

### Character Breakdown:

Davina: A woman in her late 20s who has worked at the gas station for years. She is plain, typically dressed in a t-shirt, cross necklace, and low ponytail.

Barb: A woman in her 60s who runs the gas station. She has a gray mullet and a rarely seen smile.

Jill: A woman in her early 20s, recently hired at the gas station. She has an impish expression and a green streak in her ponytail.

Cole: A woman in her 20s; Barb's granddaughter. She is obese, a glamorous dresser, and an aspiring singer.

Ryan: A man in his late 20s; he is a firefighter and Cole's boyfriend.

Cassie: A woman in her 20s; a friend of Cole and Davina's

Stacey Ann: A woman in her 50s; mother of Cassie and a friend of Barb's

Marcus: A man in his 40s; a friend of Barb's

A robber (*masked – could be double-cast with Ryan or Marcus*)

A customer

The gas station hasn't seen a new coat of paint in decades. The store is offset on the stage, with the upstage corner containing a few cold cases of pop and beer. A counter with a sink and a small coffee station stands along the stage left wall. Further downstage on stage left are the back door of the shop and a few shelves of sunflower seeds, potato chips, beef jerky, tampons, etc. The checkout counter and a front door stand on stage right. The walls behind the cash register and coffee station hold big plate glass windows.

Outside the front door on stage right, a strip of sidewalk and curb occupy the foot of the stage, left unlit while scenes take place inside. Outside the back door on stage left, on the foot of the stage, are a dumpster and milk crate, also left unlit during interior scenes.

At rise: DAVINA, JILL and BARB are at work inside the gas station. Davina arranges shrink-wrapped muffins on an endcap display. Jill passes Davina muffins from a box. Barb sits at the register and stares out the plate glass window. All three women wear stiff yellow vests.

DAVINA

It's eight of us from my women's Bible group. We're gonna be staying in cabins up there and just fellowshiping and doing Bible study and the high ropes course. And I leave tomorrow, so we're gonna have to get your training wrapped up today.

JILL

Okay.

DAVINA

I'm so excited. Except for the ropes part, I don't love heights. But I think I can do it. They have a zip line, and I totally want to do that. So see how I put these?

(Davina gestures to the muffins on the shelf.)

DAVINA (CONT'D)

You have to do some of each kind up front. You can't just have all chocolate in front and blueberry behind, people won't see it.

JILL

Okay.

DAVINA

The last guy who worked here would just dump them out of the box on the shelf. Like, no, you actually have to do it nice. Dry goods get delivered Mondays and Thursdays at two.

JILL

Okay.

DAVINA

Okay. You can toss that box.

(Jill crosses stage left, toward the back door, with the empty muffin box.)

DAVINA

Break it down first!

JILL

What?

DAVINA

The box.

JILL

What do you...

DAVINA

You have to, like, flatten it out.

JILL

Why?

DAVINA

Because it takes up a billion times less room that way.

JILL

It's just going in the trash.

DAVINA

And that dumpster gets really full.

(Jill shrugs and starts ripping the box open as she exits through the back door.)

DAVINA (CONT'D)

Oh God. She might be another Brett.

BARB

Thought you weren't supposed to be taking the Lord's name in vain anymore.

DAVINA

Damn it. I don't hear myself doing it.

(Davina walks upstage and pours herself a cup of coffee. Jill reenters through the back door. Davina pumps vanilla syrup into her coffee from a bottle.)

BARB (without looking up)

I hope you don't think you're getting that free.

DAVINA

Coffee's always been free.

BARB

Coffee is, not the syrups.

DAVINA

I can't have caffeine without sugar, it messes with my glucose.

(to Jill)

You want coffee, hon?

JILL

Sure.

(Jill joins Davina at the coffee station and pours coffee into a Styrofoam cup.)

DAVINA

So you're from Malina?

JILL

Yeah. Over by the softball hall of fame.

DAVINA

What brought you here?

JILL

My boyfriend works at the PetSmart and he wanted to live closer.

DAVINA

Well, you'll like it here. It's a lot nicer than Malina. We have you just covering my day shifts while I'm gone, but when I come back, we can see about putting you on some nights.

