



Dwayne Yancey

BIG DOG PUBLISHING

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BIG DOG PUBLISHING

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Exchange of Gifts

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Exchange of Gifts was first performed in December 2019 by 57 Hours Productions as a touring show at several locations in Virginia: Kerry Plank, director.

TILLY: Kaiya Hoagland

VERONICA: Kelly Hoagland

SVETLANA: Lyndsey Hanks

Exchange of Gifts

HOLIDAY COMEDY. A Russian, an Australian, and a Canadian walk into an airport...and what ensues is a blizzard of laughs! Eager to fly home for Christmas, three foreign college students discover all flights have been canceled and they are snowbound in an airport lobby with nowhere to go. There's a Russian with impressive hacking skills who thinks she's a comedian, a Canadian who is studying grain sciences but suffers from a gluten allergy, and a chair-kicking Australian soccer player who is afraid of snow. Audiences will love this witty, offbeat holiday comedy. Easy to stage, perfect for touring.

Performance Time: Approximately 90 minutes.

Characters

(3 F)

SVETLANA IVANOVA PETROVA: A Russian college student with impressive hacking skills who is studying “cyber security”; female.

VERONICA: Upbeat Canadian college student from Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan who is studying grain sciences (wheat, in particular) and suffers from a gluten allergy; female.

TILLY: Temperamental Australian college student who is in the United States on an athletic scholarship and is afraid of snow; female.

NOTE: Characters may be older than traditional college students by indicating they are graduate students or non-traditional students in the script.

Setting

Airport terminal, Christmas Eve.

Sets

Settings may be represented with simple set pieces.

Airport terminal lobby. There is a Christmas tree with lights, a loudspeaker on the wall, several chairs, and a window that looks out on a snowy runway. There is a café or snack bar that can be rolled on.

Outside the airport. A scrim may be used or a bare stage will suffice.

Synopsis of Scenes

ACT I

Scene 1: Airport terminal lobby, Christmas Eve.

Scene 2: Airport terminal lobby, a short time later.

Intermission, opt.

ACT II: Outside the airport, nighttime.

Props

Laptop computer, for Svetlana
Screen posting arrivals and departures, opt.
Misc items for airport café/snack bar (bread, buns, pizza
slices, hot dogs, bags of chips, sandwiches, etc.)
Water bottle
Chewing gum
Small perfume bottle
Large highway sign, for "sled"
Diplomat costume, for Veronica
Nobel Peace Prize
Acceptance speech
Skis

Special Effects

Holiday music for airport lobby
Annoying holiday song
Northern lights (lighting effect)
Fake snow, opt.
Instrumental version of "We Three Kings"
Scrim, opt.
Sound of baby crying

*“Inclement weather”
is when you have a blizzard so deep
the moose can’t even get through it...”*

—Veronica

ACT I

Scene 1

(AT RISE: Airport terminal, Christmas Eve. There a Christmas tree in the lobby and a loudspeaker on one wall.)

LOUDSPEAKER: *(Voiceover.)* Your attention, please...

(Tilly enters from the back of the theatre and runs toward the stage.)

TILLY: *(Shouts.)* Wait! Wait for me!

LOUDSPEAKER: *(Voiceover.)* This is a special announcement for all passengers...

(Svetlana enters from the back of the theatre and runs toward the stage.)

SVETLANA: *(Shouts.)* Wait! Wait! Am here!

LOUDSPEAKER: *(Voiceover.)* Due to the inclement weather...

(Veronica enters from the back of the theatre and runs toward the stage.)

VERONICA: *(Shouts.)* Wait! Wait! Please don't let them go yet! Please!

TILLY: *(Shouts.)* I'm almost there! Don't do this to me!

SVETLANA: *(Shouts.)* I have my ticket! See! I have my ticket! All my papers are in order!

LOUDSPEAKER: *(Voiceover.)* All flights are hereby canceled until further notice.

(Veronica, Tilly, and Svetlana have reached the lobby. They look up at the loudspeaker in disbelief.)

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TILLY: *(To loudspeaker.)* Canceled? What do you mean “canceled”?

VERONICA: *(To loudspeaker.)* But why?

SVETLANA: *(To loudspeaker.)* What does “until further notice” mean?

TILLY: *(To loudspeaker.)* How I am supposed to get home?!

VERONICA: *(To loudspeaker.)* It’s just a little snow! That’s not inclement weather!

SVETLANA: Does this mean they are not flying?

VERONICA: “Inclement weather” is when you have a blizzard so deep moose can’t even get through it, and it’s so deep only the tops of their antlers are sticking out. Now, that’s inclement weather.

TILLY: *(To Loudspeaker.)* I have to get home for Christmas!

VERONICA: *(To Loudspeaker.)* I have to get home for Christmas!

SVETLANA: *(To Loudspeaker.)* I just have to get home!

LOUDSPEAKER: *(Voiceover.)* We repeat, all flights are canceled for the duration of the storm.

TILLY: You don’t understand! I have to get home to Brisbane!

SVETLANA: *(To Loudspeaker.)* I have to get home to Moscow!

TILLY: *(To Loudspeaker.)* That’s in Australia!

SVETLANA: *(To Loudspeaker.)* That’s in Russia!

TILLY: *(To Loudspeaker.)* That’s a 15-hour flight!

VERONICA: *(To Loudspeaker.)* I have to get home to Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan! *(Tilly and Svetlana look at Veronica.)* That’s in Canada...sort of the middle of the country. Our version of the Midwest. *(To Loudspeaker.)* I’d settle for Regina, or even Saskatoon!

LOUDSPEAKER: *(Voiceover.)* This airport is now closed.

(Blackout.)

Scene 2

(AT RISE: Airport terminal, a short time later. Stage is dimly lit. Svetlana is tapping away on her laptop. Tilly is angrily pacing. Veronica is looking out the window.)

VERONICA: There's hardly any snow at all out there.

TILLY: I'm stuck in an airport!

VERONICA: It's barely up to my knees! Now, if it were up to my jaw, maybe you could call that "inclement weather."

TILLY: I'm stuck in an airport...for Christmas.

VERONICA: Or a moose's jaw. We have a moose statue in my hometown, and it's way up to here. *(Indicates with hand.)* You never see a moose have any trouble in the snow.

TILLY: I'm stuck in a stupid airport somewhere in the middle of the United States!

VERONICA: You know what I think the problem is? *(No one responds.)* Americans don't play enough hockey.

TILLY: And I'm not going to get home for Christmas.

VERONICA: If they played more hockey, they wouldn't let something like a little snow bother them.

TILLY: I've never *not* been home for Christmas.

VERONICA: They'd be out there shoveling away the snow and watering it down so it'll freeze, and they'd have a proper hockey rink.

TILLY: When I told my family I was going to university in the States, they worried that they'd never see me again because I was going halfway around the world. But I told them I'd be home for Christmas.

VERONICA: Or curling. We Canadians might go curling, too. But, mostly, we'd play hockey.

