

Not On My Watch

a ten-minute play by David Schrag
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Characters:

HANSEN, a single man
ILANA, a single woman

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NOT ON MY WATCH

A walking path in a park. A park bench center stage. HANSEN and ILANA enter from opposite sides of the stage. Both wear digital wristwatches with very large displays. They walk past one another with only a slight awareness of the other's existence. Their watches start to beep. They both stop and read the watch displays. A look of surprise and excitement shows on both faces. They turn around and face one another.

HANSEN

Wow.

ILANA

Yeah, wow.

HANSEN

Illahna?

ILANA

Actually, it's pronounced like Elena. Everyone gets it wrong. You're Hansen, right? Nice to meet you, Hansen.

HANSEN

Yeah, really nice to meet you. Do you want to sit down?

ILANA

Oh, God, I don't know. I'm on my way to a JobInt. I'm supposed to be there in five. Can we do later?

HANSEN

How later?

ILANA

One sec, thinking. OK, it's a stage three JobInt, and my initial rating was triple-plus, so I'm hoping I'll be talking to them for quite a while. I'll be free for dinner, though. Where do you want to go?

HANSEN

One sec, B-R-B.

(He checks his watch.)

Hmm, X on that. I have a stage five RomEnc tonight. You want to synch sledge?

ILANA

Whoa, backspace, you're already at a stage five RomEnc?

HANSEN

Yeah, but she and I are only 81. I've never met a 96 before, have you?

ILANA

Not even close.

HANSEN

Can you tell them you'll be a few late?

ILANA

(pointing at her watch)
But they know I'm right down the street.

HANSEN

They don't have video, do they?

ILANA

Not not not! They haven't hired me yet!

HANSEN

Then you can think of something. Come on, Ilana, I'm a 96!

ILANA

If I delay my JobInt, will you cancel your RomEnc?

HANSEN

I will, as soon as we get past stage one.

ILANA

OK, go have a seat. I'll be right with you.

HANSEN waits for ILANA on the bench. ILANA presses her watch, then holds two fingers to one ear. HANSEN pushes buttons on his watch and reads it while she talks.

ILANA (CONT'D)

Martin, please.

(MORE)

ILANA (CONT'D)

(slight pause)

Martin, the craziest thing just happened. Some kid on a motorboard just slammed into a bench right next to me, and I think he might have broken his wrist. I'd like to wait with him for the ambulance. Is that going to crash you? It should only be a few minutes.... Thanks so much for understanding. B-R-T.

ILANA joins HANSEN on the bench.

HANSEN

That was brilliant. May I?

ILANA

Please.

HANSEN puts his arm around her shoulder.

HANSEN

You pinged him so quickly, I haven't been able to learn much about you. Birthplace: Minnesota. College: Wellesley. That's all I got.

ILANA

Major: economics. First job: Americorps. Grad degree: Stanford MBA. Current job: consultant. Focus: non-profit fundraising. Hobbies: hiking and golf. Music: electronica. Books: biography. Food: organic. You?

HANSEN

Birthplace: Connecticut. College Stanford --

ILANA

A-ha!

HANSEN

A-ha! Major: mathematics. First job: high school teacher. Grad degree: Yale MBA. Current job: government auditor. Focus: white collar crime. Hobbies: Hiking and golf --

ILANA

A-ha!

HANSEN

A-ha! Music: cabaret. Books: how-to. Food: vegetarian.

ILANA

Vegetarian?

HANSEN

Yeah, but not vegan.

ILANA

I guess I can live with that. Are you --

HANSEN

What, militant? X on that. It's health, not conscience.

ILANA

OK. I got nervous there for a second.

HANSEN

Yeah, but I'm sure it's --

ILANA

Not, not, not! It was just kind of a weird, you know I wasn't expecting that.

HANSEN

I understand. It doesn't bother me, though. You want to go 10 seconds?

ILANA

Absolutely.

They look at one another for 10 seconds. As they do, their smiles become broader and broader.

HANSEN

I am so in love with you.

ILANA

I am ridiculously in love with you.

They kiss passionately, for a long time.

HANSEN
(sings to her)
"I used to tell myself / That I had
everything / But that was only half
true ..."

ILANA
Ohhh-kayyyy....

HANSEN
It's from Fiddler!

ILANA stares at him blankly.

HANSEN (CONT'D)
Fiddler on the Roof!

ILANA
That must be retro.