JILL

I don't think I wanna work nights. Sounds creepy.

DAVINA

Honestly, it's fine. You make 30 cents more an hour.

JILL

Are there, like, cameras?

DAVINA

Barb's getting them fixed.

I am? BARB

C'mon. DAVINA

You want it so bad, you pay for it. BARB

(to Jill)  
Don't pay her any mind. DAVINA

Excuse me? BARB

Don't worry. It's fine. DAVINA

(The front door bangs open and a ROBBER enters, a big man with his face covered by a hunter orange ski cap with crude and uneven eyeholes cut out. He points something blunt from inside the pocket of his oversized hoodie.)

Everybody fucking freeze! ROBBER

(Davina shrieks. Jill jumps back. The robber turns to the cash register. Barb doesn't react.)

Everything you got, c'mon! ROBBER

I don't think so. BARB

You tryna die, bitch? ROBBER

Barb! DAVINA

You want them to die, bitch?! I'm not fuckin' playing! ROBBER

(The robber points the blunt object at Davina and Jill. Davina shrieks even louder. Barb waits for them to be finished and then says, without raising her voice,)

BARB

If you had a gun, you'd be waving it in my face right now, because you're a clown, Caleb Hofstadter.

(The robber flinches.)

BARB (CONT'D)

Now, get. Because one of us has a gun, and I'd put a warning in your foot if it wouldn't stain my floor.

(Barb reveals a Glock from under the counter. The robber freezes; then he leaps into action, grabbing a two-liter bottle of Pepsi and an armful of Pop-Tarts from a nearby shelf on his way out the door. Barb takes one of the bags of potato chips arranged near her register and pops it against the counter with the butt of her gun. At the loud bang, the robber jumps and drops the Pop-Tarts. He exits through the front door at a sprint. Barb replaces the gun. After a shocked silence,)

DAVINA

Oh my God, oh my God...! I can't breathe...

JILL

Ho-ly fuckin' *shit!*

(Davina sinks to the floor.)

DAVINA (CONT'D)

Oh, my God...

(Barb starts eating the potato chips that spilled on the counter.)

JILL

How did you know who that was?

BARB

That's his girlfriend's momma's car idling out front.

DAVINA

I feel dizzy.

JILL

You okay?

DAVINA

Get me a pop.

BARB

You're not getting that free.

DAVINA

We just got robbed!

BARB

So? What's a pop gonna do about it? He's been and gone.

DAVINA

I need it for my sugar, Barb.

BARB

(shaking her head)

I shoulda let the kid rob me.

DAVINA

(to Jill)

Gimme a Dr. Pepper. Cherry vanilla, if we have it.

BARB

New girl. You pick those up first.

(Barb points at the Pop-Tart boxes on the floor. Jill picks them up and rearranges them on the shelf. Then, as Jill is crossing upstage to the cold case, the bell above the front door jingles, and COLE and RYAN enter. She wears a striking sundress, and he wears a t-shirt emblazoned with *PINE COUNTY FIRE DEPT.*)

COLE

Hey, Grammy.

(Cole does a double-take at Davina, sitting slumped against the coffee counter.)

COLE (CONT'D)

Why are you on the floor?

DAVINA

We just got *robbed!*

BARB

No, we didn't.

COLE

What?

BARB

Caleb Hofstadter came in here sticking his fingers out under his shirt.

(Barb points her fingers like a gun. Cole snorts.)

COLE  
Dopesick dumbass.

(Barb grunts.)

RYAN  
(to Davina and Jill)  
You girls okay?

(Davina puts a hand on her chest and manages a tiny nod. Jill hands Davina a can of pop.)

JILL  
Here.

DAVINA  
No cherry vanilla?

JILL  
I didn't see any.

DAVINA (with a small sigh)  
Okay.

(Davina remains sitting on the floor.)

JILL  
Need a hand?

(Jill sticks out her hand. Davina glances at Ryan, who looks away. Davina takes Jill's hand and stands up.)

RYAN (to Barb)  
When did this happen?

BARB  
Two minutes ago.

