

# **Through Blue**

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**February 1997**

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**Lights up on a person dressed in black. . She is holding a camera and pointing it at herself. She seems to have the hiccoughs. She takes a picture, a flash goes off, she turns to face the audience, all the while shaking the polaroid in an effort to dry it. She still has the hiccoughs. Finally, she looks at the picture.**

Steven: **(SCREAMS)** God, nothing like a good scream to get rid of the hiccoughs. Either that or drinking from the wrong side of a glass of water. That's actually way better as a party trick - if you're into parties. How? Ever have those dreams about showing up for kindergaten in a 30 year old body without your clothes on? Hello. I am a - well it's complicated but, well, call me Steven. Yeah I know. It's new, not mine, well mine now... Identity, what a drag, eh? What I mean to say is that the name change didn't fix it. Everyone said that it would. Wrong. Well maybe they only said it would help, but whatever the case, it didn't. I'm still on the quest, want panacea, will take any wonder drug So anyway, I've been thinking about doing a little travelling, know I can't find myself but maybe I'll find something else. Shake it up, get the low-down on this life

**A man appears out of a cloud of smoke. He is wearing a forties style suit and a fedora. His hands are in his pockets and he is whistling a tune as he looks up at the sky and circles the space.**

Steven: Shit! I know him. When I first saw him, he was walking. Hands in his pockets, head in the clouds. He walked right by me, or through me. It was hard to tell and I was very young. I wanted him to see me but I didn't move. I couldn't reach him. He couldn't see me. So, there we were.

**The man disappears offstage.**

Steven: Here we are. We're still here. No matter who he is I recognize him. Shit, I saw him. Did you see him?

**She takes a teeny step toward the audience.**

Steven: Okay, I'll level with you. I'm completely fucked. I don't believe in anything. Oh and one more thing, I need that to change.

**Lights down on the woman and up on a man who creates a vast shadow behind her.**

Jacques: Play it again, Steven

**Blackout and zippo on to light Steven**

Steven: Before we are born we know everything. But the archangel is charged by god to make us quiet before we get here. "Too much confusion" god says. So the archangel flies into the ocean of our mothers. And when she arrives she sadly makes the sign of quiet and when she does this, she puts her finger above our lips and leaves this mark.

**Zippo out**

**LX up on man filling out forms**

Jacques: Thank you. Just wait over there.

***The woman enters.***

Jacques: Thank you. Just wait over there. ***(Sh e moves forward)*** Thank you. Just wait over there. ***(Sh e moves forward to Jacques )*** Print your name then sign on the dotted line.

Steven: It's my life.

Jacques: It's our insurance.

Steven: Touche!

Jacques: Your name.

Steven: My printing is not so good.

Jacques: ***(He looks at the form then at her)*** Thank-you. Steven. Just wait over there.

Steven: Okaly-dokaly

Jacques: Allo je m'apelle Jacques. Hello, I am Jacques. I am the jump master. You are les etudians. This is the first jump training course.

Steven: You know how when you sign a form? And you know that the small print is like gonna get you? And you hear your dad or somebody with a control freak disorder, telling you to read it really carefully? And just to spite that special control freak in each and everyone of our lives you never even read the big print?

Jacques: Attention! Plane is up. Ground is down.Wind is in the middle

Steven: And I'm just a gasp of neon blue.

Jacques: Fine now, but keep your jokes on the ground! The one thing - c'est promis - you will never jump again if you joke about life up there.

Steven: Sorry, sir, I hated school.

Jacques: You will respond to the numbers you are given.

Steven: Doubt it.

Jacques: You are number 4

Steven: My name is -

Jacques: You are number 4

#4: My name is -

Jacques: Number 4 -

#4: My name is -

Jacques: Number 4! You put your left cheek like so. Right cheek so. Grip the wood. Grip the door. See the camera. Set your sights, grip, the door. Look at the camera.  
GO! Count to 4! 1-2-3-4 and-

#4: Why the camera?

Jacques: C'est ton choix. The camera is on the wing. It records your jump. It's the best place to be looking as you leave the plane.

#4: Leaving the plane?

Jacques: You have left the plane which is - **(indicates up)**

#4: Today?-

Jacques: and you are in the wind which is - **(indicates left & right)**

#4: I'm sleepwalking to the edge of the world.

Jacques: and you can see the ground which is - **(indicates down)**

#4: It's gonna hurt.

Jacques: The dive.  
  
Arch Thousand! Two thousand! Three thousand! Four Thousand! Five Thousand! Check Thousand!

#4: I'm afraid of heights.

Jacques: Tight! Tight! Tight! Tight! Tight! For the Landing. Fall this way, or that, ca depend. Feet together. Roll. Yes!

#4: Excuse me, Jacques?

Jacques: Yes?

#4: What's the distance between dream and disaster?

Jacques: Good question. 21 seconds.

#4: Oh.

Jacques: Emergency Procedure - Three type. Numero Un, Partial Malfunction.  
  
**(he clears his throat to get her attention)**

#4: Oh, you're talking to me.

Jacques: Number one - partial malfunction. Watch first, then repeat. Legs up! Left arm over! Look! Pull! Lift flap in behind! Ball Chute! Out and Down and to the left! Feed out line! Your turn.

