICK

I hope that's okay...

JANE

(says nothing)

RICK

I need to keep on Olga's good side because of work.

JANE

(says nothing)

RICK

She's basically keeping me employed with all her antique fetishes.

JANE

(says nothing)

RICK

I know Win is -

JANE

He's like "DidacticMan."

RICK

He's not that bad.

JANE

Help me DidacticMan, I'm ambivalent about something. There's a sale at the Gap on sweatshop panties! What should I do?!!

RICK

Jane!

JANE

I asked how he was doing the other day and he said the city had become 'hegemonic.'

RICK

I wish he -

JANE

I was like, 'monolithic'? -

RICK

Uh huh.

JANE

- he said, 'no, hegemonic.' How can a city be hegemonic?

RICK

I could call and tell them you're sick.

JANE

No...Well...No...I mean it's not like he's getting his
panties at the Gap.

Bell. Lights flicker.

RICK

Have you noticed all the white people getting off the
train at our stop now?

JANE

I know. It's like the beginning of the end.

RICK

I think we made it worse by telling everyone how
welcoming everyone was.

JANE

We should have talked about how scared we are.

Rick changes the sign: "Jackson
Diner." They sit as if at a restaurant.

JANE

I don't know why you wanted to come here. I totally
can't afford to eat out.

RICK

Remember this place?

JANE

Rick.

RICK

My plumber used to call this the "melting pot of the
melting pot."

JANE

I can't afford this dinner.

RICK

Everybody here looks like us now. I'm totally taking
you out.

Pause. They eat in silence.

JANE

You don't really have the money either.

Pause.

RICK

I was hoping we could talk about what we were talking about the other day.

JANE

Do you -

RICK

I just think we could start by talking about what the issues are. Like, what scares you about it, what scares me.

JANE

Uh huh.

RICK

What might be fun.

JANE

(says nothing)

RICK

Because it might be fun.

JANE

Uh huh.

RICK

Some parts of it might be.

JANE

I don't know people with a fun marriage.

RICK

What time is it?

THREE

(Gives a fake time: usually military)

JANE reads from the book Rick handed her earlier. It is the following quote from *The Global City Model* by Saskia Sassen. (NOTE: I didn't write quoted text, Saskia Sassen did)

JANE

“Several of the organizing hypotheses in the Global City Model concern the conditions for the continuity of centrality in advanced economic systems in the face of new organizational forms and technologies that maximize the possibility for geographic dispersal. Historically, centrality has largely been embedded in the central city. Have the new technologies and organizational forms altered the spatial correlates of centrality?”

When finished she throws the book in the box, exasperated.

Bell rings. They flip the sign to indicate a new place: "Inwood"

RICK

Do you think it will be environmental or political.

JANE

Definitely environmental.

RICK

No way.

JANE

Total. By the way, thanks for dinner.

RICK

No problem. Olga got me this wallpapering gig in one of those new Harlem condos? Choice.

They kiss.

JANE

“Choice?”

RICK

What?

JANE

Dude. Anyway, I'll get the next one. I'm getting a big check next week.

RICK

Sure.

Pause.

Sometimes I feel like Leonard is right, that we just really need to risk more. Don't you?

JANE

I do.

RICK

In order to have an impact. Do you want to have an impact?

JANE

I totally do.

RICK

Then what do we do?

JANE

I keep thinking, you know, how many of us are there? Like *us* us.

RICK

Mmm. A couple hundred thousand?

JANE

In the city? No way.

RICK

A hundred thousand.

JANE

Try, like 36. I mean who really embrace all the stuff we do.

RICK

Which is what?

JANE

The Right to the City thing Tom put together...It's like, very grass-roots but it doesn't totally get co-opted by the language of commerce to sell ideas about...what's...morally obligatory or whatever, in terms of making the world. It's about, you know...whose city are we... how do we deal with the short term and the long term ...It's very unfashionable

to talk about a system...It's a miracle people even get together at all you know, we should just have a party for that. Maybe we should go? They're meeting on Thursday again.

RICK
Thursday's our date night.

JANE
It might be a fun date.