TILLY: I promised them I'd be home for Christmas, so do you know what that makes me? *(No one responds.)* A liar!

(Tilly screams. Veronica tries to comfort Tilly with a big hug.)

VERONICA: Oh, it's not your fault. You tried. We all tried.

TILLY: I just want to go home!

VERONICA: We all want to go home.

TILLY: Thanks.

VERONICA: There, there. It'll be all right. (*Introducing.*) I'm
Veronica, by the way.

TILLY: I'm Tilly.

VERONICA: Oh, that's a pretty name.

TILLY: Well, it's better than my real name.

VERONICA: What's your real name?

TILLY: Tilda. (*Slight pause.*) Matilda.

VERONICA: Oh... (*Lying.*) ...that's pretty, too.

TILLY: Do you know how many times I get asked about
waltzing? It's a stupid name. I hate it every time I hear it.

VERONICA: But, hey, you've made the best of it. That's what
we'll have to do here...make the best of it.

TILLY: I don't see how.

SVETLANA: (*To Veronica and Tilly.*) What are English words
for "flying"?

TILLY: What?! You're doing a crossword puzzle? You're
stuck in an airport, and it's pitch dark, and you're doing a
crossword puzzle?!

VERONICA: See, she's making the best of it. (*To Svetlana.*)
How many letters?

SVETLANA: Does not matter number of letters. I just need to
know English words for "flying."

TILLY: What kind of crossword is it where you don't need to
know the number of letters?

VERONICA: (*To Svetlana.*) "Aeronautics, "aerospace,"
"aerodynamics." All those "aero" words.

TILLY: (*To Svetlana.*) "Turbulence." There's a word for you.
That's what we've got here: turbulence.

SVETLANA: Not "turbulence." Other words. Good words.

TILLY: I thought "turbulence" was a pretty good word.

VERONICA: "Aerosmith," like the band! There's another
"aero" word.

SVETLANA: That not it.

VERONICA: Hey, we could play word games. Anybody want to play word games?

TILLY: No, I don't want to play word games. I want to go home.

SVETLANA: I need more flying words.

VERONICA: "Airborne," "aircraft," "air speed."

TILLY: *(To Svetlana.)* Or "grounded." That's more like it. There's another word for you.

VERONICA: *(To Svetlana.)* "Aviation," "aviator," "aviatrix." That's like a female pilot.

SVETLANA: "Aviation." Thank you.

VERONICA: It fits?

TILLY: What do they think we're supposed to do? Just sit here in the dark and wait? And wait for what?

VERONICA: I don't know...morning?

TILLY: Christmas morning. *(Suddenly, the lights come on.)* Whoa. What just happened?

VERONICA: The lights came on!

TILLY: I can see that, but what just happened?

SVETLANA: *(Indicating laptop.)* Americans so easy, not like Russians. We Russians mysterious.

VERONICA: *(Realizes.)* Wait, you did that?

TILLY: She did what?

SVETLANA: *(To Veronica.)* Is simple. I turned on the lights.

TILLY: But how?

SVETLANA: I enter password, I bypass security code, I disengage automatic timer, I re-route power to lighting grid. Is simple.

VERONICA: You hacked into the computer system?

SVETLANA: "Hack" is primitive word. "Hack" is what sickle does to crop of wheat. "Hack" is what axe does to pile of wood. "Hack" is what you do to fat goose at Christmas.

TILLY: You were able to do that...from there?

SVETLANA: But, yes, I hacked.

VERONICA: We have lights! We have lights!

TILLY: *(To Svetlana.)* Wait. You're not one of those Russian hackers, are you?

SVETLANA: Is old Russian proverb: "I hack, therefore I am."

VERONICA: *(To Tilly.)* I think all that really matters right now is that she turned the lights on.

TILLY: *(To Svetlana, skeptical.)* So what else can you do?

SVETLANA: I could reschedule all flights.

TILLY: Really? You could do that?

SVETLANA: Only on big screen there, not actual aircraft.

TILLY: Oh.

SVETLANA: But if you want —

(The screen posting arrivals and departures lights up. Note: This can be unseen by the audience, if desired.)

VERONICA: *(To Tilly, indicating screen.)* Look at that! All our flights are on time! And look! Now they're boarding! *(To Svetlana.)* Do you think you could put Moose Jaw on there? You know, just for fun. We don't have our own airport. Well, not one with regular flights, anyway. We don't even really have that many moose. But we do have wheat...lots and lots of wheat.

SVETLANA: Now have airport...international airport. Aeroflot has direct flight: Moose Jaw to Moscow. I ride home with you part of way.

TILLY: *(Indicating screen.)* Shut that off. It's depressing.

SVETLANA: All Moose Jaw flights now canceled.

VERONICA: *(Introducing.)* I'm Veronica. I'm from Canada, but I guess you figured that out already. This is Tilly. She's from Australia. What's your name?

SVETLANA: Svetlana Ivanova Petrova. But I let you call me by KGB code name.

TILLY: Wait, you're KGB?

SVETLANA: Code name either "Red Dawn" or "Red October." I get them confused. First, "Red Dawn" had Russians. Remake had North Koreans. No wonder it flop.

TILLY: So, wait a minute. Are you really a Russian spy?

SVETLANA: Is joke.

TILLY: Oh.

SVETLANA: Or not.

TILLY: What?

SVETLANA: Is like Rocky and Bullwinkle. (*Indicating Veronica.*) She moose. (*Indicating Tilly.*) You flying squirrel.

I Natasha. No Boris, though. Boris not my type.

TILLY: (*Confused.*) What?

SVETLANA: You can call me Svetlana. Is easier to remember.

If forget, can just call me "comrade."

TILLY: Whatever. How'd you learn to do all that...to break in on your computer and turn the lights on?

SVETLANA: Easy. I study on exchange program. I exchange their password for mine. Now I am master of universe, or at least airport.

TILLY: So you *are* a Russian hacker!

VERONICA: (*To Svetlana.*) So you're studying in the United States? I am, too. What's your major?

SVETLANA: Cyber security.

TILLY: You learn fast.

SVETLANA: Not really. I learn all this in school in Russia.

Here, I hack into university mainframe and change test scores. Mostly, I sit in my room, drink vodka, play chess, steal government secrets. Maybe sell mail-order brides. Vodka here not cheap. In Russia, we are all capitalists now.

TILLY: You're making that up, right? Because I can't really tell.

SVETLANA: I don't know. Am I? All you know is...lights back on.

VERONICA: They are back on.

TILLY: (*To Svetlana.*) Uh, yeah, thanks.

SVETLANA: Can turn on Christmas tree if want.

VERONICA: Sure, that'd be nice.

TILLY: (*To Svetlana.*) May as well. It's probably as close to Christmas as any of us are going to get.

(Svetlana approaches the tree and plugs the light cord into the socket. Christmas tree lights up.)

