Airport Axis
written by
Bella Bravo

Bloomington, Indiana 2016
AIRPORT AXIS
A PLAY

PRODUCTION HISTORY

Airport Axis premiered at the Void in Bloomington, IN on April 23, 2016. The play was a stage adaption of a short story of the same name. The direction and set, lighting and sound design was by Bravo. Graphic design was by Jenna Beasley. The costume design was by Bravo and the actors. The cast was:

DAVID  Michael Barton
SALINAS  William McHenry
ELIAS  Miles Grimmer
BUS DRIVER  Janelle Beasley
THE SETTING

A middle-income suburb on the west side of the Salt Lake Valley, UT. The set is the interior of a bus with bus seats made of cardboard boxes varying in size. A bench seat facing the audience is in the center. An aisle runs the length of the stage, dividing three rows of seats and ending at the driver’s seat, which is a stool positioned near the wing on the stage left. There are blue pieces of paper scattered on the floor, as if they are postings fallen from the bus windows and doors. The upstage wall has a white backdrop for projections of still images. The opening picture is a pink sky full of clouds. The orchestra pit is a sidewalk corner with a stop for the airport bus. There is a small step leading from the pit to the stage. We, the theater audience, are in the middle of the road.

An August afternoon in 2017.
THE CHARACTERS

DAVID BALIRAN, fifteen
Stout. Summer-cropped hair. Mustached with peach fuzz. Latino. He is young and in love. Our moral compass.

SALINAS BALIRAN, fifteen
Lanky. Wavy, shoulder-length black hair, passed down from their Panamanian grandmother. David’s identical twin. He’s the yin to David’s yang. He officially started smoking last year. (He secretly started at age twelve.) He’s been reading Hamlet lately.

ELIAS SANDBORN, fifteen

BUS DRIVER, forty-five
A chain-smoking public servant.
THE COSTUMES

David wears an extra long polo shirt, which was a birthday present from his grandmother to his father. He has a medium-sized duffle bag and a small paper box in hand. Elias just finished with soccer practice, so he is sweaty and wearing a soccer uniform and croakies. Salinas wears an over-sized, heavy denim jacket, black high tops and cut-offs. He is aware that he looks cool.
ACT ONE

BEFORE THE SHOW

As the audience files in Just What I Needed by The Cars starts playing. The pink sky lights the stage. David, Salinas and Elias are milling about in the dark orchestra pit, ready to begin.

When the song fades, the lights come up...
SCENE ONE

Salinas is smoking a cigarette. Elias tries to distract himself with a Rubik’s cube, but the cigarette smoke makes him queasy.

ELIAS
I know this isn’t the best day for you, but could you . . .
It’s just the smell is making me a little sick.

SALINAS
Uh, sure thing.

Salinas snuffs his cigarette and takes a seat on the curb.

DAVID
I heard that one song on the radio this morning. What’s it called. . . It’s like. . . I don’t mind you coming here . . .
It’s actually pretty good!

Elias says to Salinas:
ELIAS
Hey, you said that the airport bus comes every hour, right?

DAVID
I hadn’t really paid attention to the lyrics before, but they’re kinda dark.

SALINAS
Yeah, every hour.

Elias looks up and down the street.

DAVID
It is! The chorus goes . . .

To get a feel for the rhythm, David says quickly:

DAVID
I don’t mind you coming here and wastin’ all my time.

He hums to find the melody and starts singing out of key.

DAVID
I guess you’re just what I needed
I needed someone to feed
I guess you’re just what I needed
I needed someone to bleed

What is that!? “Someone to feed.” “Someone to bleed.” It sounds like a hostage situation.
Salinas ignores David.

SALINAS
Yeah, every hour. I checked before we left the house.
We must have just missed it.

David sings again, even though no one’s paying attention to him.

DAVID
I don’t mind you coming here
And talking in your sleep
Why is Benjamin Orr watching this person sleep?

Salinas looks down the street.

SALINAS
He doesn’t say he’s watching them. Oh, there’s the bus.