RICK
Michael's part of that.

JANE
And?

RICK
Come on.

JANE
There's nothing going on with me and Michael.

RICK
I didn't say there was.

JANE
No you didn't.

RICK
No. I didn't.

Bell. New Sign/neighborhood:
"Jamaica" Rick pretends to be coming home.

RICK
Did you know you can get the Long Island Railroad into town from out here?

JANE
(says *nothing*)

RICK
I didn't even know this was still part of New York.

Pause.

JANE

So, did you know that Shannon and Pete are doing this whole, like, 'unlocking your sacred sexual connection' thing? This workshop?

RICK

No.

JANE

Yeah, you do this whole thing where you walk around each other in a circle and sort of proclaim what you love about the person. Like it's supposed to be sort of invoking the spiritual to get to better sex? They call it "keening," or "calling", or something.

RICK

Huh.

JANE

"I like it when you suck on my nipple!"

RICK

(says nothing)

JANE

But, you know, what happens when we've been together long enough and, it's like there are two options. If we want to expand, or --

RICK

-- expand?

JANE

-- can you create a sort of ritual, spiritual, sacred-type situation.

RICK

Or be with other people.

JANE

Which seems sexy at first -

RICK

- it does?

JANE

But then you get into the logistics of it, the planning, and it's sort of deadly boring-slash-just deadly, you know?

RICK

I don't fantasize about anyone else.

JANE

Really?

RICK

Really.

THREE

Really?

RICK

Sexually. Practically, though, I see some women and I'm like, 'Wow. I bet no one has to remind her to pay rent on time.'

JANE

(says nothing)

RICK

You know?

JANE

For me it's sexual. I want the cock.

RICK

Huh. That's totally cool. *(to Three)* I can totally hear that.

JANE

(to Three) I was thinking the ideal would have been to live together, but next door. That way you could still have the freshness of "your place or mine," but the intimacy of shared toothpaste.

JANE

(to Three) What time is it?

THREE

[SAYS TIME]

During RICK's following line to the audience, JANE quietly puts a towel on her head, as if she were emerging from the shower.

RICK

I loved you the most when one of us was traveling. When I'm traveling, and I'd finally get the internet connected in my room and I'd check my email, relentlessly, waiting, and there would be something from you, and I'd love you the most. Because I could imagine you sitting and pecking out the letters on your computer. Because I could smell you in the morning without having to, actually.

Rick holds up a new sign: "Greenpoint"
Jane emerges from bathroom/shower, with towel on her head.

JANE

There's no hot water again.

RICK

I'll call the landlord tomorrow.

JANE

I thought \$1,800 a month included water.

She sits down with him.
I'm worried my skin will fall off.

RICK

Your skin?

JANE

Yeah, like it is getting so hot that my skin will peel off and we'll be walking around as these fleshy red sore hot peeled-skin people. It will happen so fast that we won't be able to invent SPF 350, which is what we'll need to survive. The pharmaceutical companies will be our saviors, they will make us adaptable, like roaches.

RICK

(says nothing)

JANE

I wish we could afford a place upstate. Do you think we should move out?

RICK

If things get really bad we could go to Canada. I really want to raise a kid somewhere with open space.

JANE

Yeah. I don't know.

RICK

What do you mean?

JANE

It's just like, what would we be bringing this kid into, you know?

RICK

Right. Well. I think we'd put more on the line, you know, politically, if we had a future to think about.

JANE

Uh huh.

RICK

Like a kid.

JANE

(To Three) Time?

THREE

[GIVES TIME]

JANE

(to Three) We were trying to repair it. We keep our eyes peeled for a generational groundswell. Tom's running for city council, which feels...hopeful.

Bell. They change the sign to: "Fort Tryon."

RICK

(to Three) There were some very simple things but we repeated them so often they lost their potency:

JANE

(to Three) Don't buy products that make you complicit in other people's suffering, willfully. Right?

RICK

(to Three) Get a reusable water bottle, eat better, get therapy,

THREE

stop driving,

RICK

do push ups.

THREE

Compost.

JANE

Barter.

RICK

Meditate.

JANE

Cut down on junk mail.

