



**Jeff:** Those noises were like a nightmare—if nightmares have noises. I'm not sure of anything. I mean, I feel disoriented—like I'm in space or something. I'm afraid if I take a step, I'll fall a million miles. Lee, I'm scared.

**Eileen:** It's okay, Jeff. Honest.

**Jeff:** Do you ever feel like this?

**Eileen:** No. You get over those things. You get your confidence.

**Jeff:** How long does it take?

**Eileen:** Well, see—I've been this way as long as I can remember. I've never known anything different. It's harder for people who lose their sight. They're much more scared. *(She takes his arm and they walk on.)* Hey, I just thought of something funny.

**Jeff:** What?

**Eileen:** The blind leading the blind.

**Jeff:** How do you know your way around so well?

**Eileen:** Oh, I've been here lots of times. When you're blind, you get maps in your head. I know exactly where I am right now. There's a phone booth right about here. *(She feels it with her cane.)* Excuse me. I promised to call Mom.

*(She steps in and closes the door. There is a man sitting across the walk from Jeff. He has a dog with him, off the leash. It is a tiny dog, a toy poodle. The dog runs over to Jeff and begins barking. To Jeff, this tiny creature sounds like the Hound of the Baskervilles.)*

**Jeff:** Go 'way. *(The dog barks louder.)* Hey, go away! *(The dog barks louder. Jeff begins to edge back and poke out with his cane. The dog snaps at the cane.)* Get out of here! *(Almost terrified, Jeff gets into the phone booth with Eileen.)*

**Eileen:** Hey, what's wrong?

**Jeff:** There's a ferocious dog after me.

**Eileen:** Huh?

**Jeff:** He tried to attack me.

*(The man walks over to retrieve the dog.)*

**Man:** Fluff! Come on, Fluff!

• ferocious (fur OH shus) savage; vicious

**Eileen:** Fluff?

**Jeff:** Yeah—

**Eileen:** That's a funny name for a monster.

*(The man walks away with the dog on a leash. Jeff and Eileen wait inside for a moment.)*

**Eileen:** Look, I think it's all right now. Come on.

*(They leave the booth and start on their way. Dissolve to: Another area of the park. It is peaceful as they stroll by a pond. Across the way there appears an ice cream man riding a bicycle with attached freezer. As he pedals, the bells on the bar of the bicycle tinkle.)*

**Jeff:** Wait—listen. *(They pause as Jeff listens.)*

**Eileen:** What?

**Jeff:** Sh-h! *(He holds his finger to his lips. We become very aware of the tinkling bells as they fade away.)* What a nice sound. I never realized how nice a sound that was before.

**Eileen:** Yeah.

**Jeff:** You really hear things like this.

*(Eileen smiles and they stroll on. In the pond two ducks begin a dialogue in the chatty almost whispering way of contented ducks.)*

**Eileen:** Hear the ducks.

**Jeff:** Yeah. *(pause)* It's as if I never heard ducks before.

**Eileen:** Hey, do me a favor, huh?

**Jeff:** Sure.

**Eileen:** I want to feel what you look like. *(She holds her hand up in front of his face.)* Okay? *(She runs her hand over his face, down his nose, across his forehead, and so on.)*

**Jeff:** *(trying to be casual)* Well?

**Eileen:** Well, your nose is kinda big.

**Jeff:** Thanks a lot.

**Eileen:** And your ears stick out.

**Jeff:** They do not.

**Eileen:** A little.

**Jeff:** Okay—a little. But not so's you'd notice. *(He smiles.)*

**Eileen:** That's a nice smile.







**Jeff:** I'm glad you like something.

**Eileen:** All in all, it's a nice face.

**Jeff:** You think so?

**Eileen:** Yeah, it's a really nice face.

**Jeff:** *(smiling)* You had me worried there for a minute.

*(There is an embarrassed pause. Eileen lets her hand drop from Jeff's face.)*

**Eileen:** Hey, come on, Nice Face.

*(Dissolve to: Music and a colorful moving merry-go-round. Jeff and Eileen are standing beside it. The ticket taker is standing on the moving merry-go-round, holding onto a horse. As the horses pass by, we see a few teenagers riding on them and, of course, some kids with their parents. The machine slowly stops and the music runs down.)*