The bus pulls up. The bus driver walks from right to left across the stage. The bus driver is smoking. He sits down on the stool near the wings on stage left. The doors of the bus open. The boys line up at the step: David, Elias and Salinas.

SALINAS
They could be lying down together, and he just hears the other person talking.

Elias peaks around David to peak inside the bus. In shock, Elias covers his mouth.
DAVID

Explain the “someone to bleed” part then.

David enters the bus by walking up the step onto the stage. Elias steps to the side and lets Salinas go on ahead of him. Salinas walks up the steps.

SALINAS

It's like a corporeality thing. Um, like that feeling where loneliness and ephemerality meet. Benjamin Orr wants to share his life with someone, but someone whose days move “like a fleeting shadow.” That’s my best guess.

David and Salinas sit next to each other on the bench seat facing the audience. David carefully stows the paper box next to the seat.

Then, it’s Elias’s turn.

BUS DRIVER

You comin’ too?

ELIAS

Um, um.

BUS DRIVER

Kid, I have other stops.

ELIAS

Sorry, yeah, me too.

He grimaces and quickly steps onto the bus, riffling through his pockets.
ELIAS

I only have a twenty.

BUS DRIVER

Sorry, no change.

ELIAS

Okay.

The bus starts. Elias trips as he walks down the aisle.

A dainty metal ting begins to chime. It continues cyclically like a natural breeze rotating a fan blade.

The pink sky on the white backdrop fades into another view of the clouds.

Elias takes the seat next to the twins. Hiking up his legs onto the seat, Elias crosses his ankles and rests his forehead on his knees.

David and Salinas exchanges glances. David taps Elias on the knee.

DAVID

What was all that about?

Elias jerks up in surprise.

ELIAS

Oh, nothing. Um, I was just surprised to see the driver smoking!

DAVID

Me too.
ELIAS
I thought I was hallucinating.

SALINAS
Oh, yeah?

After a pause:

ELIAS
I feel a little queasy.

He says to Salinas:

ELIAS
Hey, could I stay at your house tonight? I gotta get away from the cigarette smell.

SALINAS
Uh, sure.

ELIAS
Sorry to spring it on ya. You’d be okay with no smoking in the house?

SALINAS
It’ll be as though David never left.

DAVID
I like this. You’ll be a little deterrent to keep him from smoking in the house while I’m gone.
ELIAS
Happy to. I can’t believe your dad is okay with that.

He breaks out his Rubik’s cube.

SALINAS
Well, . . .

DAVID
He cares none-too-much. . .

SALINAS
What we do with our time.

ELIAS
Yeeaaah. No, I can’t imagine living with a smoker and letting them have free rein.

SALINAS
Well, . . .

DAVID
Elias, your house is a special case.

SALINAS
I can’t imagine my sister screaming at my mother from across the breakfast table . . .
Salinas turns to David, grabbing his shoulders comically, and loudly imitates a young, angry girl screaming:

SALINAS

Mother, is your chain-smoking some poor disguise for the smell of our father’s corpse rotting in the basement?

David gives a token snicker, and Elias barely looks up from his cube.

ELIAS

Maybe good ole dad took my sister’s inside voice with him.

He sighs.

ELIAS

Wouldn’t matter if sis was more tactful though. Mom’s in too deep.

SALINAS

C’mon, it’s not like you live in an opium den.

After a pause:

SALINAS

And, to be fair, it seems like your mom needs to smoke.

Before Elias’s anger snaps, David turns to him and says to his friend:
DAVID
I think he meant that your mom seems sad—maybe because your dad left, who knows—but I think he’s saying... why not... pardon her this misdemeanor.

SALINAS
However oncogenic.

_Salinas puts a cigarette into his mouth._
_David sends him a cross glance, which changes into confusion._

DAVID
I can’t tell if you lack social awareness or self-control. Wait, what does oncogenic mean?

_He grabs the cigarette out of Salinas’s mouth before he can light it._

SALINAS
Um, tumor-making. Like Oncology.