RICK

The little emergencies trump all of it.

JANE

(to Three) We also had to take care of ourselves.

RICK

According to Olga, people aren't getting things refinished any more. The trend is contemporary. There's a supertower on the Bowery where my shop used to -

Bell cuts him off. They return to their regular scene, opening bills.

JANE

There's a new zero percent offer on the table.

RICK

Thank god.

He goes to open it.

Oh your client, Sheila? I forgot to tell you this. She called to cancel for tomorrow, and can she get a refund.

JANE

She's going to The Hamptons and she wants a refund?

RICK

(to Jane) Oh, did you hear that Hans and Vicki sold their co-op?

JANE

Really.

RICK

To a guy who's gonna flip it to some investors in Hong Kong.

JANE

How much?

RICK

\$560,000

JANE

Holy shit.

RICK

I know.

JANE

We should have bought when they bought.

RICK

We should have bought, period.

JANE

I know. You're totally right.

RICK

I'm so glad we're in this together. I love you.

JANE

I love you too.

RICK

When we connect like this I feel so, I don't know, excited and ecstatic. I feel, connected. I think it's

because I only feel this way when I am alone
otherwise, and when I am with you and I feel it, it
means something really profound, like we are alone
together, and that's real intimacy.

JANE

Isn't that from "Wings of Desire?"

RICK

The sentiment is, sort of.

JANE

That's what I'm saying, you didn't come up with it.

RICK

You always cut me down.

JANE

No. Why don't you call Sally. That always helps you
get over our fights.

RICK

Were we fighting? Was that a fight? What time is it?

THREE

Time.

Jane holds up a blank sign. She
speaks to the audience.

JANE

I was in my new old place. Somewhere familiar, but
the shape of the world was becoming unrecognizable.
It was like some formula from Algebra class - some
oblong algorithm that had slowly crafted itself and we
all missed the pop quiz. First truckers stopped
delivering to grocery stores, for weeks, and then for
months - there was an underground arugula economy.
Then the subway went on strike again and they
stopped bargaining. No one could get to work.
Another one of those steam pipes blew. They couldn't
agree on the right pollution tax, I don't know, it was
hard to breathe. After that - wasn't it just some wacko
with fertilizer and nails in a van by a Con-Ed
transformer? It was a slow conflagration. What straw
broke your back? We'd all had exit strategies in the
back of our heads for years. All of us, but we didn't

discuss it, even with our friends because it felt
alarmist. Embarrassing.

THREE

Totally.

Bell. Sign: [NEIGHBORHOOD OF
PERFORMANCE LOCATION].

JANE

I can't pay rent yet.

RICK

What do you mean?

JANE

I'm a little tight this month.

RICK

But it's the 5th already.

JANE

I need a couple more days.

RICK

But...

JANE

I lost a client.

RICK

And?

JANE

And I ate at the expensive salad place.

RICK

I thought we discussed the expensive salads already.

JANE

I know...but I don't always have time to make lunch in
the morning.

RICK

Well that's what we talked about, Jane. I mean, we
bought that Tupperware so you could make salads in
the morning so you wouldn't spend money on lunch
so we could afford to live in Crown Heights!

JANE

I know.

RICK

I think you have to do some better planning, or something. You have to live within your means. You have to make a budget. You have to write down your goals.

JANE

I did that.

RICK

And?

JANE

My goal was to eat expensive salad like normal middle-class people.

RICK

Not to be, like, revolutionary?

JANE

That moved down the list a ways.

RICK

Not to come up with new tropes?

JANE

I'm just tired, Rick. I need to go to bed.

RICK

Maybe you should have checked with me before you had those goals. We have to pay rent.

JANE

I have a six a.m. client tomorrow. I'll get a check.

RICK

Where?

JANE

Near Lincoln Center.

RICK

How does someone afford to live up there and hire a personal trainer.

JANE

I don't know. Ask Olga?

RICK

I'll make you a salad before I go to bed.

Bell: Sign: "Philadelphia."

JANE

You know I have a really good feeling about this place.

RICK

Me too. It's so much space.

JANE

It feels like a new beginning.