**Eileen:** There's a step here, kinda high.

**Jeff:** Okay.

**Eileen:** You got it.

*(They climb on. The ticket taker, a burly man, notices them and comes over.)*

**Ticket taker:** Hey—you there.

**Jeff:** What?

**Ticket taker:** You've got to get off.

**Jeff:** What do you mean?

**Ticket taker:** I said you've got to get off. I can't take you people

**Jeff:** What people? We just want a ride.

**Ticket taker:** It ain't allowed. I can't have blind people on the horses.

**Eileen:** Come on, Jeff. It's no big deal.

**Jeff:** No, wait a minute. We're all right. I've been on this ride a million times.

**Ticket taker:** Not with me here, buddy. I ain't covered.

**Jeff:** Huh?

• burly (BUR lee) big and strong

**Ticket taker:** I don't have insurance for your kind. Now look, I don't want to be mean. So come on. Let me help you get off.

**Jeff:** Get your hands off me.

**Ticket taker:** *(takes Jeff's arm)* My customers want to ride.

**Eileen:** Come on, Jeff. It's all right. It's okay.

**Ticket taker:** Thanks, lady. Thanks.

**Jeff:** No, wait! It's not okay. Nothing's gonna happen. We just want a crummy ride, that's all.

*(A kid sitting on a horse yells "Hey, mister, let's go" and is joined by a few other kids.)*

**Eileen:** Come on, Jeff. Please.

*(They go. Jeff stumbles, almost falling. The ticket taker walks to the lever on the merry-go-round. It begins to move. The music blares. The kids smile, laugh, wave. Jeff and Eileen stand helplessly on the side.)*

*(Dissolve to: A street in the park. Jeff and Eileen are standing on the curb, waiting to cross to the other side. Cars are whizzing by. The traffic light is green, but then there is a click. It turns to yellow, then red.)*

**Eileen:** Hey, it's red.

*(They begin to cross. Jeff moves slowly. He has trouble getting down the curb.)*

**Jeff:** It's okay?

**Eileen:** Yeah, come on. They don't give you a lot of time.

*(They move across. The engines seem to be running too loudly. One of them revs up as if readying for a race. A couple of drivers in back begin to honk.)*

**Jeff:** *(angry and nervous)* Hold your horses!

*(A driver beside Jeff suddenly revs his engine. Jeff jumps.)*

**Jeff:** What's wrong with those guys?

**Eileen:** It's okay.





THING FOR YOURSELF

**Jeff:** *(The traffic light has just clicked.)* We're not even half way. *(He stumbles.)*

**Eileen:** It's all right. Come on.

**Jeff:** Don't they know we're blind?

**Eileen:** They'll wait.

**Jeff:** *(He has heard another click.)* It turned green!

*(The cars in the lane behind them begin to move, taking off with a screech. The car nearest Jeff reus its engine.)*

**Jeff:** *(turns to the car and waves his cane)* Shut up!

*(Again the screen goes black, giving us Jeff's point of view. We hear the noise of the horns, tires, traffic become a roar. Then the picture gradually returns and we see Jeff frantically begin to take off his glasses, clawing at his face.)*

**Eileen:** What are you doing?

**Jeff:** Taking this junk off!

**Eileen:** No! *(She takes his arm, firmly leading him on.)* Not yet! *(They are at the other side now. Jeff is breathing deeply.)* It's okay. Take it easy.

**Jeff:** I'm sorry. I panicked.

**Eileen:** Listen, it's all right. Just rest a minute.

**Jeff:** Such a coward. I'm sorry. *(Pause. Eileen takes his arm.)* How do you do it?

**Eileen:** You get used to it.

**Jeff:** Do you? Do you really?

**Eileen:** Hey, let's go.

*(Dissolve to: Another part of the park. They are alone and pass a flowering lilac bush.)*

**Eileen:** Hey, wait a minute. *(She stops at the bush.)*

**Jeff:** What?

**Eileen:** Come here. *(Jeff returns.)* Smell that. *(Jeff inhales.)* Feel. *(They both feel the same puff of flowers.)* Some kind of flowers.