SVETLANA: Works better if plugged in. How you say, "tada"!

VERONICA: Oh, that's beautiful. *(To Tilly.)* Isn't that beautiful?

TILLY: *(Sarcastically.)* Yeah, great.

(Svetlana does a ballet-like spin.)

SVETLANA: Am also ballerina. Is required in Russia. I could dance "Nutcracker" for you.

TILLY: That's all right.

SVETLANA: "Swan Lake," perhaps?

TILLY: No, thanks.

SVETLANA: Your loss. *(Sighs.)* No appreciation for greatness of Russian culture.

TILLY: I'm sorry. I didn't mean it like that. I'm just upset.

SVETLANA: Is all right. I just hack into bank and drain your account. You appreciate Russian culture then.

TILLY: What? No! You're joking, right? *(To Veronica.)* Is she joking? I can't tell. Tell me if she's joking.

VERONICA: I think she's joking. Sometimes humor just doesn't translate very well.

SVETLANA: Tell me about it.

VERONICA: So, uh, thanks for figuring out the lights. They'll help cheer things up some...give us at least a little Christmas cheer.

TILLY: Very little.

VERONICA: Well, right now, it's all we've got.

TILLY: How can they just leave us here?

SVETLANA: Very easily, it seems.

TILLY: Aren't they supposed to at least put us up somewhere? I thought when they canceled a flight, they put you up somewhere.

SVETLANA: They did. They put us up here.

TILLY: It's an airport!

SVETLANA: Better than putting us out in the cold.

TILLY: I don't think they even know we're here. We should call someone.

VERONICA: Like who? I already let my parents know, but there's not much they can do about it from there.

TILLY: I don't know... *(Thinks. Gets an idea.)* The police! We should call the police!

SVETLANA: No! Not police!

TILLY: Why not? They might come help us! They could find us a place to stay!

SVETLANA: No need to alert authorities!

TILLY: Why not?

SVETLANA: Am Russian. Have experience with authorities!

TILLY: The authorities here probably aren't like your authorities.

SVETLANA: Is worse! Is American authorities!

TILLY: Wait. You're not doing anything illegal, are you? Because I'm totally in favor of calling the authorities to get us out of here.

VERONICA: Actually, I don't think the authorities are going to be able to help us much.

TILLY: Why's that?

VERONICA: Look out there. *(Points to window.)*

TILLY: *(Looks out window.)* Oh. What am I supposed to see?

VERONICA: You see out there on the other side of where the runway is supposed to be?

TILLY: Yeah. I mean, no. I mean, I don't see anything.

VERONICA: The highway out there on the other side of the runway?

TILLY: Yeah, what about it?

VERONICA: I can't see it.

TILLY: Oh. Neither can I.

VERONICA: There's nothing moving. If there was traffic moving, we'd be able to see the headlights.

TILLY: Oh.

VERONICA: Even if we called someone, and they wanted to come get us out, they couldn't even get here.

TILLY: Are you sure?

VERONICA: I think the whole city is shut down.

TILLY: Can they do that?

VERONICA: Doesn't matter if they can or can't. I think they have.

SVETLANA: Put another way, all authority has broken down.

VERONICA: Well, I'm not sure I'd say that.

SVETLANA: Am Russian. I will say it. *(Takes off her shoe and bangs it à la Nikita Khrushchev.)* "We will bury you!" Well, under snow, anyway.

TILLY: What are you doing?

SVETLANA: Is Khrushchev reference. You not know Khrushchev?

TILLY: I have no idea what you're talking about.

SVETLANA: Is famous Russian shoe salesman. He demonstrate sturdiness of heel.

TILLY: I don't care about shoes! We're stuck in the snow! Who's going to get us out?

VERONICA: Wait, I remember something from one of my international relations classes—

SVETLANA: Americans not know how to deal with snow. They try to fight it. We Russians...we *are* the snow.

TILLY: Whatever that's supposed to mean.

SVETLANA: Think of airport as internal exile. In Russia, if government not like someone, it kick you out. If really not like someone, it make you stay. America must really like us.

TILLY: *(To Veronica.)* So are we really stuck here, then?

VERONICA: I'm afraid so.

TILLY: Ugh!

SVETLANA: In Russia, there is story. Man goes to town to drink vodka. On way home, big snowstorm. Loses way. Passes out drunk in snow.

TILLY: And?

SVETLANA: He eaten by wolves. That end of story.

TILLY: And the point of that is?

SVETLANA: Is no point. Just story. Three things in every Russian story: Vodka, wolves, snow. Maybe sometime bear. Is like, how you say, perfect country-western song? Or, if Russian, perfect country-eastern song.

TILLY: (*Screams.*) Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaargh! (*Kicks a chair.*)

SVETLANA: (*To Veronica.*) She no like story, or she no like Russia? Because if she no like Russia, maybe I report her to authorities – my authorities – not your authorities.

VERONICA: (*To Tilly.*) All you all right?

TILLY: No, I'm not all right! None of us are all right! What kind of question is that? We're all stuck in an airport thousands of miles from home and can't get home for Christmas! Do you call that "all right"? So, no, I'm not all right! (*Kicks another chair.*)

VERONICA: Whoa...whoa...easy on the furniture. (*Tilly screams.*) Okay, at least you didn't kick anything that time. (*Tilly grabs a chair and prepares to throw it. Veronica restrains her.*) Hey, hey, let's take it easy.

TILLY: Why?! After what they've done to us?! I want to make them pay!

VERONICA: Yeah, well, more likely, they'll make us pay once they finally come back and find everything broken.

TILLY: Good. It'll teach 'em a lesson to leave people stranded like this!

VERONICA: Uh, I'm not sure it's going to work that way.

TILLY: Just one more thing! Just let me smash one more thing!

VERONICA: I'm sorry, I can't let you do that, Tilly.

TILLY: Why not? Just give me one good reason.

VERONICA: Because if you bust up all the chairs, we won't have anything to sit on.

TILLY: Oh.

VERONICA: We're going to be here a long time. We might want to sit down at some point.

(Tilly wrestles free from Veronica's grasp.)

TILLY: Oh, fine! *(Appears to calm down.)* One, two, three –
(Counts to ten, muttering the rest of the numbers.)

VERONICA: Deep breaths. Deep, cleansing breaths.

TILLY: All right, I'm better now.

VERONICA: You sure?

TILLY: *(Erupting.)* I just need to kick one more thing!

(Tilly kicks one of the chairs she had kicked previously.)

VERONICA: Hey!

TILLY: There, all better. Just had to get that out of my system.

VERONICA: Uh, I'm glad, I guess.

TILLY: You should see me when I really get upset.

VERONICA: Uh, I'd rather not.

SVETLANA: *(To Tilly.)* Very impressive.

TILLY: What?

SVETLANA: The kick...very impressive. You play sport?

TILLY: Uh, yeah. Football. Well, "soccer" they call it here.

VERONICA: Cool. Who do you play for?