RICK

Isn't every beginning new?

Bell. Fast transition. Sign: "Cleveland, Ohio."

RICK

The Cleveland Indians are doing really well this year.

JANE

Really?

RICK

I could get tickets to the home games through work.

JANE

Okay. I guess.

THREE

Was it the blackout that got you to leave? By the second or third week, a lot of people took that opportunity to get out, so nobody's blaming you if you were one of them.

Bell. Sign: "Weehawken."

JANE

Rick.

RICK

Yeah?

JANE

I want to go home.

RICK

Well. A lot of people are moving to those places just outside of Flushing, you know. I think they just give you the air rights and you have to do your own building. I can do that work.

THREE

You remember when the Tappan Zee collapsed? Swept over to Indian Point. Or the other way. I can never remember what was downstream.

Pause. They flip the sign. "Flushing."

JANE

Rick?

RICK

Yeah.

THREE

Where to light a fire. All that stuff about canned goods - you learn to eat like a hobo and clean your hands like a cat. Where did you find food? Where did you get your coffee in the morning? Whose fault is this? Is the water rising? Is the water rising today? Who do you ask? And if it is where do you go? I don't know how long your shoes will last. Or your feet.

Bell. Sign: "Flushing." Rick and Jane fight, loud and fast.

RICK

I fucking hate it when you come home so late!

JANE

Every time you say "fucking" I feel like we're 15.

RICK

But you said, Jane! You said you'd be home at 8 and it's 10:30!!

JANE

I know! God, you sound so much like my father.

RICK

I imagine you raped or something. I get very nervous!

JANE

I know!

RICK

You sound like you're thirteen.

JANE

Jesus, what, am I grounded now?

RICK

Try taking some fucking responsibility for yourself.

JANE

Daddy?

RICK

Try being an adult for a change.

JANE

Oh god.

RICK

Where were you?

JANE

Am I grounded?

THREE

Plumbing is a miracle. Every time I turn the faucet on I think that. Plumbing is a miracle. I resolve I'm never again gonna complain about paying a guy 80 bucks an hour -

All the lights in the house go out, as if there's a blackout.

- to fix my sink. You should resolve that, too.

Three shines a light at David, as if to ask what the matter is.

DAVID

Should just be a minute.

David (the stage manager) leaves to fix the lights.

THREE

(continuing) Garbage - you would have been amazed at how long the garbage collectors stayed. Angels, you know? How did they get gas for their trucks?

RICK

Sh'we keep going?

THREE

Yes.

RICK

I said, "Does it feel like we should think about breaking up?"

JANE

I said, "It feels like we should think about it but not do it."

THREE

This one day the Mayor came through the city, on horseback. Wearing waders. And everyone applauded. That was leadership.

JANE crosses to THREE so she can read the following passage by his flashlight. She takes a piece of paper from her pocket and reads.

JANE

I think if I left you I would become a permanent insomniac. I think I would get some kind of beige job and end up killing myself. I think I would do a lot of drugs. I think I would not be able to stand it but would not be able to get back together. I think I would see you in two years, after months of everyone saying how good you were looking and you would look good. You would have your shirt unbuttoned two buttons like you do to look casual, but I would know that you'd spent a few minutes in front of the mirror, deciding one, two, Three, no two, two looks great. And the hair? Swip, brush, shake.

Lights go back on.

The perfect illusion of whateverness. I think I would have a crisis. I would be alone forever because no one would put up with me. I think if I left you my career would go into a nose-dive. my hair would turn gray. And my teeth would fall out. And my car would fall apart, if I had a car. And my jobs would dry up, if I had one. And my heart would have a condition. I think I would suffer from constant lower back pain and medicate. I think you would be fine or get fat or drink yourself to death. That's how much I mean to you, you mean to me, I mean, I think.

JANE

So. Hey! Guess what? I'm pregnant.

RICK

What?

JANE

I'm pregnant.

RICK

Holy fuck.

JANE

I'm going to have a baby.

Pause.

RICK

How about we figure out the bills. How about we figure out how we're going to pay for the baby, and where we're going to put it.