***(She hurts herself)***

#4: Shit.

***Jacques crosses over to her and begins to guide her through. She repeats what he does words and actions***

Jacques: Now regarder. Legs up! Left arm over! Look! Pull! Lift flap in behind! Ball Chute! Out and Down and to the left! Feed out line!

***They complete the exercise together***

Jacques: Numero Deux, Total Malfunction

#4: That'll be me!

***They laugh together then***

Jacques: Legs up! Left arm out! Look! Pull! Punch!

***She gets stuck halfway through again he comes over and talks her through.***

Jacques: Legs up! Left arm out! Look! Pull! ***(She knocks him over)*** Punch! ***(She punches herself and he delights in this)***

#4: Give me a break!

Jacques: You just received about 342 -BREAKS. Numero trois, Emergency Landing Procedure.

***She balls up like a sloth and holds her breath.***

Jacques: You see Power Lines? Do this. Trees? Do this. Okay?

***He looks to Steven but gets no response***

Jacques: Sky diver #4 - THIS IS YOUR JUMP!

***She gives a thumbs up***

Jacques: ASSUME THE POSITION.

***(Jacques nudges her to action)***

Jacques: 1

#4: What the fuck! My soul's been blitzed -

Jacques: 2

#4: - a million times. And if I do lack soul, something I've often-

Jacques: 3

#4: -had the pleasure of being accused of, then all my dreams have already been shattered.

Jacques: Arch Thousand!

#4: I wanted to be Evil Knevil

Jacques: On your knees.

#4: But you had to be boy to do that.

Jacques: Arms up

***(Jacques straightens #4 up)***

Jacques: TWO THOUSAND!

#4: No, what I wanted was to want something -

Jacques: THREE THOUSAND!

#4: But you had to be a wannabe to want that.

Jacques: FOUR THOUSAND!

#4: No! I wanted to jump out of a plane.

Jacques: FIVE THOUSAND!

#4: But you have to have courage to do that.

Jacques: Non

#4: CHECK THOUSAND! And I'm going down.

Jacques: Non ce nes't pas ca, I'm going up. Repetez le.

#4: That's impossible

Jacques: Eh voila!

#4: I'm going down.

Jacques: I'm going up. Repetez-le

#4: Why? I've got gravity on my side

Jacques: But I have sky on mine. Time to get ready. Let's go!

#4: Outside?

Jacques: Follow me

#4: Motion. Isn't it time for some new scientific breakthroughs? Personally I loved it when inertia hit the top of the charts?

Jacques: Entrer.

***Jacques enters the space, carrying a coat rack***

#4: Jacques?

Jacques: Boo! - Joking - don't be scared

#4: Awake or asleep life is the land of the scary.

Jacques: Time to put the gear on

#4: Do you have anything that will make me feel good?

Jacques: I have something that will keep you alive.

#4: Touche!

Jacques: What?

#4: It means "touch" in french but "you win the point" in english.

Jacques: I know.

#4: Oh right. **(pause)** sorry.

Jacques: What for?

#4: The well of loneliness overflows, the unlit lamp turns on -

Jacques: Jump suit first. #4.

#4: Call me Steven. I drink red wine, ride fast horses and sport a cream coloured cashmere suit. It looks great on me because I'm so thin and tall. Radclyffe Hall invented me so I'm really smart but very lonely and I -

Jacques: How much do you weigh?

#4: They don't talk about weight in literature. I like literature.

Jacques: Here put this on, it's big enough for anybody.

***(She throws her old pants at him and accepts the new ones)***

#4: I laugh with exquisite good humour and gracefully await the attention of my servant who will spray and spritz me back to life.

Jacques: You'll need this - for the canadian cold.

#4: A smoking jacket. A deep rich, red, robust velvet. The hostess stole it from her father, the king of France and she gave it to me.

Jacques: #4?

#4: Call me Steven.

Jacques: Allons-y. You're looking good, Steven.

#4: Thank-you. I will gallop on the wind.

Jacques: First you must practice.

#4: Nah! It's too cold.

Jacques: It will be a lot colder up there.

#4: Where?

Jacques: About 4,000 feet

#4: I need to stand very still for just one moment.

Jacques: Is little miss macho getting cold feet?

#4: No!

Jacques: Then come on.

***(Music composition in)***

#4: Nah... I'm making a bath, deep scent, essence, bubbles everywhere. I'm sliding into the tub - lean back my head. Heel bubbles. I said heel bubbles. Get away from my throat. Give me some space.

Jacques: People are waiting.

***Music out. She sees the audience***

#4: I'll never take a bubble bath again!

Jacques: Bravo! You have to attack the air. Atackatackatack! And - Go! 1,2,3,4, Arch thousand

***(Jacques does a practice jumps)***

#4: I can't

Jacques: Noone asked you to do this.

***(jacques exits)***

#4 ***(To audience)*** It's true BUT I'm thinking about last night and a conversation I wish I hadn't had with a person I hadn't seen. Betty, Betty Blue. We're supposed to be doing something, anything to avoid having the conversation, but in a cost saving measure the government decided to cut all compelling distractions. So we decided - like everyone else - to go and get drunk. I'm nervous because I don't like getting drunk. I mean I've made plans to avoid something, big time avoidance plans and now BOOM! We're gonna get drunk.