RYAN  
Damn! I wish I'd have been here!

BARB  
We didn't need you.

RYAN  
Caleb Hofstadter. That prick needs to pick on someone his own size.



BARB

I'm a cut above Caleb's size.

RYAN

I should beat his ass next time I see him.

BARB

He has a disease. What the hell kind of way to treat people is that?

RYAN

Y'know, I could ask the guys at the fire station to drop by here now and then, keep people from getting ideas—

BARB

Not necessary, Mr. Hero.

COLE

So listen to this, Gram. There's gonna be American Idol auditions in Philly in three weeks, and I'm going. I already requested the day off and everything.

BARB

Good for you, baby girl. You got your song picked out?

COLE

I'm doing "Rolling in the Deep."

BARB

I don't know that one.

COLE

Yeah, you do.

(Cole sings, "We could've had it all...rolling in the deep..." in a big, brassy voice.)

COLE (CONT'D)

Adele, remember? The redheaded British girl.

BARB

It's your song now. You need gas money for the trip?

COLE

I have a job, Gram. Ryan's taking me to work right now. Actually...

(Cole checks her phone.)

COLE (CONT'D)

Fuck, I gotta go. Love you. I'm taking a Diet Coke.

BARB

Love you, baby.

(Cole takes a Diet Coke from the cold case. Then she and Ryan exit through the front door. Barb turns to watch them go through the plate glass window behind her.)

JILL

(to Barb)

That your granddaughter?

(Barb nods, still looking out the window.)

JILL (CONT'D)

I liked her dress.

DAVINA

She always has to dress flashy.

JILL

(to Davina)

You friends?

DAVINA

Ryan and I used to go out in high school, actually. High school sweethearts.

JILL

With her, I meant.

DAVINA

Oh, her. We're basically family.

JILL

How?

DAVINA

Well, my mom died when I was nine. We were in a car crash. I have 23 stitches up my back. She and my dad were divorced, but I had never lived with him because he was pretty addicted to poker, and Mom knew he'd just bring me along to the casinos. But after she died, I went to live with him anyway, but by then he had got paralyzed from the waist down by some thugs he owed money to. And it messed his head up, too. Like, he'd just sit playing online poker all day. So I spent most nights at Barb's house. She was my dad's neighbor.

(Jill glances over at Barb.)

DAVINA (CONT'D)

Cole's her granddaughter, but she lived there too, 'cause of both of her parents were out of commission.

JILL

How come?

DAVINA

Pills, mostly.

(Jill raises her eyebrows.)

JILL

She should write a song. Is she really doing American Idol?

DAVINA

She's been saying that for years.

JILL

Well, maybe someday.

DAVINA

(scoffing)

C'mon.

JILL

Why not?

DAVINA

(as if it's obvious)

Because of her weight.

(The bell above the front door jingles. STACEY ANN and CASSIE enter.)

STACEY ANN

Hey, Barb, guess what?

(Stacey Ann waves a coupon in the air.)

STACEY ANN (CONT'D)

Thirty percent off Kohl's coupon. I just got Egyptian sheets for 40 bucks and some golf shirts for Bill. But Trish will let you reuse it, just go through her checkout.

(Stacey Ann slides the coupon across the counter to Barb.)

I don't need to go to Kohl's.

BARB

Oh, come on, you'll find something.

STACEY ANN

I'm going home after work.

BARB

Can I have it, then?

DAVINA

Oh, hi, hon. I didn't even see you there. You all set for tomorrow?

STACEY ANN

No! I still have to do laundry and pack.

DAVINA

Oh, my word.

STACEY ANN

You're really not coming, Cassie?

DAVINA

Mike and I are doing our engagement photos this weekend at his grandparents' farm. And I have, like, so much wedding stuff to do.

CASSIE

Did you guys decide where you're going for your honeymoon?

DAVINA

Disneyland.

CASSIE

Oh! I really want to do a Disneyland honeymoon!

DAVINA

With who?

BARB

I mean someday.

DAVINA

Oh, right.

BARB

DAVINA

So can I have that coupon?

BARB

Take it.

DAVINA

Awesome!

