

Elaine (with Benjamin)

Benjamin I want you to know I hate myself.

Elaine Thank you for saving me the trouble.

Benjamin I've been going through a difficult time lately.

Elaine Then I feel sorry for you.

Benjamin I feel sorry for myself.

Elaine I don't believe I'm sitting here with a nihilist. I'm always being attached on to by nihilists. I hate nihilists. I try to avoid them.

Benjamin Feel free to avoid me from now on.

Elaine Have you ever read *The Fountainhead*?

Benjamin No.

Elaine Have you ever seen the *Mona Lisa*?

Benjamin No.

Elaine Well, I have.

Benjamin I know you have.

Elaine The world is full of wonderful things. How can you sit there and say life is bullshit?

Benjamin I've had a very good education.

Elaine Then be grateful. There are people fighting for an education in Alabama. Fighting state troopers for a good education. Do you think they think life is bullshit?

Benjamin Very possibly.

Elaine A monk just set fire to himself in Saigon ...

Benjamin Well, hey.

Elaine Life is precious, Benjamin. How dare you. How dare you sit there and say life is bullshit. When you have so much. When whatever you want you could probably have.

Benjamin You like your life?

Elaine I *love* my life. Don't you?

Benjamin Once, I guess. When I was a kid.

Elaine What happened?

Benjamin It was unrequited.

Elaine Well, nothing's perfect Benjamin. I'd have liked a nicer nose. I wish my

mother didn't drink so much. I wish I'd never fallen out of that tree and broken my thumb because it so affects my fingering I'll probably never play the violin as well as I'd love to but that's about it for the bullshit, Benjamin. It's only bullshit if you let it pile up. Heaven's in the details. Someone said that. I think Robert Frost said that.