***(Jacques reenters and comes up behind #4)***

Jacques: No practice jump, no jump, jump. Think about it.  
#4 ***(To Jacques)*** I am, in my own way I am.

Jacques: ***(To audience)*** Completement fou - Completely crazy

#4: Asshole!

***(Jacques motions her up to the practice platform. She goes but-)***

#4: I had decided not to drink. I hear things when I do. Tee totalling temperance. But we get to the bar and she goes for the drinks and "what'll it be?". Hey, you know me Betty, make it - a blue

Jacques: Okay #4 Steven -

#4: Then she comes back from the bar with my beer and her ginger ale and I feel duped.

Jacques: ***(Whistles to #4)*** C'est fini

#4: That's what you said

Jacques: I'm sorry

#4: You didn't say that but you should have

Jacques: You cannot jump!

#4: I'm sorry what? I couldn't hear you, what did you say?

Jacques: Come back when you're ready.

#4: I am ready. There's a reason for everything. I must be ready

Jacques: Then get up there and practise.

#4: Okay

Jacques: Allez. Allez.

#4: Why did you say that in french?

Jacques: Parce-que tu comprends

#4: Who are you?

Jacques: I am Jacques, the jump master and you are l'etudiant

#4: Strictly professional right?

Jacques: Numero quatre je ne te donne pas la conseil psychologique. Comme instructeur, il faut que je protege les etudiants - Point final.

#4: Jump and arch. I got it no problem.

***(She executes the practice jump)***

#4: Arch thousand!

Jacques: Felicitations. Let's go.

#4: Piece 'o cake.

***(Jacques pulls out his binoculars)***

Jacques: I'm very sorry, everybody.

#4: I didn't do anything.

Jacques: You will all have to come back tomorrow.

#4: I did my practice jump

Jacques: Snow means no.

#4: You're kidding!

Jacques: No

#4: But this is Ontario

Jacques: Il y a toujours demain

***(She grabs Jacques by the throat and kneels him down before her)***

#4: Oh sure. I can see it now. I'm driving home. Faces of abandonment float in front of the steering wheel, they look at me with a mixture of pity and contempt. Then they look at each other to share in the joke - ME!

***(Jacques falls to the floor)***

#4: "I couldn't jump - foul weather." they all know I'm lying. And then - Betty...

***(She fondles Jacques' face)***

Jacques: #4? ***(Nothing)*** Steven! ***(Nothing)*** We go. ***(He goes to leave)***

***(#4 straddles him on the ground)***

#4: Don't leave me again. I can't bear it. Time going round and round. Back at the start, passing through to the finish. I'm here for you. I haven't slept for you. I wanted to jump for you.

Jacques: I'm very sorry. Try again tomorrow.

***(Jacques escapes from under #4. She falls to the floor and has a tantrum)***

Jacques: Snow means no!

#4: OKAY! Please god, please change the facts please god, and I'll cross my legs every time I hear the word

Jacques: Yes, yes. Tomorrow - yes. 9am - yes. Yes, yes.

#4: Please god. Anything so that I can jump out of the plane.

Jacques: Eh! C'est pas si pire que ça

#4: The most beautiful person in the world is no longer beautiful.

Jacques: And jumping today will change that?

***(She runs to the plane)***

#4 Hey camera! You **will** record me leaving this plane - 'cause me and god say so. I'm sweating. My right armpit is watering the plywood. A tree starts to grow in front of me. Birds of paradise spring from the branches and fly out into the sky. An orange assault on a virginal canvas I see sky. Not blue, but white, snow white, commercials on tv white.

Jacques: Okay #4 give it up.

#4: Their green stems battle the white, they are winning the sky is turning blue.

Jacques: Steven? -

#4: Look!

Jacques: Who are you?

#4: I am #4 and you are Jacques the jumpmaster.

Jacques: And this is our pilot, Bob.

#4: Bob?

Jacques: Hello Bob! It's showtime folks!

***(They climb into the plane)***

Jacques: Prepare for takeoff. We're going up! Stanby!

#4: Here we go!

Jacques: Like birds, no?

#4: What?

Jacques: Ca fait pas mal du bruit!

#4: What?.

Jacques: Ready?

#4: What.

Jacques: Remember the camera.

#4: What?

Jacques: #4?

#4: Camera?

Jacques: L'histoire instantanee

#4: Who's setting the frame?

Jacques: You are.

#4: Then close in on my face - I like my face - Get my eyes gazing out onto an ocean of infinite blue. Pan to bottles crammed full of hopes and dreams and catch the dolphin jumping through. Pull back on an azure desert of infinite blue. P.O.V. - eyes resting on safe, distant shores. The end. ***(She sings the closing bars)***

Jacques: Oh que c'est beau.

#4: My picture ?

Jacques: The sky. You and I - all of us - jump into the sky.

#4: **(To Jacques)** Excuse me Jacques? There's no ocean.

Jacques: That's because it's Ontario.

#4: Oh. **(Pause)** There's no water here. I'll die.

Jacques: Here we go!