(Davina crosses downstage and excitedly picks up the coupon from the counter.)

DAVINA (CONT'D)

Can I use it on stuff that's already on sale?

STACEY ANN

Depends, you have to read what's on the bottom.

(Stacey Ann and Davina lean their heads over the coupon. The bell above the front door jingles and MARCUS enters.)

MARCUS

Ladies.

(Marcus nods at the women, joins them at the cash register, and sticks his thumbs through the belt loops of his jeans.)

MARCUS (CONT'D)

So you all hear what happened?

DAVINA

What?

MARCUS

Roger saw something last night.

CASSIE

Like what?

MARCUS

It was really weird. He was in his garage, working on his motorcycle, when he heard this loud bang. He thought he'd knocked something off the shelf. Then it happened four more times, loud, like metal hitting something hard. He couldn't figure it out. Then, not 15 minutes later, it starts up again. So he says fuck this--pardon my French—and goes out with a flashlight down that long gravel road by his house, and *BANG!* It nearly bust his eardrums. At this point, he figures there's something fishy going on in the woods, so he runs toward the sound—

BARB

Did he have a gun?

MARCUS

No, and I was like, what did you think you were going to do if you found something shady going on with nothing to protect yourself? He said he didn't know, he just knew it was making him crazy to figure out what was making that noise. So in he goes, and he can tell he's getting closer because he can hear something. Not the banging anymore. This kind of whirring. Like crickets, he said, but much louder. Suddenly, he can feel someone looking at him. Hand to God, he said, his hair on the back of his neck all stood up. And then, *whoosh*—this crazy wind came out of nowhere. But by now he had got his eyes used to the flashlight, and he saw something.

DAVINA

What?

MARCUS

A wing. A bat's wing. Except this thing was eight fucking feet long.

DAVINA

JILL

Oh, come on.  
Really?

MARCUS

I still haven't told you the creepy part.

CASSIE

What?

MARCUS

So Rog, when he sees this, just about has a heart attack. He got completely turned around, and it took him 45 minutes to find his way back to the road, and then he got in his truck and went to Mulligan's and needed two shots before he could even tell them what happened. And someone's like, wait a minute, and pulled something up their phone. It was a Facebook post they'd seen days ago from this account called "NASA leaks." No one knows who it is, but people around town have been getting friended because, get this. The account has been *specifically talking* about Hogentown. Saying there's been activity around here that NASA won't say anything about, that they've been picking up all this activity. He predicted that people would hear banging and whirring.

JILL

Oh my God...that's crazy.

(Marcus turns in Jill's direction, noticing her for the first time.)

MARCUS

Who's this lovely lady?

JILL

I'm Jill. I'm new.

DAVINA

I don't buy it.

JILL

But he heard exactly what that guy said.

DAVINA

That's the point. He probably saw that post before he "heard" anything.

BARB

Exactly.

MARCUS

C'mon, Barb. A billion planets out there, and there's nothing on none of them?

BARB

I didn't say that. I just don't believe in things I haven't seen.

MARCUS

Or heard. Yet.

STACEY ANN

What I want to know is how many drinks did Roger have beforehand.

CASSIE

No, Mom, he only was drinking after he saw it.

STACEY ANN

So he says.

CASSIE

Drinking doesn't make you see *wings*.

STACEY ANN

Sure it does, if you've got a good imagination.

MARCUS

It was reddish brown, he said. Sort of mottled red and brown.

DAVINA

You're saying Roger saw an *alien* last night, Marcus.

(Marcus holds up his hands.)

MARCUS

All I know is what I heard.

DAVINA

You're crazy.

BARB

You don't know everything, Davina.

DAVINA

But—

STACEY ANN

Well, we gotta get going. I've got chicken in the Crock-Pot.

DAVINA

See you tomorrow! Tell Pastor Bill I said hi.

STACEY ANN



We will. Bye now.

(Stacey Ann and Cassie head for the door, which is held open for them from outside. After they exit, RYAN enters.)

BARB

You again.

RYAN

I forgot my Five-Hour Energy. Mr. Hero has a shift tonight.