ELIAS
I know that! I took biology with Ms. Jimenez too.

SALINAS
David asked!

“Jim” is pronounced “Him."

DAVID
I had Jim for bio, too, but I did not pay attention.
ELIAS
It’s fine. I just feel sick.

SALINAS
And sensitive.

ELIAS
I’m always sensitive.

The picture fades into a view of the pink sky revealing the top of some nearby mountains.

SALINAS
Me too, dude.

After about ten seconds, Elias puts his Rubik’s cube and wipes the sweat from his palms.

ELIAS
It’s so hot.

David wipes his forehead.

DAVID
Yeah, it’s like we’re outside.

Elias pats the parts of his body with profuse sweat.

ELIAS
I’m so gross.
Elias says to Salinas:

ELIAS
I can’t believe you’re not sweating.

David says to Salinas:

DAVID
How do I sweat more? We have 100 percent gene similarity.

Salinas shrugs.

After a pause:

ELIAS
Do you two hear that ting?

Ting.

DAVID
Oh, you mean that ting? The recurring highlight of the last fifteen minutes?

ELIAS
I think the air conditioner must be broken.

David lifts his legs alternatingly, each with their tacky peel.

DAVID
The backs of my legs concur.
Salinas picks up one of the blue sheets of paper from the floor. The paper reads, “A/C Down.” He presents it to David and Elias.

**SALINAS**

I think “A” stands for Air and “C” stands for Conditioner. I think the slash between them is a linguistic device used to connect Air and Conditioner conceptually.

**Elias** leans back in anguish.

**SALINAS**

I don’t think “Down” is used literally, so like not below or under, but like I think down is used more colloquially as in malfunctioning or broken.

**David** cuts him off.

**DAVID**

With how hot it is, I think, summer is the best time to quit smoking.

The clouds change again.

**DAVID**

Just imagine you’re in the normal July heat, much like today, no, like last Wednesday, when fireworks started a wildfire in the canyon.

**Elias**

Oh, man, smoke was everywhere! I got so sick.
DAVID
As flames whip up the north face, you pull a ready tinder to yours. As warning signs guard the mouth of the pass, you’re holding an actual flame! The run-off has evaporated, and you suck down a thick, singed vapor. The canyon’s going to explode from desiccation, and you swallow dry.

SALINAS
Unimaginable, my brother.

Blackout.
SCENE TWO

During the blackout, the song Magic by the Cars plays. David and Elias re-arrange the boxes on stage into a rough semi-circle. Salinas picks up David’s paperbox and Elias’s Rubik’s cube. He opens a box, places each inside, and closed the box. Salinas then gathers the blue paper from the floor into a stack. David pulls assorted household items from boxes, e.g., a box radio, Christmas tree ornaments, cassette tapes, a soccer ball, a cake tin, and women’s clothing in various shades of blue. Elias takes a string of mismatched twinkle lights from one of the boxes, and lays it across the front of the state. He exits stage right.

The lights come up. Half the backdrop is a blue-and-white photo of an exposed light bulb with the sloped, wood-paneled ceiling of an attic behind it. The other half says, “Earlier that afternoon.” All the pictures in this scene are blue and white.

On stage left Salinas sits on one of the boxes. He picks up a piece of paper from his stack and folds a paper plane.

On stage right David kneels among the boxes and family’s accumulated history. He peruses the boxes.
Elias calls from off-stage:

ELIAS

Salinas? Are you up there?

David reaches over and turns down a radio. The song fades.

While making a paper plane, Salinas says:

SALINAS

David is dropping out of school and joining the army.

Elias enters.

ELIAS

What?

David shrugs and doesn’t even bother to look up.

DAVID

He’s kidding.

ELIAS

Oh so . . .

David jogs his head side to side as he landed on.

DAVID

Well kind of kidding about the army part.
SALINAS
You see: our love-brawled, love-low, love-weakened, love-suicide patient and puppy dog is running away to chase down the avowed love-love-love of his life, Liv Pyre. There’s magic in her eyes.