#4: Jacques - Oh my fucking god, what are you doing?

Jacques: Jumpers prepare. I will call you by number.

#4 I can't hear anything. Shut up god, shut up everything, nobody say or do anything!

Jacques: Skydiver numero 1 -

#4: Oh Diva of destiny, take me I am yours.

Jacques: GO!

#4: From the outside it looks like I'm grinning.

Jacques: A bit rough on the deplane. He almost hit the wing. Skydiver #2 Go!

#4: I inherited this from my dad. His stomach blew up from too much stress in his life, but you'd never know this from watching him put desenex between his toes. Swear to god, when I was a little kid, I'd see him in his underwear, hunched over his toes and I always thought he was grinning at me. But he wasn't even looking at me with his fingers between his toes.

Jacques: Bravo numero 2! And circle. Skydiver #3 Go!

#4 Now, my eyeballs look in. You can't reach me. My eyes are ghost sensors and they work for a guy on the river Hades.

Jacques: Attention!

#4: I'm not here.

Jacques: Sky diver #4

#4: If we could just stop everything for one minute. Look, Jacques I made a mistake, okay? You're right I'm crazy. Just let me stay in here and I'll accept that my life is a shambles and we'll leave it at that okay? I don't need to look any deeper, I don't need to know anything I don't already know.

Jacques: It's now or never Steven. You know it and I know it. C'est a toi.

#4: Un manque de desir. L'attaque! Quelle force.

Jacques: Wake up!

#4: I'm up. I'm up!

Jacques: That's good, now get ready and Skydiver #4 -

#4: The earth's an ocean. Verte et-

Jacques: Go

#4: **(Tilt Right)** Vertigo

Jacques: **(Tilt Right)** Vertigo

#4: **(Tilt Left)** Vertigo

Jacques: **(Tilt Left)** Vertigo and -

***(He goes to push her from the plane and everything freezes. He sings this to the air of "As time goes by")***

Jacques: At first she don't know why  
The blue is where she is  
She try to learn to fly  
I sigh  
I love the sky

It's not the same old story  
It's different than before  
She dreams of hope and glory  
I'm -  
I am sorry

Oh Steven where are you  
Mon ange for all of time  
The sky you are too blue  
it's true  
We sail through blue

Jacques: Thank -You. Merci! I have a hangover today. Too much Canadian Rye Whisky.  
And GO!

**(Music in)**

**(#4 starts a slo-mo fall from plane)**

Jacques: Finalement.

**(Music out)**

#4: Why does my mother hate me? We're moving. Into this big mansion of a house. Rooms all over the place. Lots of floors and tons of corners, funny coves and closets, closets everywhere. Hey! they're putting me in the room right next to their bedroom. I mean give me a break, how am I ever gonna grow up in a room right next to my parents. Then they ask me - (progressive late sixties time) what colour I would like to paint my room. My first decision as a miniature adult. "Black" I say; "Paint it black". My mom's smiling at me. She loves me. It's noisy in my head as I run home from school in breathless anticipation. "It's pink. You painted my walls pink" I WILL NOT BE DEFEATED. I stare at the walls and I hold my stare, and I stop breathing, black spots are appearing in front of my eyes and I am painting the walls with my spots.

Jacques: **(To the pilot)** That was a funny de-plane, no? ONE

#4: Hi dad! My dad scared the robbers away when they came to visit our house. We were moving out of our house because the rebels were coming to power any minute. When the robbers came to call I was awoken by a vision in white looming outside my door. God? Hi dad. My dad always has the scaliest whitest skin in the world and he always wears white singlets and white boxer shorts - he is white, he is middle-class, he is male, he is my dad.

Jacques: Jumpmaster Jacques is ready...

#4: He's standing at the railing looking down and he's saying, and his voice is cracking and he's shaking and he's saying - his vocal chords are ripping because he should be yelling but he's saying: Go away, please go away. AND THEY DO!  
My hero, my dad.

Jacques: Ready to save a life

#4: You can't catch me!

Jacques: Can too! TWO

#4: I'm leader of the bad club - with Ann  
"My mom spells Anne with an "e" but you don't."  
She's my best friend and I hate her. She's in the cloak room having a secret take-over meeting with the five boy members. I know. I wait in the grade one class room, lurking. I catch one of the boy members by the ears, he's kneeling before me. I make him take away his bad thoughts about me. I win.

Jacques:        **(To pilot)** This will kill the hangover

#4:                Ann!

I'm ripping out my baby tooth Ann. You're making me do it because it's not loose. I love you Ann! And I'll whip your butt.

"Hey, you've got glasses I'm gonna get some." "Can too!"

"Oh, You're gonna die"

"Oh yeah?" "yeah- hey watch the - your bicycle, his car.

"Don't die Ann."

He killed her.

I killed her.

Ann's dead.

Jacques:        **(To pilot)** I hope! THREE

**(A bear comes flying at her)**

#4:                Oh Wendy!

Jacques:        Eh Voila!

#4:                Oh Wendy! My mother knitted all these miniature school uniforms for you." Her name is Wendy but she is a boy. I named her after Ann's older sister who I was in love with but she's still a boy. I told my mom you were a boy but all the uniforms she knitted were for girls. Sorry Wendy, I tried.