BARB

One seventy-six.

DAVINA

I'm taking my smoke break now, Barb.

(Barb doesn't look up from counting Ryan's change. Davina exits stage left through the back door.)

JILL

(to Marcus)

So what made the banging sound? Something metal?

MARCUS

That's what it sounded like.

(Ryan takes his change and his Five-Hour Energy and exits stage right through the front door. The lights go out over the gas station.)

(Lights rise over the dumpster on the foot of the stage. DAVINA stands between the dumpster and a milk crate, spinning a pack of cigarettes in her hands. RYAN enters from upstage on stage left and approaches Davina from behind.)

RYAN

Hey, beautiful.

(Davina spins around and beams at Ryan. They kiss deeply.)

DAVINA

I wanted you so bad today.

RYAN

I wish I'd've been there to protect you.

DAVINA

Me too. You have no idea.

(Ryan leans against the back door with Davina in the crook of his arm. She pulls out a cigarette and lights it.)

DAVINA (CONT'D)

It was crazy. He pointed a gun right at me, babe.

RYAN

I thought he didn't have a gun?

DAVINA

Well, it looked just like a gun.

RYAN

Poor baby.

(Ryan kisses the top of her head, then takes the cigarette from her, drags, and passes it back.)

DAVINA

And now I can't even see you for a week. I'm gonna miss you so much.

RYAN

Well, no one's making you go to church camp.

DAVINA

Don't make fun. I just wish we could finally be together.

RYAN

We are together.

DAVINA

Together for real. So I could see you the minute I get home. So I could tell my Bible study about you.

RYAN

Why would you talk to your Bible study about me?

DAVINA

Because I love you.

(Davina pauses, looking expectantly at Ryan.)

RYAN

And I love you, too.

DAVINA

And I just know God has a plan for us—

RYAN

Okay. But you know I want the exact same things. So you can't blame me.

DAVINA

Don't you think you should just do it already?

RYAN

Cole's way too fragile. She's so self-conscious, on the inside. Because of her weight. And since the miscarriage—

DAVINA

I know.

RYAN

She'll think that's why I'm leaving. She'll blame herself. She already does.

DAVINA

I know.

(Davina sighs, looks at her cigarette.)

RYAN

But hey. If this American Idol thing works out, and she goes off to be a singer...

DAVINA

Yeah?

RYAN

Well, she knows I can't move. So that'd be her choice to leave. And then she'd be off in New York or whatever, and I'd be here. I'll be right here.

(Davina smiles, and they kiss again.)

DAVINA

Love you.

RYAN

Love you, dovey. But I gotta go now. I got a shift.

DAVINA

Okay. Be careful.

RYAN

Always am. Have fun at church camp.

DAVINA

You know, there's a men's Bible study, too.

RYAN

Nice try.

(Ryan leans in for another kiss and swats Davina's backside. She giggles. He exits upstage the way he came. Davina watches him go, then finishes her cigarette and stubs it out underfoot. Lights go out over the dumpster.)

(Lights come on inside the gas station. JILL is wiping the counter by the coffee station with a wet rag. BARB sits at the register.)

(DAVINA enters through the back door, smoothing her hair. She looks around, and settles her gaze on Jill as she wipes down the coffee station.)

DAVINA

(to Jill)

Do you have a sani bucket?

JILL

What?

DAVINA

You can't just wipe it down with water, it won't get clean.

(Davina reaches in front of Jill and grabs a red plastic bucket and bottle of tablets from a shelf below the coffee. She drops a tablet in the bucket and hands it to Jill.)

DAVINA (CONT'D)

Fill this up.

BARB

All right, I'm headin' out.

(Barb rises heavily to her feet, gathering her purse and cigarettes.)

DAVINA

Bye, Barb. See you in a week.

BARB

You be careful, now.

DAVINA

At my Bible retreat?

BARB

Out there on the ropes.

(Barb exits stage left through the front door. Davina watches her go, then turns her attention to Jill. She dips a finger in the bucket Jill has filled with water.)

DAVINA

No, it has to be *hot*.

(Davina shakes her head and picks up the bucket. Curtain drops.)