TILLY: Some university you've never heard of.

VERONICA: Are you on scholarship?

TILLY: Oh, well, uh, yeah. That's how it works.

SVETLANA: They give you scholarship to play sport?

TILLY: Yeah.

VERONICA: *(To Svetlana.)* Some American schools do that.

SVETLANA: Oh. And this is how USA get to moon? If only Russia know. We send scientists and engineers to school. Should have sent football players. Then we have red moon! Goal!

TILLY: When I was little, I had anger issues. My stepdad sent me to therapy for a while, but that didn't work so they

signed me up for football instead...figured I could work out all my aggression that way.

VERONICA: And did you?

TILLY: No, but I developed a heck of a kick.

SVETLANA: You like Caesar: You came, you saw, you kicked chair.

TILLY: First, it was just to give me a way to get my anger out. To be honest, I never really liked football all that much, but at least it got me out of that therapist's office and gave me a chance to run around and burn off steam. And then I started getting noticed, like really noticed: junior national team, international tours, then scholarship offers from American universities. Pretty heady stuff for a girl who got signed up for football because she was acting out in school.

VERONICA: But it's worked out all right, right?

TILLY: I'm stuck in an airport for Christmas! No, it hasn't worked out all right!

(Tilly goes to kick another chair. Veronica restrains her.)

VERONICA: No, no, no, no, no.

SVETLANA: *(To Tilly.)* How Ronald Reagan say? "There you go again."

VERONICA: *(To Tilly.)* Let's just take it easy, shall we? Kicking the furniture isn't going to help anything.

TILLY: It helps *me!* Just let me go!

VERONICA: Not until you calm down.

TILLY: Don't you understand?! I *am* calm!

VERONICA: All right, then *calmer*.

SVETLANA: You need blue helmet.

VERONICA: What?

SVETLANA: Blue helmet. UN peacekeepers have blue helmets.

VERONICA: What are you talking about?

SVETLANA: That what you do. You keep peace.

VERONICA: Uh, yeah, I suppose.

SVETLANA: Also, she might hit you in head.

VERONICA: Huh?

SVETLANA: That what they teach us in Red Army training, or maybe women's self-defense class. In Russia, all the same.

TILLY: *(To Veronica.)* I could, you know. A head butt.

VERONICA: I know you could. But you're not going to, are you?

TILLY: *(Sighs.)* No.

(Veronica loosens grip.)

VERONICA: All right, then.

TILLY: Sorry about that.

VERONICA: It's all right. You're upset. We're all upset.

TILLY: *(Indicating Svetlana.)* She doesn't seem upset.

SVETLANA: Am Russian. Am accustomed to waiting in queue.

TILLY: Yeah, well, this isn't exactly a queue.

SVETLANA: You're right. Is not. Is plot. Is capitalist plot.

TILLY: Whatever.

SVETLANA: You not find that funny?

TILLY: Find what funny?

SVETLANA: "Capitalist plot." Is play on "communist plot."

TILLY: Oh. Yeah. I don't know. I suppose.

SVETLANA: Will make note of that. You not know Khrushchev, either.

TILLY: Make note of what?

SVETLANA: How you say? "If first you not succeed, try, try, again."

TILLY: Something like that, but I have no idea what you're talking about.

SVETLANA: Is old Russian proverb.

TILLY: If you say so.

SVETLANA: Everything is old Russian proverb. That where God get idea for Book of Proverbs.

TILLY: You are strange.

SVETLANA: Am Russian. Am "riddle, wrapped in mystery, inside enigma." Churchill said that. He not understand Russia, but he understand vodka. So Stalin make him honorary Russian. That how war was won.

TILLY: Whatever.

SVETLANA: Is true. Government says is true; therefore, is true.

TILLY: I'm not sure it works that way.

SVETLANA: That because you not Russian. Trust me, in Russia, is how works.

VERONICA: *(To Tilly.)* You know, if you really want to work out your aggression, you should learn how to play hockey. You get to hit people there...in a legal way, of course.

TILLY: Yeah, well, not much ice in Australia.

VERONICA: I guess not.

SVETLANA: Best not encourage her to hit people. She already commit assault on chair.

TILLY: I've never ever seen snow before.

VERONICA: You've never seen snow? Really?

TILLY: They say it hasn't snowed in Brisbane since sometime in the 1800s. It's basically beach weather year-round.

SVETLANA: That because you on bottom of world. Is like snow globe. Turn it over, and it snow in Brisbane.

TILLY: It snows up in the mountains some. "Up in the Alps," "down in the Alps," however you say it. The Australian Alps...some people go skiing there. But I've never been there. They're down in the southern part of the country somewhere.

VERONICA: I can't imagine a world without snow.

TILLY: Strange, isn't it? I never traveled to see snow in my own country, but now I've gone to the other side of the world and that's all I can see.

SVETLANA: World turned upside down...just like snow globe.

TILLY: Definitely turned upside down.

VERONICA: Americans call Canada "The Great White North." That's all they know about us. We're big, and we're to the north, and they think all we have is snow. They don't really know anything else.

SVETLANA: Snow invented in Russia. Is true. Your Arctic clipper comes from Siberia.

VERONICA: They say the First Nations people have 50 words for snow.

TILLY: Yeah, well, I've got one word for it right now.

SVETLANA: *(To Veronica.)* Better hide chair. We about to get vocabulary lesson.

VERONICA: *(To Svetlana and Tilly.)* Look, why don't we find some way to pass the time? I mean, we're obviously going to be here awhile, whether we like it or not, so how about we get to know one another.

TILLY: Fine.

SVETLANA: Name, rank, serial number. That all I say.

VERONICA: *(To Svetlana and Tilly.)* I'll start, how about that?

TILLY: Sure.

SVETLANA: *(To Veronica.)* I take notes. File full report with minder.

TILLY: *(To Veronica.)* She scares me.

SVETLANA: How you say, "mission accomplished"?

TILLY: *(To Veronica.)* See!

VERONICA: *(To Tilly and Svetlana, introducing.)* So, I'm Veronica. I'm from a little town with a funny name in the middle of nowhere in Canada, but I'm going to school in the United States.

SVETLANA: What you study?

VERONICA: Agriculture. Grain sciences, actually. Wheat, if you're really curious.

SVETLANA: You study wheat?

VERONICA: Yeah.

TILLY: Why?

VERONICA: What can I say? I'm from Saskatchewan. We have lots and lots of wheat there.

TILLY: When it's not snowing.

VERONICA: We have two seasons: winter and wheat.

SVETLANA: So why you come to United States to study wheat? No school there teach wheat?

VERONICA: I don't know. I could have gone to the University of Saskatchewan. I just thought I'd do something different. You know, see the world a little while I could.
[*Note: If Veronica is cast as a grad student, change to: "I went to the University of Saskatchewan for my undergrad but for grad school, I thought I'd do something different. You know, see the world a little while I could."*]

SVETLANA: So you go to American wheat school.