**(Wendy flies off)**

Jacques:        **(To pilot)** Radio on? **(Popcorn maker in grid turns on and Jacques gives a thumbs up to the pilot)**

#4:                Hey Pam!  
Pamela Burr she's in my grade 5 class at school and she has the biggest boobs. She has to walk funny just to balance the platter and she wears really thick glasses.  
Hi Pam!  
Sometimes I hang out with her because I feel sorry for her and no one else hangs out with me because-

**(She walks right down to the audience)**

#4:                Because I pick my nose and eat it.  
I really like doing it in dangerous and provocative places. Like on the school bus. That is the best because it is so crowded except for the seat next to me and you know how kids love to stare at the kid they've decided to hate.

"Field trip" I have their undivided attention! BUT, the thrill for me is trying to dig really deep and eat a big, huge chewy green morsel without anyone catching me. YES! When succesful I feel like Evil Knevil. Then I look in the bus window and see my face, I feel funny.

***(Music out)***

Jacques: FOUR! Now number 4 now!

***(She is grabbing at popcorn falling from sky and stuffing it in her mouth )***

#4: What?

The first time I tried dieting, it worked. So I'm gonna get fat so that I can try it again.

Jacques: Now number 4 now!

#4: One night, I stay out in Choisi, Quebec with best-friend Lisa # 1 and we go over to her friend Jean's house. Their house smells really creepy to me and all the kids have shag carpet lofts and no mom. All my friends have to have moms, I like playing with them. Jean's dad is bad. Her dad's name is Mr. Asselin. I like his name because I hate him. He has a swear word sitting right there in it. Ass - Elin. So, he decides to take us all to the Dairy Queen and I don't want to go because I'm on a diet. And he wants to buy us all milkshakes and I say "no thank-you" and he starts working on me.

Jacques: Everyone who jumps from a plane wants something

#4: But I don't want anything.

Jacques: Oh yes, everyone does

#4: No, I don't. He then gets really mad at me and then he gets in a huff, steamy, quiet and I say; "Okay, sure I'll have a milkshake". And I hate him and he laughs at me because he says:

Jacques: It's what she wants

#4: Yeah? fuck-off you jerk.

***Music in***

Jacques: Quoi?

#4: Hey Jacques!

Jacques: Yes?

#4: Did you know that the first three boys that I seriously like will turn into out of the closet gay writers for alternative magazines.

Jacques: So!

#4: I think I like you

Jacques: Moi, je menfou de toi.

#4: My best-friend Lisa #2 used to say the exact same thing. Only it was in english and she didn't swear. She gets really bitchy and then she yells at me. She yells "Stop touching yourself, it's driving me crazy" I touched myself all the time and I'm sorry to tell you but I still do. I felt bad about it and tried to stop but I couldn't and I still can't. I'm a compulsive self-toucher.

Jacques: Merde!

#4: What the fuck is wrong with that? It doesn't give me orgasms or anything.

Jacques: C'mon! #4 it's time to focus

#4: I'm learning how to masturbate. "The Shere Hite Report, what a book, what facts!"  
I'm reading the The Happy Hooker, Xaviera Hollander, and I'm looking at my dog. (**Jacques growls**) Okay, I'm on a bus with Lisa #2 FIELD TRIP! and we have a playboy magazine and there is this really sexy story and I'm sitting right next to her reading it and I cream my jeans."  
I don't even know what that is but I know something is happening.  
"Now she's reading it" I bet you any money she's doing the same thing!  
We sure aren't going to talk about it no way.

Jacques: ARCH THOUSAND! (**Music out**)

#4: If I stretch way out and stretch way up I may actually touch something outside of me.

Jacques: Respirer. Stretch out.

#4: Is anyone out here? Balance.

Jacques: Hold it. Respirer.

#4: And now up right up on my tippy toes, visualize. See the strings. They are all over me. One on the top of my head one on either hand another one on my solar plexus. Rousseau you were right! Can you see me. Can you see them. I see it. Chain link strings stretching me out, out way out and up.

Jacques: Relax into them. Equilibre, balance

#4: Between relax and tense?

Jacques: Ne pense pas trop - relax your forehead. Find your center. Ne cherche pas ca va te trouver. Prends ton temps. Reach, reach and grab hold -

#4: I'm falling. Contact - read falling, read pain read I'd rather be small than tall even though tall is the most beautiful thing in the world. I mean skyscrapers. I always wanted to be one. Then I'd go to parties. Have a drink with the CN tower and talk about the view. Talk about the air and live in the world of ideals up with the clouds and the quiet and the calm and the blue that will break you're heart because you can't get inside of it.

Jacques: BRAVO!

***(She opens her eyes.)***

#4: The Eaton Centre?

***(A ball cap with a raggedy ann doll flops onto her head)***

I love the Eaton Centre. It is so cool.

I am a teenager visting Toronto from my native Montreal to play in the Raggedy Ann Softball tournament.

all We go pronto to the Eaton Centre to try out some big town fun. My father and the business men from Montreal call it the White Elephant. But, I like elephants so there's no personal conflict for me.

Godamn it, no matter how hard I try, I can't think of a cooler place.