**Jeff:** There's a big puff of them. And soft.

**Eileen:** What kind are they?

**Jeff:** I don't know.



**Eileen:** They're beautiful. I'd like to know.

**Jeff:** I'll ask somebody.

**Eileen:** There's no one around.

**Jeff:** Oh.

**Eileen:** Do me a favor.

**Jeff:** Okay.

**Eileen:** Take that stuff off your eyes.

**Jeff:** Now?

**Eileen:** Yes. Now.

*(He hesitates, then begins to remove the glasses and the picture fades to Jeff's point of view. It is black and quiet. Then, as the last patch comes off, we see the lilac bush. The purple flowers are gorgeous.)*



## HING FOR YOURSELF

**Jeff:** (showing surprise, pleasure) Oh!

**Eileen:** Tell me. . . .

**Jeff:** Well, they're purple. Dark purple. Lots of little flowers on a stem. Four or five little petals on a flower. They're beautiful. . . . (He turns around, slowly, with appreciation.) Everything's beautiful. The sky . . . the trees . . . the grass. . . . (laughs with pleasure) It's like a fairy tale. I never realized—look, Eileen— (He suddenly realizes with stunning clarity that she can never take off patches and see.) I'm sorry.

**Eileen:** It's okay, Jeff. I can feel how nice it is from your voice.

**Jeff:** You can? (He stares at her for a long moment.) You know what's beautiful?

**Eileen:** What?

**Jeff:** You're beautiful.

**Eileen:** You mean that?

**Jeff:** I mean it. (There is a long moment as she returns his stare by taking his arm. Then, embarrassed, they turn and start on their way.) Hey, wait a minute. (He goes back and picks a sprig from the lilac bush.)

**Eileen:** What are you doing?

**Jeff:** I'm taking one of these. They'll forgive me just this once. (He takes her hand and puts the sprig of flowers into it.)

**Eileen:** Thank you. (She smells it.) Um-m-m. (She puts it in her hair, takes his arm, and they walk on.)

**Jeff:** (casual, happy) You know, I heard about this dance our two schools are having, after the game.

**Eileen:** (casual and happy too) Yeah, I've heard about it.

**Jeff:** Want to go with me?

**Eileen:** Why not?

**Jeff:** (laughing) Why not?

(The screen slowly fades to black.)

END

• clarity (KLAR uh tee) clearness

## ALL THINGS CONSIDERED

1. This play has (a) one main character. (b) two main characters (c) three main characters.
2. Jeff is (a) athletic. (b) outgoing. (c) shy.
3. Because Eileen is blind, Marge and Eric (a) talk secretly with gestures. (b) help her home. (c) help her study.
4. The hardest thing for Eileen to imagine is (a) size. (b) shape (c) color.
5. Eileen has (a) a sense of humor. (b) a big appetite. (c) very few friends.
6. Jeff pushes Eileen into the pool because (a) he wants to treat her the way he would treat everybody else. (b) she thinks the water is cold. (c) Eric told him to do it.
7. Jeff tries to understand what it means to be blind by (a) asking Mrs. Hays. (b) reading about blindness. (c) putting patches over his eyes.
8. On Sunday Jeff and Eileen (a) go to the dance. (b) read Braille together. (c) go to the park.
9. With the patches over his eyes, Jeff (a) learns to enjoy food more. (b) appreciates sounds more. (c) appreciates darkness more.
10. Jeff takes off his patches and glasses and tells Eileen (a) he enjoyed the experience. (b) everything is beautiful. (c) he will never again wear patches over his eyes.
11. At the end of the play, we feel sure that Jeff and Eileen will (a) get married. (b) go to the dance together. (c) soon stop seeing each other.
12. You can conclude that (a) Jeff has learned a valuable lesson from his experience. (b) blind people are often in great danger (c) sight is more important than hearing.

## THINKING IT THROUGH

1. Which of these questions best summarizes the plot of "Blind Sunday"? Why?
  - How can Jeff and Eileen develop a good friendship?
  - Is it possible to love a blind person?
  - Are blind people as capable as sighted people?
2. Why does Eileen get so angry at the waiter in the restaurant? How do you think the waiter should have treated Eileen?
3. The ticket taker on the merry-go-round does not have insurance to cover accidents to blind people, so he will not let Jeff and Eileen ride. Do you think he is right or wrong? Why? What could be done to help solve this problem?