ELIAS
Jesus Christ, dude, do you even know where she is? Half of the backdrop fades into a picture of a girl running through a serene place, like a field or lightly wooded area. We can only see the back of her.

SALINAS
An excellent question! But I think unanswerable from the heart center of love’s all-consuming flame. After all, one’s love is everywhere when one is in love.

David sneezes into the elbow of the other. Attic dust. Salinas keeps making paper planes and sending them across the attic.

SALINAS
But—Perhaps, my brother will permit insight to his immediate course of action, no doubt having displaced any thought of the immanent route to eternity. Brother, i wonder, what’re you doing?

David does not turn to face his brother.

DAVID
It’s annoying when you do this, Salinas.
After a pause, David turns to address Salinas:

DAVID
Okay, I'll play along. Just like when we were kids. You'll hide, so I'll seek.
David changes his tone.

DAVID
My good brother—
Eat not too soon other's words;
you've so many of your own.
Though it's true, "all that lives must die,
passing through nature to eternity."
While our friend Elias lives,
passing through our attic in nobility,
let us not brush him off as dust.

Half of the backdrop fades into the picture of a girl looking over her shoulder, maybe she's at a train station or standing on a balcony.

David says to Elias:

DAVID
To answer you, Elias, she's in Maine,
but she's going to Montreal.

ELIAS
And you're going to meet her there?

David pulls a blue teacup from a box and holds it up for inspection.
Yep.

But how are you getting there? You’re fifteen!

He doesn’t have a car.

You can’t drive!

He can’t bike either.

That’s all true. But, Elias, do you remember when Grandma got drunk at me and Salinas’s tenth birthday party?

Definitely.

Half of the backdrop fades into a picture of a child’s birthday. We see streamers, party hats, laughing children, probably one crying too.

Which had an open bar thanks to our father’s charity.

David picks up and folds the blue clothing and returns each article to the boxes. Elias takes this cue and does the same with the other objects.
DAVID

Maybe his openmindedness.

Pause.

DAVID

Well, then you surely remember, overhearing Grandma drunkenly describe the... um

SALINAS

miasmic

DAVID

Yes, surely you overheard Grandma drunkenly describe the miasmic details of our mother's funeral, which coincidentally was also the last time we saw our grandfather. Grandma blurted out that before leaving the funeral our grandfather had a tense side-hall conversation with our father who had arrived late...

SALINAS

Yes late!

DAVID

To his own wife's funeral ceremony!

SALINAS

S Salacious!

DAVID

Yes! But, however salacious, we had heard all of that before. The interesting detail that Grandma revealed was that as he left, our
grandfather threatened to open a joint bank account for the two of us as a sort of poor man’s trust fund.

SALINAS
It’s also interesting that our father greeted the monthly arrival of these bank statements with a silent deposit into the trashcan!

Salinas lands a paper plane in a close box.

Elias discovers the Rubik’s cube. He holds it up.

ELIAS
Woah! Hey, can I have this?

DAVID AND SALINAS IN UNISON
Yeah, it’s yours.

ELIAS
It is?

DAVID
Yeah, Salinas stole it from your house a long time ago.

SALINAS
We were six! No six-year old knows right from wrong.

Elias gives up on cleaning and starts playing with the cube.

ELIAS
Dude, it’s cool.
DAVID
Grandma opined that opening the account is something Grandpa would do.

SALINAS
But added there’s no way to know, from whom the account and its principal came, because she also doesn’t speak to him.

DAVID
The savings account continued to be a success after Grandma’s spill, because we were way too afraid to ask our dad to withdraw money. Seeing as his.

SALINAS
Countenance is more in anger than in sorrow.

DAVID
So we left the dividends to accrue on the same principle.

The attic is tidy. Everything has been returned to the boxes, except the blue teacup and the paper air planes.

David packs the teacup into a small paper box and closes it.