Being a teenager is way cool because smoking's still cool and I like smoking and you can still smoke here and that's cool.

If I spend too much time here, I get really confused about who I am. Especially when something catches my eye in Smart Set.

Or Cotton Ginny.

Or Additionelle

I leave as soon as that happens but sometimes I'm torn because of all the neat stuff in Stitches. I mean have you seen the deals they have on winter coats? Don't anybody worry. - The wake up call always comes in at Bikini Village.

But I do love all the nature type stores and the exploding fountain.

Why go outside?

I like to think the nature stores are there to keep the canadian geese dolls happy. And the fountain is there to keep them sad.

Balance.

#4: I identify with those geese dolls.

Stranded on strings and forgotten.

Wings caught in mid-flight.

Give 'em a nod, next time you're there. They'll perk up a bit, I'm sure of it.

Anyway, I'm walking through with some friends from school. Actually we just split up because I don't really think they like me, so I'm walking, walking kind of cool, feeling kind of cool because of the breeze blowing off the fountain - When all of a sudden, the fountain starts to change, it's getting all jaggedy and sharp, sharp razor sharp, and he - the fountain - says:

Jacques: Once more into the breach, dear friends. Steven! My first jump - twenty years ago today. Anniversaire! A young man - me. And a young man also - him. Steven. Twenty years ago we climbed into a plane to do what I have done, day in, day out since. Jumpmaster Jacques, proprietaire of safety - lost my love. So beautiful, a face like a soldier, fierce dark eyes and the courage of a lion. He - I wanted him at 4000 feet, I wanted him at 3,000 feet - It happened at - this beautiful boy, this soldier of a man, his lines tangled - there was no way. Time going round and round. Back at the start passing through to the finish. I'm here for you Steven. I drink too much because of you Steven I've devoted my life to you Steven. And now, Steven. And now Steven I - you have given me a second chance.

#4: I'm feeling kind of funny because it's the Eaton Centre and outta nowhere this fountain starts speaking in tongues. I can't understand a single thing he's saying. Maybe it's because I'm a teenager. But still I'm thinking, I know him, I've seen him before - But I'm slammed outta of my reverie by - ohmygod - and, and, and- ohmygod

And coming right towards me and - blocking my fountain view - are two attractive females and they are holding hands.

***(She freezes)***

I freeze.

***(She strikes a pose)***

Then I unfreeze and try to groove cool. The females are laughing and taking up space. I peek to see what the man thinks about all this but he has turned back into the fountain and his jets are about to cum.

Look left, Look right I won't give in without a fight. Big Steel Man!! AHA! They'll never come in here.

Multi-coloured cable knit sweaters. Nice. But My third adolescent eye starts to twitch. They are coming up behind me. They want me. They think I'm one of them. I make the move to move but am stopped - dead - in my tracks - because they are - wait for it - and I'm a teenager - I'll never forget - and they are

kissing.

Jacques: ARCH THOUSAND

#4: Red. The sweaters are red. The store is red. The Eaton Centre is red. And the red is coming from my face. And they know because everyone knows. Oh yes everyone knows. Fight or flight. I run. But I get stuck in the slowest fight of my life. A tango for three on the threshold of freedom. They are winning because there are two of them and their lips and hands are clasped in an iron embrace. And Donna Summer is singing -

***(SOUND Love to love ya baby.)***

#4: I'm losing my grasp, I'm being sucked into the luscious void. But NO!

**(SOUND OUT)**

#4: Denial! Never forget you zen adjusted women of the future, Never forget Jacques - denial can be a terrible, a powerful, a dazzling force. I deek them out and move right down the center. Their hands are ripped apart their lips are sliced in two.

Jacques: Pull a little to the right #4

#4: Blue. It's very quiet, the world is blue and I think about the man with the hard hat on tv who's been crazy glued to a piece of wood and he's suspended up, up, way up in the air by that tiny drop of glue. And I feel bad because I'm afraid that one of those girls might have the palm of the other girl stuck to her hand and the other girl might just have ripped the lips off the face of the first. And there is probably just a lot of exposed veins and guts and blood congealing behind me. But I don't run because I'm still a teenager and besides nothing really happened there so what's the point.

Jacques: On your knees.

#4: I wanted to be Evil Knevil

Jacques: Arms up

#4: But you had to be a boy to be that

Jacques: TWO THOUSAND!

#4: No, what I wanted was to want something

Jacques: THREE THOUSAND!

#4: But you have to be a wannabe to want that

Jacques: FOUR THOUSAND!

#4: No, what I wanted was to jump out of a plane

Jacques: FIVE THOUSAND!

#4: But you have to have courage to do that.

***(She gets completely tangled up in her lines, her body contorted)***

Jacques: NOOOOOOOO!

#4: I've survived more than I haven't. I have never died and I have never thought about killing myself. I'm a sloth. When things get really bad I don't want to

move. I'm a sloth. So how you gonna die if you don't move. It's takes energy, firmness and an unshakeable belief in flair, to do yourself in. I think you also have to believe that your own absence would make a difference.

***(She disappears in the clouds)***

Jacques: #4?