VERONICA: Well, I wouldn't call it a wheat school. But, yeah, I guess it's not really all that different. It's a different country at least. I thought I might learn something.

SVETLANA: And what you learn so far?

TILLY: Wait, are you interrogating her?

VERONICA: It's okay.

SVETLANA: (*Proudly.*) I intern in gulag. Learn interrogation technique from best.

VERONICA: Well, I guess I've learned about all the ways wheat is influenced by climate and soil, and all the different diseases wheat can get, and all the ways you can manipulate its genome to produce different strains of wheat and—

TILLY: Boring! Sorry, just being honest.

VERONICA: Well, yeah, it kinda is, I guess.

SVETLANA: (*Excited.*) Confession! Subject has confessed!

TILLY: I need more action in my life.

VERONICA: Yeah, I probably do, too. But, someday, you'll thank me when you have breakfast, or at least that's the plan.

TILLY: Ugh, I hadn't even thought about that. What are we going to eat?

SVETLANA: We break into vending machine. Commit crime against state.

TILLY: We can't live off a vending machine!

SVETLANA: In Russia, we boil shoe for supper. Eat laces for dessert. Vending machine is like buffet!

TILLY: I'm being serious!

SVETLANA: We have six shoes. We last six days if we share.

TILLY: No!

SVETLANA: Wash down with vodka, never notice.

TILLY: You're not helping!

SVETLANA: Trust me, with boiled shoe, vodka helps.

TILLY: Arrggh!

VERONICA: So, how about you? What brings you here?

TILLY: What? Who? Me?

VERONICA: Sure.

SVETLANA: *(To Tilly, indicating Veronica.)* She trying to change subject. She clever like that.

VERONICA: *(To Tilly.)* Come on, we may as well get to know each other.

TILLY: Well, I think I've told you most of it. I'm from Australia. Brisbane. That's on the east side of the country. It's pretty much summer all the time.

SVETLANA: Ever eat kangaroo?

TILLY: No, we don't eat kangaroo!

SVETLANA: Kangaroo ever eat you?

TILLY: No. Enough about kangaroos.

SVETLANA: Emus? I bet taste like chicken. Big chicken!

VERONICA: Let her tell her story.

TILLY: Anyway, I came here to play football... *(Realizes.)* ...soccer. I still have trouble calling it that.

SVETLANA: So you study soccer?

TILLY: No, I'm studying sports management.

VERONICA: Cool. What do you hope to do with that?

TILLY: I don't know. Do something in sports, I guess. Hadn't really thought much beyond that.

SVETLANA: I want play chess against you. I beat you every time. Me, I think so far ahead, I beat you before you even set up pieces.

TILLY: So what about you, Miss KGB? What brings you to the United States?

SVETLANA: Airplane. Just flew in from Moscow, and boy are my arms tired.

(No one laughs.)

TILLY: You know what I mean.

SVETLANA: Not authorized to say more.

TILLY: Not authorized by whom?

SVETLANA: Not authorized to say.

TILLY: Aargh! *(To Veronica, indicating Svetlana.)* Can you make her stop?

VERONICA: Not likely.

SVETLANA: You English-speaking people, you tell everybody everything. You tweet this. You post that. Whole life...there for all to see. We Russians, we more private.

VERONICA: That's understandable. Every culture is different.

SVETLANA: That why we go online, hack in, steal your identity. Now, I am he, as you are he, as you are me, and we are all together.

TILLY: *(Confused.)* What?

SVETLANA: And walrus is Paul.

(Veronica laughs.)

VERONICA: Oh, I get it.

SVETLANA: Favorite song is "Back in U.S.S.R."

VERONICA: So where are you going to school in the United States?

SVETLANA: California. I spy on Silicon Valley.

VERONICA: I'm in Kansas. Kansas is a lot like Saskatchewan...just without the hockey...or the moose.

SVETLANA: So much for see the world.

VERONICA: Yeah. *(To Tilly.)* I bet you'd like hockey. There's lots of action in hockey.

TILLY: Yeah, maybe. Sounds cold.

VERONICA: So what about you? Where are you in school?

TILLY: On the East Coast, about as far away from as home as you could get.

VERONICA: I'm lucky. I'm not that far away, although I'll admit at the moment it feels pretty far.

TILLY: I didn't really think it mattered until now, but if I was going to school on the West Coast, I wouldn't have had to get that stupid connecting flight and wind up here, wherever here is.

VERONICA: I guess this is what we get when we try to save money by booking our flights on a budget airline, eh?

SVETLANA: Next time, I hack into better airline. Get first-class ticket.

TILLY: What kind of airport is this, anyway? We're apparently the only ones trying to fly through here.

SVETLANA: Is very international. You try to go west. I try to go east. She try to go north. All we need is someone trying to go south.

TILLY: What we need is someone to get us out of here!

VERONICA: Santa Claus. He's trying to come south, in a way.

SVETLANA: Santa Claus is Russian.

VERONICA: I didn't think Santa Claus had a nationality.

TILLY: Why are you even talking about Santa Claus?

SVETLANA: Santa Claus lives at North Pole.

TILLY: Yeah, so?

SVETLANA: North Pole belongs to Russia.

TILLY: The North Pole doesn't belong to anybody. It's like the South Pole. It's international territory or something.

SVETLANA: Russia claim North Pole.

VERONICA: *(To Tilly.)* She's right. It has. I read something about that. It's part of a dispute over who really owns the

Arctic. Climate change is opening up the Northwest Passage and all that. It's kind of tricky.

SVETLANA: Next, we take back Alaska. But you not worry. Russia be good neighbor. Just ask Ukraine.

TILLY: All right, that was definitely a joke, I think. Right?

SVETLANA: Global warming good for you. Grow wheat all across Arctic. Turn Siberia into breadbasket. Santa Claus ride grain combine around world for Christmas.

VERONICA: So what's Christmas like in Russia?

SVETLANA: You change subject again. You like Russian government. You not want me talk politics.

VERONICA: I just thought it would be a chance for us to learn about a different culture.

TILLY: I'd rather learn about how we can get out of here.

SVETLANA: This like gulag. We not get out until they let us out.

TILLY: Oh! I really, really want to kick something!

VERONICA: Come on, let's hear Svetlana tell us about Christmas in Russia.

SVETLANA: Russia not celebrate Christmas until January. We on different calendar.

VERONICA: Oh, that's interesting.

TILLY: See, she's not even going to miss her Christmas.

VERONICA: Come on, let's just listen.

SVETLANA: Family eat supper with 12 dishes, one for each disciple.

VERONICA: Oh, that's neat. *(To Tilly.)* Isn't that neat?

(Tilly doesn't respond.)

SVETLANA: In good year, some dishes even have food.

TILLY: I don't want to hear about food.

SVETLANA: In bad year, just have boiled shoe.

VERONICA: Do you have Santa Claus?