The picture of the birthday party fades into solid blue.

SALINAS
Today was the first withdrawal.

DAVID
I took all of the money and booked a one-way ticket to Montréal. Salinas is pretending to be annoyed.
David pats Salinas on the shoulder.

DAVID
He’s only being a pity-party because he wants to go but can’t admit it to himself.

Salinas blisters but only shows it for a second.

DAVID
You said I could take it. If it’s not okay, just say so.

Salinas sends the paper plane across the attic.

DAVID
And to answer your earlier question: What am I doing?
I’m simply spending time with you, my brother.
Because from here on out, things are gonna start to move fast.

Blackout.
ACT TWO

SCENE ONE

During the black out, the song Since You’re Gone by the Cars plays. The bench seat and Elias’s seat haven’t moved. All of the other boxes remain positioned as they were in the attic. The paper box again sits next to David’s seat. The paper airplanes are cast about on the stage floor.

The backdrop shows the sun setting behind an airport tower and vast parking lot.

The bus driver enters from the stage right as the song fades. He walks down the aisle to his stool, smoking and driving. The ting begins again. The boys sit in their seats. Elias plays with his Rubik’s cube.

Grinning like a bastard, Salinas says:

SALINAS

My brother, . . .

Salinas shifts his weight toward David.
SALINAS

I think I owe you something.

Salinas licks his finger and slowly inserts his finger into David’s ear.

Failing to escape, David yanks away and crashes into Elias.

DAVID

Ahhh, nooo!

Leaning on Elias, David re-orient himself and locks eyes with Salinas.

DAVID

My brother, you are another who is no longer other.
Regardless of this wet willy, I too owe you.

Elias pushes David off, and quickly David flings himself toward his brother. His tongue poised and aimed for Salinas’s ear.

The tings change become shrill, compressed and rapid like reverberating trills.

Salinas eludes him and falls to the floor. David piles on top of him. The twins grapple playfully, Elias plays with his Rubik’s cube, and the bus driver smokes. Their movements are twice as fast as they should be.

Salinas wrestles on top of David, and the tings become low, sonorous, and distended like resonances from a hollow gong. Everyone moves in slow motion. After two gongs, David pushes himself on top of Salinas. The tings trill, and everyone rushes through their motions. After a few seconds, Salinas flips on top.
again. A gong sounds, and then, even though Salinas is above David, the rings begin to trill. Elias drops his Rubik’s cube.

Black out.
SCENE TWO

Time returns to a familiar pace. David, Salinas and Elias arrive at the airport. At the bus stop and drop-off lanes for departures.

David stands up. Salinas spreads out on the floor. Elias stands in the orchestra pit, retrieving his Rubik’s cube.

Elias says to David:

ELIAS
What part of “I feel sick” don’t you understand?

DAVID
Sorry, dude, my excitement got away from me.

David looks around to collect his things. Lying flat on his back, Salinas pulls out his cigarette pack from his pocket. Elias massages his arms and shoulders.

ELIAS
It’s okay; at least you’re more careful than you used to be.
Salinas places the cigarette in his mouth.

SALINAS

Practice, my friend, practice.

DAVID

Oh, you think we can control this.

David mimes pulling back an archer’s bow.

DAVID

What's that saying?

ELIAS

Don’t shoot yourself in the foot?

DAVID

No, it’s like that. But it’s not about hurting me. It’s about not hurting the people around me. Oh! I shoot no arrow over my house.

Pause.

DAVID

I’m not doing this to hurt you. I’m moving things along because this is what I want. And, I think it’s what you want too. If I thought otherwise, I would stay.
SALINAS
Oh, you need not prod at me my brother . . .

*Salinas lights the cigarette.*

SALINAS
Of us surely I know my poor enemy.

ELIAS
Man, I'll be so happy when our English class finishes *Hamlet.*

DAVID
Are you going to languish away our last moments together?

SALINAS
You're right, you're right.

*Pause.*

SALINAS
Hey, do you remember giving Elias a bloody nose?