***(She reappears . He disappears)***

#4: I'm looking back after I've died to see what you are doing. But I'm dead so nobody's home. Casket's closed. If I'm dead and if I'm not being a spiritualist, I would have to say that I would be pretty pissed off to find out that I'd spent an entire lifetime not knowing I was here only to die and have you find out that I was. Total fucking rip- off.

Jacques: PARTIAL MALFUNCTION

#4: My biggest fear!

Jacques: 21 secondes #4

#4: No, no, not that. This!

Time stops for fear. Everything stops for fear.

I'm suspended by fear. Cool!

Jacques: TOTAL-

#4: Okay, okay, Something totally amazing may happen or something totally awful and I won't register it. I won't feel it. And if I can't feel it then I can't prove that it happened. And if this event is so big that the whole world feels along with it and I don't register it then where does that leave me?

Jacques: This cannot be happening

#4: This is only a test please do not adjust your set. Beep!

Jacques: Please #4 - Steven this is - Steven

#4: ***(Guns firing)*** John Wayne explains it all to you. The way I see it, it's a fork. You got two choices. You can decide that you are completely alone. ***(Fires a pistol)*** Or you can decide to take the other road. ***(Fires second pistol)***

Jacques: Choose something #4!

#4: Develop her. Out of the shit find the form.

Jacques: Steven

#4: Develop her. Cut loose - sever the chord, I'm falling through space. Develop her. This a story of love. Free fall. Jacques do you hear me?

Jacques: I can hear you

#4: Develop her. Who is the person beyond reproach? Develop her. How do I make what I cannot see. Do you hear me Jacques? Were things relative before the theory was developed? Einstein wore no socks. I don't wear socks. Therefore I'm Einstein.

Jacques: LEGS UP!

#4: My marriage of fright with Mr. Right. What the fuck am I doing married? High altitude eye popping epidemic. I gotta go! Get me out of here! I look for the friend I never see the crisp October sky, Leaves float up from the trees - Fall is here, things are dying.

Jacques: Reserve pack Steven. Move to your reserve.

#4: Can I use yours Jacques?

Jacques: Non utilise le tiens

#4: I'm going down Jacques. And I'm taking you with me. Do you want to go down with me Jacques? Let's call the sky Titanic and the wind a wave and we can drown together. Eh, Jacques? What do you say?

Jacques: LEFT ARM OUT!

#4: But Mr. Right is struck back. A real humdinger of a curve ball levelled at me from the pitching mound. One that warmed up in the bull pen for what must have been years and totally-He says to me, he says

Jacques: TOTAL MALFUNCTION!

#4: That hurt - that really hurt - How dare you... I'm killing you, I'm fantasizing about killing you, you're dying in a car and you're driving and I'm not even there but you're dying because I'm sitting by the phone waiting for the call from the OPP that is going to tell me that you are dead and I've already got my funeral dress on and I'm looking forward to all the attention of being a widow.

Jacques: LOOK!

#4: Mom? Yeah, Mom it's me. Mr. Right is wrong mom. Oh and mom, I'd like you to meet Betty. Betty Blue...

Jacques: Steven please, this is your life.

#4: For whom the bell tolls eh Jacques?

Jacques: Quoi?

#4: Just ring the goddamned bell

Jacques: There is no time left for joking

#4: You let me decide how to fight my battles - it doesn't have to make sense to you.

Jacques: Ding, ding

**MUSIC**

#4: Because - Because - Don't - Don't - I don't know - Well I can't understand you. Civil if even a bit theoretical approaches to the nature of love and all else that is fickle in this world, knock - me - out...

Jacques: PULL!

#4: Mom!

Jacques: PUNCH!

#4: Mom?

Jacques: Steven. Please respond. Pense a toi-meme, I'll meet you halfway

#4: I can't get inside. I can't.  
I can't. I think I can't, I  
think I can't, I think  
I can't-

Jacques: Fuck-

#4: FUCKLAND

**( Music out & Blackout)**

***(the following is done by the light of a zippo and Jacques translates simultaneously underneath)***

#4: Pendant la nuit il y a toujours un moment, le moment ou la grande decouverte nous approche. On est la, toujours en attente, toujours au seuil de sommeil. Mais ce n'est pas une reve, je te jure. C'est la voix pure, la voix claire qui nous parle de nous meme. Les oreilles s'ouvrent, les fleurs bleus du printemps. L'ame eclate. L'explosion. Ca brule, ca fait mal. Mais la sensation - on est pu capable, on a pas le droit - le jeu de cache cache s'eteint comme le feu. La parabole de l'oiseau entre le ciel bleu et le feu.

***(When lx restore a man sitting in the heat without his shirt on)***

Jacques: It's about time!

#4: Jacques?

Jacques: Dinner is almost ready

#4: Jacques?

Jacques: Sure, whatever. Take your coat off it's a beautiful day

#4: Where am I?

Jacques: Everyone's waiting

#4: How'd they know I'd be here?

Jacques: Math.

#4: Math?

Jacques: It's all in the numbers

#4: You're kidding

Jacques: Dead Serious

#4: This is surreal

Jacques: How's about a nice col drink

#4: It's so quiet

Jacques: What a view eh? You can see yourself.

#4: I can see you

Jacques: And I can see you.

#4: We've met before.