HANSEN
Yeah, you could say it's retro.

ILANA
I'm not really ...

HANSEN
Yeah, I know. Electronica.

ILANA
But you have a nice voice!

HANSEN
Thanks. So ... tell me about this
job. If you get it, will it involve
a lot of travel?

ILANA
No, not too much. I'd be director of
corporate giving for Corwin Balfour.

HANSEN
Corwin Balfour??? You were calling
Martin Elko at Corwin Balfour?

ILANA
You've heard of them? You know Martin
Elko?

HANSEN
That's an understatement. One sec,
B-R-B.

(pause)
I think you should cancel the
interview.

ILANA
Huh?

HANSEN
You should cancel the interview.

ILANA
Why?

HANSEN
I can't tell you. But trust me.

ILANA
What is it?

HANSEN
Let me put it this way. You know
I'm an auditor, right?

ILANA
Right.

HANSEN
Well I just came from there.

ILANA
And?

HANSEN
And having you work there would make
things VERY complicated for us.

ILANA
Oh! They're being audited! Why?

HANSEN
Access denied.

ILANA
Is Martin involved? Is he in trouble?

HANSEN
Access denied!

ILANA
One sec, thinking! God, Hansen, I don't know what to do. This seems like a really good opportunity for me.

HANSEN
Believe me, it's not.

ILANA
Yeah, sounds like not, not, not! Wow, I guess I found you just in time.

HANSEN
Yes you did. And I found you. I have to kiss you again.

ILANA
OK!

They kiss again.

HANSEN
I know it's a little premature, but have you got names picked out?

ILANA
For what?

HANSEN
Duh, for babies! I like Jeremy for a boy, and Belinda for a girl.

ILANA
You're winking, right?

HANSEN
How is that a joke?

ILANA
(sitting up)
Hansen, something's very wrong here.

HANSEN
What do you mean?

ILANA
I take it you're KidsPref Two?

HANSEN

Obviously.

ILANA

Buddy, I've been KidsPref Zero for five years.

HANSEN

You are not.

Ilana presses her watch a few times and shows him the face.

HANSEN (CONT'D)

That's impossible. If you're KidsPref Zero, how could we be 96?

ILANA

No kidding! Plus the vegetarian thing, and then this whole business with Corwin Balfour? I mean, something like that is hard to factor in, but doesn't it seem a little bit odd?

HANSEN

I don't understand. How could this happen?

ILANA

One sec, thinking. Let me ask you something. What firmware are you on?

HANSEN

I don't know.

ILANA

Please check.

HANSEN pushes a button on his watch and looks at the result.

HANSEN

4.2

ILANA

Oh my God. You analog! I should have known it when you mispronounced my name. Don't you autodownload?

HANSEN

I thought so. Why, what are you on?

ILANA

I'm on 4.3, like every other sane person in the country. Don't you know that 4.2 is buggy?

HANSEN

No, I hadn't heard.

ILANA

Well, it is. Horribly buggy. They replaced it after a week. Where have you been?

HANSEN

Hmm, one sec, B-R-B. Oh, I know what happened. Oh, this is really bad. I promised Rhiannon I'd disarm the program.

ILANA

Who's Rhiannon?

HANSEN

My stage five RomEnc -- the 81. I guess instead of disarming I turned off autodownload by mistake. Lemme do a manual download and reboot.

ILANA

Yeah, then let's refresh and see what we get.

HANSEN pushes his watch again. They wait a few seconds and look at their watches.

BOTH

Seventy-two!!

HANSEN

Well, this is embarrassing.

ILANA

Tell me about it. Now I just have to hope Corwin Balfour doesn't check up on my motorboarder story.

She presses her watch and puts two fingers to her ear.

ILANA (CONT'D)

Martin, please.

HANSEN

Listen, I'm really sorry about this.
But I still wouldn't work there if I
were you.

ILANA

Coming from an auditor who's still
on a 4.2, I'll take that with a grain
of salt, thank you. Have a nice
life.

She starts walking again toward her original destination,
presses her watch and puts two fingers to her ear.

ILANA (CONT'D)

Martin? All set, on my way. And
there's something new we have to
discuss.

HANSEN watches her go. He presses his watch and puts two
fingers to his ear. He delivers his final line as he walks
off the stage.

HANSEN

Hey, Rhiannon. I'm looking forward
to tonight. Listen, let me ask you
something. What firmware are you
on?

END