DAVID
I remember *you* giving Elias a bloody nose.

SALINAS
Hmm, that doesn't seem right.
Elias, who gave you a bloody nose?
ELIAS
Which time?

*Salinas lifts his head up to look at Elias.*

SALINAS
There was only one time!

*Elias and David exchange glances.*

DAVID
“The play’s the thing...”

ELIAS
“To expose the guilty conscience of the king.”

*Salinas props himself up on his elbow, still smoking.*

SALINAS
No, no! It wasn’t me!

David starts stacking boxes in the front right corner of the stage.

ELIAS
Let’s see, we had just back from church camp, so we would have been eight or so... .

DAVID
Old enough to know right from wrong.
ELIAS
That new subdivision was going up, so we biked out to explore it.

DAVID
Did we even bike? It was so close to our neighborhood.

SALINAS
Oh yeah, it felt close, because it was only like a mile west of our favorite gas station.

ELIAS
Mr. Li!

DAVID
I forgot about Mr. Li! Any time of day, “why aren’t you in school?”

SALINAS
Free slurpees. . .

DAVID
Free bananas. . .

ELIAS
Chocolate and box candy?

They laugh.

DAVID, SALINAS, AND ELIAS IN UNISON
Full price!
Elias swerves through the boxes in the center of the stage.

ELIAS
So we rode out in the middle of the night, armed with our flashlights and Boy Scout skills...

SALINAS
... and pocketknives for times when the former failed us.

Elias then turns quickly to jab at the air.

DAVID
We must have been a strange sight.

SALINAS
Our parents wouldn’t know.

DAVID
Ha! I didn’t see our father that entire year.

ELIAS
Geez, no wonder the other parents in the neighborhood were terrified of us.

Salinas whispers, continuing to smoke.

SALINAS
Fear it, fear it!
David finishes stacking boxes. In the front right corner of the stage, there is a monolith taller than him. Elias approaches it.

ELIAS
Our silhouettes descended upon the monster frames of new wealth. We honed in on a goliath, three-story structure. Unfinished but at the stage of construction warranting locks. David and I tested the locks’ fortitude. All first-floor doors: secured. Windows: secured. We faced a proper puzzle. Salinas, you, flanked the sides in search of an opening. And you found it: our prize shot, a second-floor, unframed window.

David bums and kneels next to Salinas.

DAVID
Dun, dun, dun, dunn... .

ELIAS
The only option was a three-man shoulder stand!

Salinas let his head fall back and his eyes roll.

SALINAS
Oh, I remember now...

ELIAS
We attempted them all the time in between soccer and swim team practice. Without a word, I took a knee.

Elias takes a knee. David pulls Salinas onto his feet.
Elias
Salinas swung his legs around my neck and tapped my shoulder.
Salinas sits on Elias shoulder.

Elias
I visualized straight lines connecting my ankles, knees and hips.
Elias stands up with Salinas on his shoulders. David spotting them.

David
You’re good?

Elias
The first test was complete.
Elias lowers back to his knee.

Elias
I remember a column from David’s flashlight ambling in the dirt next to my knee.

David
You ready?

Elias
I stretched my toes and prepared my legs and shoulders for double the weight. I exhaled and said, “okay,” compressing my abdomen to its smallest size.

David tries to climb up them.
SALINAS
You suffered the full weight of the Baliran family future on your shoulders and one knee.

David tries again from a different angle.

ELIAS
Once David steadied and braced his palms against the house, I heard you both whisper, “go.”

David forgoes further attempts and snaps his fingers instead.

In one fluid motion, Elias stands, and Salinas dismounts by stepping forward. Elias falls backward, and David catches Elias by the armpits like a trust fall.

ELIAS
In the half-second before my eyes adjusted to the dark inside the house, I focused on finding the rhythm of my breath.

David tosses Elias to Salinas. Salinas catches Elias as though he collapsed in Salinas’s arms. Salinas carries Elias facedown to the ground.

Elias props himself up on his elbows.