SVETLANA: We have Grandfather Frost, but he comes New Year's. Santa Claus...he agent of Western imperialism.

TILLY: I thought you just said he was Russian?

SVETLANA: Maybe Russian exile. Some sent to Siberia.
Santa sent to North Pole.

VERONICA: *(To Tilly.)* What about you? What's Christmas like in Australia?

TILLY: Happening without me.

VERONICA: It'll still happen. It'll just happen here...with us.
So what can we do to make Christmas more Australian for you?

TILLY: Nice try, but I'm afraid that's impossible.

VERONICA: Come on, try us. Other than that whole being in Australia thing.

TILLY: We go to the beach.

VERONICA: Oh, because it's summer there, right.

SVETLANA: We have summer in Russia, too. It come one day in August. Usually in afternoon.

TILLY: Barbie on the beach. That's our tradition.

SVETLANA: We could set fire to something if it will make you feel at home.

VERONICA: *(To Tilly.)* I guess everything would be different there since it's summer. I hadn't really thought about that.

TILLY: Not everything. There's still a Santa Claus.

SVETLANA: Russian Santa!

TILLY: More like an Australian Santa. Instead of reindeer, he has kangaroos.

VERONICA: Cool!

SVETLANA: Convenient. Kangaroo put presents in pouch like overhead storage bin on airplane.

TILLY: And we change out all the snow words in the Christmas songs.

VERONICA: *(Excited.)* Songs! That's what we could do to pass the time! We could sing Christmas songs!

(Svetlana resumes typing on her laptop.)

TILLY: I'm a terrible singer.

VERONICA: I am, too, but it's the thought that counts.

SVETLANA: What song you like?

VERONICA: Oh, any, I guess. *(To Tilly.)* I'm curious, what are the songs where you change the words? Maybe you could teach us.

TILLY: I don't know. Like "Jingle Bells." "Dancing through the bush." That sort of thing.

VERONICA: Neat. *(Suddenly, holiday music blares over the loudspeaker.)* Hey!

SVETLANA: DJ Svetlana in the house. I take requests.

TILLY: You did that? How'd you do that?

SVETLANA: I log into audio system, I open folder of sound files, I pick sub-folder labeled "Christmas," I launch "play" –

TILLY: All right, all right, I get it.

SVETLANA: I hack.

TILLY: Ha-ha. I guess you did.

VERONICA: *(To Svetlana.)* That's beautiful. Thanks!

SVETLANA: If Santa have Internet, I hack into his system, we get all presents we want. Turn naughty list into nice list!

VERONICA: Ha!

TILLY: I wish...

SVETLANA: Of course, if Santa real, he land on runway and we all ride home.

TILLY: Yeah.

SVETLANA: Instead, we have Christmas music.

VERONICA: And each other.

TILLY: Please don't go getting sentimental. I can't stand being sentimental. It just makes me want to kick something.

VERONICA: I'm serious. I'm not being sentimental.

SVETLANA: *(To Tilly.)* She just trying to save chair. She sentimental for furniture.

VERONICA: Look, let's take an objective view of the situation. We're stuck here whether we like it or not.

TILLY: We don't like it.

VERONICA: But we at least like each other, right?

TILLY: I guess. *(To Svetlana.)* I'm not sure about her.

SVETLANA: Is okay. I not sure about myself, either.

VERONICA: Come on, now, please...we're going to be spending Christmas together. Let's at least make the best of it.

TILLY: You are entirely too cheerful. Has anybody ever told you that?

SVETLANA: She talks to wheat all day. Wheat probably not talk back. Just wave.

TILLY: Ha! That's kind of funny.

SVETLANA: I make note of that.

TILLY: What's with you making notes of everything?

(Svetlana doesn't respond.)

VERONICA: We have a Christmas tree. We have Christmas music. We have a warm place to stay.

TILLY: Actually, I'm kind of freezing.

SVETLANA: I can turn heat up.

TILLY: You can?

SVETLANA: You kick chair into pieces, then we set fire. Then all warmer.

TILLY: *(Sarcastically.)* Great.

SVETLANA: Or I change thermostat.

VERONICA: You can do that?!

SVETLANA: I tell you, I am master of controls now. Heating, air conditioning at my fingertips.

TILLY: Thanks. I'm not used to the cold like you two are.

SVETLANA: Is like Cold War! Russian have finger on button!

(The lights come on in the café. Note: This may be unseen by audience, if desired. Tilly and Veronica don't see this happen.)

TILLY: So can the master of controls find us something to eat?

SVETLANA: I can initiate nuclear reaction.

TILLY: What?

SVETLANA: I see microwave in café.

(Svetlana gestures toward the café or snack bar. Note: Café or snack bar may be rolled on, if desired.)

TILLY: Oh, thank goodness. I'm starving. *(Approaches café.)* I hadn't even noticed this was here.

SVETLANA: I did. On circuit board is labeled "kitchen."

VERONICA: So, now we even have food!

SVETLANA: Maybe even wheat. You introduce us? You know all wheat personally now?

VERONICA: *(Laughs.)* Oh. Well, I'm not sure I need to do that. I'm sure you can figure out what it is.

(Tilly starts investigating the café.)

TILLY: There's bread...lots of buns.

SVETLANA: Any turnips?

TILLY: No turnips.

SVETLANA: People think Newton discover gravity. Newton not first to discover gravity. Russian first to discover gravity. Russian peasant get drunk, fall off turnip wagon. Turnip hit on head. Gravity! I discover gravity! But West go with Newton story. Apple more glamorous than turnip. Oh, well. Is way of world. That why no computer company called "Turnip."

TILLY: We could make sandwiches! Does anybody want a sandwich?

VERONICA: No, thanks.

TILLY: You're not hungry?

VERONICA: No, it's not that.

TILLY: What then?

VERONICA: I'll just put together a salad maybe.

TILLY: An airport salad doesn't sound very appetizing.

VERONICA: Yeah, I know, but I'll be fine.

TILLY: You sure? They've got some hot dogs. This looks like pepperoni for a pizza. This might be salami.

VERONICA: I'm fine.

TILLY: There's white, wheat, rye—

VERONICA: I'm fine, really.

SVETLANA: *(To Tilly.)* Maybe she vegetarian. In Russia, that mean you eat turnip. Nothing else. Just turnip. Maybe cabbage on holiday. It holiday, give her some cabbage.

TILLY: *(To Veronica.)* Not really seeing anything for a salad. Just sandwiches and bags of chips.

SVETLANA: Vegetarian cannot even eat boiled shoe.

VERONICA: Maybe I'll just have some chips. *(Looks at the label on a bag of chips but sets them aside.)* Not these. *(Keeps looking through the chips, setting the bags aside.)*

TILLY: You don't want a sandwich?

VERONICA: No, no, that's okay, really.

TILLY: Suit yourself.

SVETLANA: *(To Veronica, concerned.)* You not eat?

VERONICA: I'll eat something. I'll be fine.