Jacques: Yeah.

#4: What's your name?

Jacques: Astro but it changes.

#4: So does mine.

Jacques: What are you using now?

#4 Steven

Jacques: I like that name

#4: I've been here before.

Jacques: Yup, oh yeah.

#4: So, where am I?

Jacques: Fuckland.

#4: You live here?

Jacques: Yeah. Well no. Well actually, I'm moving.

#4: Oh.

Jacques: Yeah. It's time.

#4: Where?

Jacques: I'm thinking about Quebec

#4: You speak french -

Jacques: Not really.

#4: God, that's so funny! I thought you did

Jacques: Juste un petit peu - you?

#4: Yeah - a little - what's bred in the bone?...

Jacques: What? Oh I see yes - I think you're right it's very important

#4: I've spent a long time thinking language was the most important

Jacques: Well yeah, I guess, and sex

#4: Same thing

Jacques: Not sure about that

#4: Well it is a language

Jacques: Do you speak it?

#4: Not really

Jacques: Now that's funny

#4: Hey stop that. It is not

Jacques: is too.

#4: Is not

Jacques: Is too

#4: Stop it

Jacques: Oh Hey, here comes Steven

#4: Who?

Jacques: That guy coming over the hill.

#4: He looks like a soldier.

Jacques: Well he is in a way. Just like you.

#4: ***(She grunts appreciatively)***

Jacques: Hey Steven get everyone 'round the table. The dinner's gonna get cold!

#4: Guess who's coming to dinner.

Jacques: Who? Oh I get it. Guess who's coming to dinner. Nope, that's it. Everyone who's supposed to be here is here.

#4: What are you, the boss?

Jacques: Hardly!

#4: It sure seems that way.

Jacques: Well - you made me

#4: Oh that's a good one!

Jacques: No, I'm serious you did!

#4: Just call me Einstein

Jacques: Why?

#4: He's a developer!

Jacques: Actually, he's dead

#4: Actually I know that

Jacques: Yeah all that hair- look do you want something to eat?

#4: No thanks, I'm full.

Jacques: I'll bet you are. Thanks though.

#4: For what?

Jacques: For the farewell dinner.

#4: You mean the last supper.

Jacques: Oh no. It's way better than that.

#4: Anyway, I didn't make it.

Jacques: I think you did. **(He exits)**

#4: I think I can

***(LX restores to blue and cmusic in)***

#4: I think I can, I think I can, I think I can

Jacques: RESERVE PACK #4.!

#4 It's raining,time to put the gear on, I'm sailing in wet, I'm swimming through blue and nobody has to die.

***(She punches open her reserve chute)***

#4: I open my briefcase, my spaceship pops out and I'm on my way home with Astro the frog.

Jacques: Way ahead of you Steven

#4: And I arrive at my house on Souvenir Street. It is my house but noone knows I live there. Nobody lives on la rue Souvenir.

***A man appears out of a cloud of smoke. He is wearing a forties style suit and a fedora. His hands are in his pockets and he is whistling a tune as he looks up at the sky and circles the space.***

#4: I ask YOU in. Shangrila.

Jacques: Oh que c'est beau.

#4: The paint is peeling off the brick and the fourth stair is missing and the man on the street walks past the house with his hands in his pockets and his head in the clouds because he's forgotten it's there.

Jacques: The thiness of air 21 seconds to live or 21 seconds to die. **(He exits)**

#4: That's the distance between dream and disaster.

Jacques: Prepare to land

#4: God what a view. From up here roads lead as far as developers can take them. Find the place where water meets sky and motor on through.

Jacques: Feet together

#4: I climbed to the ends of the earth - this morning for a meeting with the sky.

Jacques: Don't look down

#4: And when I got there, I did it, I threw a stone. I mean I'm really threw it. Skip skip skip and rings echoing, echoing forever.

Jacques: Tight! - Tight! Tight! Tight! #4

#4: am Fuck! Land! Real Land. Look at them trees. I'm wearing them for shoes. And I floating. I can see. There's me. There's land. Holy shit. It's me and it. don't look down. Look up. Not so far. Down, whoa ground rush up Horizon. Land, me horizon Land - Fuck!!!!

***(She falls from the sky and rolls down, down to the ground)***

Jacques: Land!

#4: Land.

Jacques: YES!

#4: Yes.

Jacques: ***(Jacques re-enters)*** Congratulations #4. It was a beautiful jump. C'mon into the clubhouse and let's watch the video.

#4: Jacques?

Jacques: Yes?

#4: How's your hangover?

Jacques: Gone!

#4: Good. Jacques?

Jacques: Yes?

#4: I can't move

Jacques: Gravity.

#4: It hurts.

Jacques: See why I put the sky on my team?

#4: Yes. Jacques?

Jacques: Yes?

#4: Can you give me hand up?

Jacques: Avec plaisir (**He does so. #4 is a little wobbly on her feet**)

#4: Thank-you

Jacques: Thank-you Steven. May I present to you your first Jump Training Certificate. If you decide to jump again, I hope you will choose us.

***(They strike a pose for the polaroid camera)***

#4: You're kidding.

Jacques: Dead Serious.

***(The flash goes off and the stage goes to black)***

**THE END**