JANE

I think that's supposed to be your job.

RICK

My job?

JANE

Yeah. You're the guy. Hunting and gathering.

RICK

I'd have done something else. I could have learned accounting or security. You knew I'd do that right?

JANE

Yeah. Yeah? What time is it?

THREE

{GIVES TIME} How did you get here? Did you take Jake's boat or Randy's. It's actually, if you go back with Randy, it's a great view when you look back here over the water. If we time it right you can see the whole city flicker when we turn the generators off.

RICK

She couldn't pay rent and I was not at the time employed. I was on some kind of pride thing where I was like, "no, you have to at least take care of yourself. You have to be an equal partner in this. Help me." like some kind of test, like you could gauge what equal partnership is. The world stopped. The whole neighborhood flooded. It was all gray area. We decided that with so much uncertainty, you know, between us, and within us and outside in our external circumstances it might not be such a good idea to bring a baby into that.

JANE

At the time it wasn't even clear where we were going to live because we -

RICK

Because she,

JANE

We couldn't pay rent.

RICK

It was one more time when you go, are we going to weather this?

JANE

Or are we going to abandon.

RICK

I mean I go to the doctor with her, of course. I mean really that is one of those, "whatever you want" experiences, what you do as the guy in this. And it doesn't matter. Because you are always like, I should be a provider. Or, she should be a better mother. Or I should get a real job.

JANE

If those exist. We would have been fine, you never are prepared, you can't wait until the right time or you'll never do it, is what we'd heard. So we didn't. There was no way you could bring a kid into that.

RICK

First it was just, "We should leave." Then. "How do we get out." Then, "Where are you going?"

JANE

We couldn't live with each other in a city that didn't exist any more. I couldn't believe anyone even stayed. David.

The stage manager turns on the apartment lights, effectively ending the Rick and Jane play.

THREE

There were a few of us that dug in. It wasn't so bad. You test your own strength. At a certain point I'm the last one on my block. I lived that Will Smith movie, where he has to fend off wild dogs, and he lifts weights and broadcasts on a short-wave radio. There were no more cops, or parking tickets. No hot dog stands. No more supermalls or bodegas or the subway - I loved the subway. The South Street Seaport was underwater. At a certain point, I'd had enough.

I walked down to the docks to try and find a way out. A raft, I don't know. There were toys and luggage - things people left behind in a hurry. Electrical surges. I heard there were opportunities further west. Where would I go? This yellow and slow, sick place was home. And look where we are now! Look! We're rebuilding. We're bringing the city back.

Sure, the game has changed but the questions are exactly the same: what kind of life do you want to make for yourself, given the circumstances, the opportunities, and what you have available at the time. What kind of city do you want to live in, given a clean slate. What kind of home do you want. What are you willing to do to get it. This has always been a

place of squatters' rights. From day one that's been the rule. There was just a lot of paperwork that made it official. Now there's no more paper. I am the paper. Let me get you some paper. Our goal is to make a buyer out of all of you. If you get in now, you get more back.

I wish we had more services, more infrastructure in place. But if we set that up, together, then we can talk about how to fix things for everyone else. It's a renewal of equity. Let's get everyone some equity while it's here for the taking.

You'd be amazed at what we've put in place already, right Rick? Rick is one of my first clients. He got in early. He had faith in what I had to offer. If you do find you're considering it, it's very safe. (to Rick) Right, you haven't had any trouble?

RICK

No.

THREE

See?

JANE

(to Audience) When we first moved in here there were some vigilantes -

THREE

That was before. Look, some of you may have had a conversation with Sully's people over in Weekhawken, and they may have used a lot of scare tactics on you. We no longer have a gang issue here. I have security. It's taken care of. They have shares in my developments, so it's in their vested interest to do a good job. If the place is safe, more people buy in, values go up. Sully's people barely have electricity. It's a bargain, but so is a cardboard box in the rain. If you want to take that risk, go with Sully They'll make you a lot of promises. I'll keep you safe.