SVETLANA: Something wrong?

VERONICA: I'm just...I'm just a picky eater, that's all.

TILLY: Yeah, well, I was, too, but I'm famished.

SVETLANA: *(To Veronica.)* Hide your shoes! Tilly make midnight snack!

VERONICA: Actually—

TILLY: What?

VERONICA: Oh, that's all right. You go ahead. Fix what you want. I'll find something.

SVETLANA: Something wrong.

VERONICA: No, really.

SVETLANA: Me not KGB, so tell me.

VERONICA: Okay, fine, it's just a little personal.

TILLY: We're three strangers stuck together in an airport. I get the feeling we're going to find out a lot of personal things about one another.

SVETLANA: Dates of birth, passwords, identity numbers—

TILLY: Not that kind of personal.

VERONICA: I, uh, I have a gluten allergy.

TILLY: Wait. What?

SVETLANA: *(To Veronica.)* You have a gluten allergy, yet you study wheat?

VERONICA: Yeah, something like that.

SVETLANA: But why?

TILLY: *(To Veronica.)* Yeah, why?

VERONICA: I'm from Saskatchewan. Wheat is what we have.

SVETLANA: In Russia, we have wolves, but I not study them.

VERONICA: I guess it's sort of my attempt to deal with it. You know, find a way to make peace with something that's trying to poison me.

SVETLANA: *(To Tilly.)* See, she peacekeeper.

TILLY: I guess.

SVETLANA: *(To Veronica.)* Someday, you be diplomat. You make peace...peace in Mideast...peace in Midwest.

VERONICA: Ha! No, I'll probably just go back to Saskatchewan and work for some ag company. I wouldn't mind seeing more of the world, though. Maybe someday I'll get to go to Russia and see your wheat crop, who knows? Maybe I could give you some advice on how to increase your yield.

SVETLANA: Government want to increase wheat yield. Exhort wheat: "Grow more, or we send you to gulag!"

VERONICA: Ha! I'm pretty sure it doesn't work that way.

SVETLANA: Meanwhile, I sit in government office, change data to fit five-year plan. See, wheat crop increase yield! We all get medals! That how works in Russia.

TILLY: *(To Veronica.)* So what *can* you eat?

VERONICA: Fruit, vegetables, any kind of meat that's not processed. It's fine, really.

SVETLANA: Not seem fine. You be hungry.

VERONICA: Yeah, a little.

TILLY: I'm hungry a lot.

SVETLANA: You burn off energy kicking chairs.

TILLY: True. But I have a high metabolism. At school, they have us all on special diets...the athletes, anyway.

SVETLANA: Sound like Russia. One queue for important people. One queue everyone else.

TILLY: It's not like that. Well, maybe it is. *(To Veronica.)*
How about some peanuts?

VERONICA: No, thanks.

TILLY: Peanut allergy, too?

VERONICA: Yeah.

TILLY: Oh.

VERONICA: I'm pretty much allergic to everything.

TILLY: They've got some cheese here. How are you with dairy products?

VERONICA: Don't worry about me. I'll be fine. I've got some things in my purse to help keep my sugar up.

SVETLANA: Sugar? You mean like blood sugar?

VERONICA: Yeah, that, too. Although...

TILLY: Although what?

VERONICA: Although you may want to think about how to ration things. We don't know how long we're going to be stuck here.

TILLY: Oh.

SVETLANA: Am Russian. I used to ration.

TILLY: *(To Veronica.)* So how long do you think we're going to be here?

VERONICA: I don't know. At least a day, maybe more.

TILLY: More?!

(Svetlana opens her laptop.)

SVETLANA: Here, I compute how to ration.

VERONICA: Well, the snow's stopped, but with the holiday coming up, I have no idea how long it will take them to clear the— *(Sees something out the window.)* Hey!

TILLY: What?

VERONICA: Look!

TILLY: At what?

VERONICA: The northern lights!

(Tilly joins Veronica at the window and they look at the northern lights. Svetlana types on her computer.)

TILLY: *(Looking out window.)* Wow.

VERONICA: *(Looking out window.)* Aren't they beautiful?

TILLY: I've heard about these.

VERONICA: When I was a kid, I'd go out and lay in the yard behind our house and watch them for hours.

TILLY: They look like curtains.

VERONICA: Summer, winter, didn't matter.

TILLY: Curtains of fire.

VERONICA: I always used to think my life in Saskatchewan was so small—the house, the farm, the school. We never really went any farther than the grain elevator. But laying there watching the northern lights, it always made me think that the world is so big.

TILLY: Oh, look! They're changing color. Do they always do that?

VERONICA: Yeah, and sometimes you can hear them.

TILLY: Hear them?

VERONICA: Yeah. They're electricity, so they crackle and hiss.

TILLY: Weird.

VERONICA: Wonderful.

(Svetlana joins Veronica and Tilly at the window.)

SVETLANA: What is that over there? *(Points.)*

VERONICA: Over where?

SVETLANA: On horizon.

TILLY: I don't see anything.

SVETLANA: I see lights.

VERONICA: The northern lights!
SVETLANA: No, over there. On ground. (*Points.*)
VERONICA: Sometimes, it looks like they touch the ground
way off in the distance.
SVETLANA: No. This like building light.
TILLY: Sure it's not runway lights?
VERONICA: The runway lights are long since covered up.
SVETLANA: Something open somewhere.
TILLY: I still don't see anything.
SVETLANA: Very faint.
VERONICA: I'm going outside! I want to see if I can hear
them!
TILLY: It's cold outside!
VERONICA: I know! I'm Canadian! I love the cold! Come
on! You should come, too!
TILLY: But it's cold.
VERONICA: Exactly! (*Exits.*)
TILLY: (*Calls.*) But I'm Australian! It's summer where I come
from! I'm supposed to be at the beach at Christmas! (*Looks
out the window.*) They are kind of pretty, though.
SVETLANA: We must talk.
TILLY: What?
SVETLANA: While she not here.
TILLY: Why? About what?
SVETLANA: She go hungry.
TILLY: I know. She can't eat anything in the snack bar.
SVETLANA: I mean, really go hungry. Ever heard of Donner
Party?
TILLY: No. What is it?
SVETLANA: Never mind. Not good story.
TILLY: What are you talking about?
SVETLANA: I see light in distance. We go there.
TILLY: What's this *we* business?
SVETLANA: "We," "me"...does not matter as long as
Veronica get food.

TILLY: You mean you want to go and bring something back for her?

SVETLANA: I mean, we escape! We go to light!

TILLY: I didn't see any light...just the ones up in the sky.

SVETLANA: Trust me, is light.

TILLY: All right, fine. There's a light, but what if there's nothing there? What if it's just something that's closed?

SVETLANA: I admit. Is risk.

TILLY: So you just want to take it on faith there's someplace there that's open and not just some parking garage or something?

SVETLANA: Is Christmas. Whole story is about take things on faith.

TILLY: That's different.

SVETLANA: Veronica going hungry. What if she get sick?

TILLY: I don't know!

SVETLANA: What if she, you know...

TILLY: I said, I don't know!

SVETLANA: How they say, "croak"?

TILLY: She's not going to die! *(Slight pause.)* Is she?

SVETLANA: Sugar serious.

TILLY: I know, but is it really that serious?

SVETLANA: Life like chess...must plan ahead.

TILLY: What are we supposed to do...just walk through the snow?

SVETLANA: Is simple. Russians do it all the time.

TILLY: But I'm not Russian!

SVETLANA: I make you honorary Russian.

TILLY: I'm not walking out there in that snow! In the dark!

SVETLANA: Fine. I do it, then. I get food. I get help. I bring it back.

TILLY: You can't just go out there in the snow! At night! All by yourself!

(Veronica enters.)

VERONICA: Hey, guys, those lights are awesome. You ought to— (*Realizes something is afoot.*) What's going on?

SVETLANA: Is conspiracy!

TILLY: (*To Veronica.*) Svetlana says she sees a light out there.

VERONICA: Oh, that. I was too busy watching the northern lights.

TILLY: She says she wants to walk there and get help.

VERONICA: Hmmm, I just sort of figured we were stuck here.

TILLY: We are stuck here!

SVETLANA: (*To Veronica.*) You need food.

VERONICA: I'll be fine, really.

SVETLANA: What Donner said, too.

VERONICA: What? Donner the reindeer?

SVETLANA: Never mind. Is not funny.

VERONICA: I can wait, really. I've done it before.

TILLY: (*To Svetlana.*) She's right. We'll wait until tomorrow. Maybe they'll come for us.

SVETLANA: No one come for us. No one know we're here.

TILLY: And you didn't want us to call anyone.

SVETLANA: I have reasons.

TILLY: You're not here illegally, are you?

SVETLANA: I not come here illegally. I have papers.

TILLY: That sounds like a dodge.

VERONICA: It doesn't really matter. I don't think anyone would have come for us anyway, not the way the roads are.

TILLY: (*To Svetlana.*) So you want to just walk through the snow then?

SVETLANA: Is easier to walk in snow than drive in it.

VERONICA: That's true.

TILLY: (*To Svetlana.*) But at night? You'll be able to see better in the daylight.

SVETLANA: In daylight, all white. We go snow blind. Go round and round in circles. Get lost.

TILLY: But it'll be daytime. You'd at least be able to see where we're going.

SVETLANA: More snow coming. Can feel in my Russian soul.

TILLY: You can feel it in your Russian soul, huh?

SVETLANA: (*Indicating her laptop.*) Also Weather Channel say it.

TILLY: What? Are you serious?

SVETLANA: Forecast calls for more snow tomorrow. This just, how you say, "calm before storm."

TILLY: I thought we just had a storm!

SVETLANA: This just dusting. Big one still coming. They even give it name.

TILLY: What kind of name?

SVETLANA: "Storm of Century."

TILLY: No!!!

SVETLANA: How deep is four feet? I only know metric.

VERONICA: That would definitely be up to a moose's knees.

TILLY: We'll never get out of here!

SVETLANA: Or I could hack in, change forecast to "clear and sunny. Gentle tropical breeze." But still not change fact.

Storm start up again by dawn. If we go, we should go now.

VERONICA: (*To Tilly.*) Svetlana's right. If she sees a light, it'll be easier to get there by night than by day.

TILLY: But going out there in the dark?

SVETLANA: Is not dark. Northern lights bright like moon. They light path.

TILLY: What path? There's no path out there!

VERONICA: It does sound a little dangerous...

SVETLANA: In Russia, have to worry about wolves. No wolves here. Will be safe.

VERONICA: I wasn't really thinking about wolves.

SVETLANA: In Russia, always think about wolves.

VERONICA: Just being out there by yourself, though, that's probably not a good idea.

SVETLANA: Then you come with me. Canadians know snow. I make you honorary Russian, too.

VERONICA: But what about Tilly? We can't leave her here.

TILLY: *(To Veronica.)* Yeah, what about me?
SVETLANA: You stay here where warm. We go get help.
TILLY: But I don't want to stay here by myself! And I don't want you to go out there on your own, either.
VERONICA: We seem to have something of an impasse...
TILLY: It's not an impasse. I just don't think it's a good idea.
SVETLANA: Which is why you can stay here where warm.
VERONICA: *(To Tilly.)* Or you could come with us.
TILLY: You're not serious about this, are you?
VERONICA: Well, it does seem like an option. It's only snow.
TILLY: Only snow! That's like saying, "It's only fire, but that's all right. I'll just walk through it."
SVETLANA: But is not fire. Is snow. Snow not hurt you.
TILLY: I'd freeze out there!
SVETLANA: You not freeze. You athletic. Me, computer nerd. Her, how you say, "science geek"?
VERONICA: I guess I am kind of a geek.
SVETLANA: You a natural!
TILLY: But I've never even seen snow before.
SVETLANA: You see it now! How you say, "up close and personal"?
TILLY: I know, but—
VERONICA: *(To Svetlana.)* She probably doesn't have any snow clothes.
SVETLANA: Gift shop does.
TILLY: You want us to break into the gift shop?
SVETLANA: Am master of universe!
TILLY: Oh, yeah, I forgot.
SVETLANA: Is old Russian proverb: "Redistribute wealth"!
VERONICA: We could do that. I don't think it'd be wrong under the circumstances.
TILLY: Wait a minute! I haven't even agreed to this yet!
VERONICA: Okay, okay, let's think about this logically. Svetlana sees a light out there that might be something.
TILLY: *(Looking out window.)* I still don't see any light.

VERONICA: With Christmas and a new storm coming, it could be days before they open this airport back up.

TILLY: Ugh!

VERONICA: Svetlana's willing to go on her own, but I don't think she should.

TILLY: She shouldn't.

VERONICA: *(To Svetlana.)* I don't want to leave you here by yourself.

SVETLANA: And Veronica go hungry if we stay here. Anarchy break out! Survival of the fittest! Hunger games! Only bones left!

VERONICA: Look, don't do this for me. I'm fine...really.

SVETLANA: Stomach growl like wolf. You not fine.

VERONICA: Sorry.

TILLY: *(Scared.)* Oh!

VERONICA: What do you think, Tilly? We could try it a little way, and if you really can't, we can turn back.

SVETLANA: *(To Tilly.)* Like sport. How they say, "no pain, no gain"?

VERONICA: *(To Tilly.)* No pressure, okay? It's perfectly fine either way...seriously.

(Long pause as Tilly thinks.)

SVETLANA: *(To Tilly.)* Here, I play Christmas music while you decide. Soothing Christmas music.

(The loudspeaker plays holiday music, but it's the most annoying/irritating holiday song you can find.)

TILLY: *(Screams.)* Arrrgggh!

[END OF FREEVIEW]