If Sully's people are so eager to prove how safe they are with their whole, "community-reachout initiative or whatever," how come they keep talking about us? You know, "let's all hold hands and hope they go away." It takes a village? No, it takes Kevlar. You talk to Sully,

you tell him we're waiting for him. No, don't tell him that. It's good. Competition is good. It shows up who's being honest. You can't protect yourself from vigilantes with good vibes, you know?

He looks at or goes to the kitchen.

I'm so into what you did with the kitchen, by the way. I'm gonna have to get the name of your contractor. A few years ago you couldn't find a good contractor within a hundred miles of here because they all moved out to Long Island. What's great is that, with our prices now - which we'll get to, and which you're not gonna believe - it means more of them can buy in. Security, road paving, elevator repair. New York City is one big handyman's special. (to Host) Oh, did you ever used to go to that [BAKERY/NEIGHBORHOOD BAR/ITALIAN JOINT] on [NAME OF STREET]? [NAME OF PLACE]?

HOST

Yes.

THREE

I loved that place.

HOST

Me too.

THREE

(to Audience) Anyone remember [NAME OF PLACE]? We just got them their lease back. You need that near you. People repeat that 'location location location' thing? No man, it's [Name of Place, Name of Place, Name of Place]. A place that remembers you. They know how I like my bagel - not too much scallion cream cheese, and keep it out of the hole, you know? I hate that when the hole gets all squished out with cheese. They won't make that mistake twice. It's a miracle, when you feel like a regular now.

Here's another miracle: did you ever think you'd be able afford [NAME OF NEIGHBORHOOD OF PERFORMANCE] again? Exactly. Me neither!

Some of you probably think you should wait because the market is soft. You think it's soft. New York is no longer soft. It may not be skyrocketing again yet, but

that's a whole other ballgame than soft. It isn't soft.
It's just unclaimed.

He goes to a new place in the room.

I want to tell you something personal about myself. I have very few regrets in my life. Very few. I told my mother I loved her before she passed, I make enough to live on, I've had some fantastic women in my life, even if I'm between right now. But I didn't buy a place when I could have. Quick story. In 2000, if you can remember that far back, I was subletting on 9th Avenue, one of those co-ops near Chelsea Market, but this is before Chelsea Market was there. And one day the owner says to me, 'I need to get rid of this place, the co-op board needs buyers in units, do you want it? We can do seller financing, we can work it out over time, whatever.'

And I had a real hunch about this, but did I follow it? Instead, I ask a friend of mine who had bought some buildings in town, and he says, 'no, man, 9th Avenue is never gonna gentrify because it's too close to the projects.' Four years later, the woman who did buy my place? Tripled her money. Trip-pulled. Next thing you know, they built that Maritime Hotel on the next block. You could get a \$250 steak across the street from those projects.

Now, be honest with me. How many people here said 'I'll wait and see' about a place, and then lost an opportunity? Who knew about Clinton Hill 20 years ago, or SoBro? The people who lived there hadn't even heard of it because it wasn't called that yet. People were living there but realtors hadn't invented it. They hadn't created the value. You look at, historically speaking, how people did, that bought when they had a chance? People said they were crazy. None of them regretted what they did. None of them.

But it's a new game now and not everyone understands the rules. Follow me for a minute. I'll take you from A to B.

What was value, before? It was easy. Hardwood floors, a decent view,

JANE

Lots of light.

RICK

Backyard access.

THREE

Yes. A neighbor who didn't play her music too loud.
How close is it to the train.

JANE

Schools -

THREE

How are the schools. Where's the nearest precinct. Is there a Whole Foods? Do I feel like I'm part of something when I walk outside.

Now? It's, how much is a pump at the bottom of the harbor? Do you want gas generators or solar generators? Does your garbage service include boats or is it just trucks. This is what you should be asking yourself, because that's what value has become. We have solar generators with a gas backup. The first of its kind.

Still, no matter how much you explain it to them, a lot of potential homebuyers get hung up. They just look at that one number - \$75,000, yes you heard me correctly. And they say, I have the down or I don't. But, follow me for a minute: seventy-five is only fifteen up front, if you want to avoid mortgage insurance. Or you can do an extra sixty-two a month, but that's plus interest. Compounded. It adds up. You get the idea. I'm saying, we do the numbers. You should, too. And if you think you can possibly make the monthly nut, you should ask yourself, seriously: where can I get the down. People are starting to feel very charitable toward New York again. A lot of sympathy. Maybe it's possible to take advantage of that.

Quick real estate quiz. This is gonna be fun: how much are you actually paying in interest if your price is 75K?

RICK AND JANE

What's the rate?

THREE

He's right. It's a trick question. It depends completely on the rate. Lets say I'm going to offer you 19 and a quarter percent, with no points, which right now is very competitive. You're looking at 287K additional on 75, over 30 years, give or take. Ouch, right? But that's what buys you your equity. It's an opportunity. For me? No, for us. Ding! People used to call that predatory. I call it "see if you can do better." I have to charge that much because I'm assuming the risk. Also, the market is projecting a huge jump in the next couple of years. 19 and a quarter percent is gonna feel like air. You're gonna do great on the flipside.

We have some incentives for getting in now. We have low-down mortgage products, we can waive the income requirements if you qualify. It should not be a problem because let me put it this way: I know the broker. I am the broker. Come to me. I'll set you up. We haven't turned away anyone yet.

He goes to a window

Just looking out this window, right now, I imagine that in three years you're gonna have a park over there. You're gonna have a museum over there. You're gonna have whatever stores: groceries, clothing, soup. You want boutiques? Great. You're gonna have everything you need within three blocks of your house: ice, food, dry cleaning, hardware, haircuts, shoe shines, the eye doctor. Virgin, Gap, Aveda, Diesel, Bechtel. I see people starting businesses that remember you when you come in, that know not to put the scallion cream cheese in the bagel hole, right?

(to audience member) Buddy, you could start a \$12 latte shop if you really want to. You could grow the coffee in your new community back yard garden if that's what turns your crank. That's fair trade, right?

Speaking of which, {HOST}(he turns to HOST), I could really use a cup right now. Could you actually make me one?

Rick stands up. .

RICK

I got it.

THREE

You sure?

RICK

Yeah, keep going.

He goes to the kitchen to make coffee.
We may hear him turning on burner
and running water through this next
section.

Why did people ever come to New York? Come on. To succeed. To do better for themselves and the people they loved. They had dreams. They could make a living. They could afford it.

People came because they had to be here, or they wanted to, or they couldn't be anywhere else. You can laugh at that but it was probably true for you, too. All that stuff about what makes a city? The grind and hum and rustle, the energy. The purpose. What you need at your fingertips. Everyone. That's markets. Markets are people. It's what brings us together. Use it to change the world.

We all got worked up because it wasn't exactly what we thought it was supposed to be. This was wrong or that was wrong. "There's too much development, or not enough development, or the wrong kind of development. I wish it were like it used to be." The wrong kinds of people, or the wrong kinds of stores. God! People got so nostalgic. You know what nostalgia is? Nostalgia is forgetting the shitty parts. Please. Do me a favor. Stop complaining.

You remember people even got mad about K-Mart? I'm sorry it offended your delicate sensibilities or whatever, but it was cheaper. Look, K-Mart's not your savior or your best friend. It's not going to teach your kid to read. But when Kmart re-opens on 34th Street what do you think is going to happen? People will see that it's okay to come back. Next thing you know, you can flip that 19 and a quarter percent and double your money, at least. Kmart is a market beacon.

You want a shooting gallery on 8th Street and a shantytown in the park? I grew up on Rivington Street and, this is true, these drug dealers over in Needle Park? Would follow me home, take my lunch money and tell me they'd kill me if I said anything to anyone. I was so scared I went without lunch for a year, and didn't tell my folks until I was in high school. I was seven. You think that was better? Maybe it made you feel like a pioneer. Now it's a ruin again, so you'll feel right at home. Good for you. Don't buy in. I'm trying to build partnerships. It's not perfect, but this is real life, okay? Somebody's got to take over.

I don't know what you want. This is how I know how to do it. You want something other than Kmart? Look you don't even have to shop there if you don't like it, just let them build something. I don't know. We can do a community center. What does a community center do, anyway? Is that like day care? What kind of community center doesn't have a community yet? What kind of beacon is that? How are you supposed to rebuild without a beacon?

Pause. Rick re-enters with coffee. He stands awkwardly, waiting for Three to continue.

Dubai, Singapore, Hong Kong, Vegas. Those were the beacons. I've been in touch with people, and let me tell you, it doesn't look good. They're ruins. I don't even know if we're already too late here. It's 75 degrees in January now, so what the fuck does it matter where I shop? I don't really know what the best thing is, either. I really really want this city to -

RICK

(to Host) What time is it?

STAGE MANAGER

[GIVES TIME]

RICK

(half on his way to put Three back on track, and half to the audience) So, jobs, of course, are a question on everyone's mind --

THREE

I'm sorry, jobs are a question. What kind of job outlook are you going to be returning to? We're bailing out half the city - and that's not a metaphor - so how am I going to support a family. Those are valid concerns. I don't know what to tell you yet. We might have to lower our standards, frankly. You might have to roll up your sleeves. Would you do that? I have to tell you, the plus side is that you have never felt so good as when you've just held the tide off with your neighbors.

It used to be, "Knowledge is power, man." Like you could build a city on an idea. No, man. Knowledge is just knowledge. You can talk about theories until you're blue in the face. Get a drill. Get some duct tape. Power is the thing that lets you charge your cellphone and work your portable stove and keep your room warm. Fire is power. Voltage.

Maybe we build in a residency requirement of four hours a week - sandbags, electrical wiring, whatever your skillset. We could do a skills exchange. Do you want to train at something? Chicks dig guys with tools. If you come back you can do that. When did you ever move in somewhere and get job training as a free bonus?

If you have kids, we've got, what, [HOST]? Over a thousand, now? I think, something like that. There are about 1,200 kids here, various ages. People always worried about class size this, class size that. Class size now is very small. And I don't think there should be a work requirement for certified teachers.

Pause.

We're almost out of time, aren't we?

RICK

[Says Time]

THREE

Maybe we let the city slip. I'm here. I can't explain it either but here I am. We're here. We're survivors. Whatever it is that brought any of you back to look, whatever kept me here, we're the renegades. We're

the trailblazers, now. It's up to us. You have to be able to see the future to be able to know how to invest. You have to remember what you wanted it to look like.

And check this out. I have a couple calls to go to Sao Paulo and to Tokyo in the next couple months and talk about planning a rebuilding thing with those guys. They say they want to know what to consider as essential services for a newly reorganized city. They have no idea either. They are having the exact same issues. Never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined going from homesteader to international housing expert. I'm from the Bronx! Are you kidding me? Never.

Rick and Jane come out with the forms the audience has filled out.

RICK

Does anyone have one of these to hand back?

He gestures with a Questionnaire.

We want to read some of them back to you.

They read some of the answers that audience members have put out. They also read some of the following answers I wrote, as if they were audience responses.

JANE

"How is your neighborhood changing?" 1) The first coffee store opened near the subway. I was so relieved they have direct-trade. 2) You can get Fresh Direct and DSL in my zip code now. 3) The family that was always fighting got booted. 4) there are beat cops out on the corner. 5) Rent has tripled. 6) They built a mall 7) the place I got my rice and beans for 20 years closed down. A gallery opened.

RICK

"What did you love most about it."

"Authenticity" - what does that mean?

I loved that everyone had a place here, including the guy upstairs from me who yelled at the kids playing in

the hall and never left his house, which was full of newspapers.
I loved the Kmart.

JANE

"What is your exit strategy."
Metro-North?
I don't have one.
I keep cash under the mattress.
My parents are in the Midwest.

THREE

"How far have you gone to stay here."
I stopped giving a shit about what people call stability. Uh. Okay? Listen, please take my card. Take some time to think about it. Get back to me when you can. We'll be here. Also, we're going to go to [NAME OF LOCAL BUSINESS] on [ADDRESS NEARBY] - we're trying to send business their way. Ask any of us for directions.

End of Play.

Please feel free to have a discussion
and snacks or beverages.