ELIAS
I thought in an involuntary sequence: my flashlight is in my hand; my shoes are on my feet; my shoulders, my neck, my quads, all, all of my muscles are thrashed; my nose and lip are warm; I’m bleeding; my nose is bleeding; and finally, I found among my jumbled thoughts, “where am I?”
Pause.

ELIAS
I was lying ass up in the drywall dust on the damned second floor of that house.

SALINAS
And I apologized!

_Elias props himself up on his elbows._

ELIAS
Um, you tapped your nose and said, “Oh, sorry, gotcha on dismount.”

DAVID
Hey, shall I give you two swords?

ELIAS
Well, since then David’s typically been a lot better about warning me when . . . he’s about to . . . fast-forward.

DAVID
Thank you!

_Elias then looks sideways at David. Something occurs to Elias. He looks over at Salinas._
ELIAS
Though, I think your spontaneous nature will always be a little disorienting.

DAVID AND SALINAS IN UNISON
Fair.

David starts collect his things, initiating his exit.

After a pause:

ELIAS
Hey, hey, are either of you afraid of flying?

David laughs. Salinas rolls his eyes and stands up to hug his brother.
David hugs each of them in turn.

As David hugs Elias:

DAVID
Good one. You’re not ready yet, are you?

ELIAS
Maybe a little queasy still.

DAVID
Watch out for this wild lapwing here?

Salinas walks to the opposite side of the stage.
Hey, you’re the one running away with the shell on his head.

I’ll miss you too.

As David walks through the airport doors, and off stage, he pumps his arm in the air, “Breakfast Club” style and holding the paper box.

So, the teacup is for Liv Pyre?

Yep, it’s our mother’s. Was.

Pause.

I think they both like the color blue.

Salinas drops the cigarette and snubs with his shoe.

Well, liked and likes.

Elias looks at Salinas, worried.

It’s alright; he asked.
After a pause:

ELIAS

Hey, on the bus felt strange.
You all don’t normally . . . diverge.

Elias looks at the airport doors.
No blackout.
SCENE FIVE

The bus pulls up. The bus driver re-enters from the stage left, still smoking and driving.

The picture on the white backdrop goes back a pink sky full of clouds. The ting from the bus’s broken A/C system chimes.

As the bus driver passes Salinas, Salinas starts to follow the bus driver for a moment. It looks like the bus driver leads Salinas to his seat.

SALINAS

We don’t normally . . . disagree.

Elias follows and takes a seat too.

ELIAS

Do you think he’ll be alright?

With a chuckle, Salinas says:

SALINAS

Oh, he’ll be fine—I’m not on the plane.
Elias
I’ll worry enough for both of us then.

Elias tries to lighten the mood.

Elias
Okay, so do you think David is chasing Liv Pyre because... he loves her or because... he loves his idea of her or... loves the idea of love or... loves elusive love... or...?

Salinas
Salinas smirks and shrugs.

Salinas
I dunno, dude.

But, Elias gets caught up in his thought.

Elias
Elias asks Salinas directly:

Elias
Do you think any of those feelings could co-occur?
Do you think I could know?
I mean, in my present condition.
I don’t think I’ve ever been in love.

Now Elias arrives at questions for himself. Elias asks Salinas directly:

Elias
Do you think all this “speed up, slow down” thing will catch up to us?

Elias looks at his hands.
SALINAS
Things standing thus unknown... 

Salinas shrugs again and takes out his pack of cigarettes. Salinas asks with a gesture whether it’s okay if he smokes. Elias okays it.

SALINAS
If it’s okay with you, I thought we could draw out this ride back.

ELIAS
Not quite ready to be home yet?

Salinas lights a cigarette.

SALINAS
No, not quite.

As Elias and Salinas sit in their bus seats, we notice that they’re moving a little slowly. The bus driver, too.

The tings from the metal fan begin to deepen in pitch slightly, and the intervals between the tings lengthen a bit.

ELIAS
That’s fine. Is it still okay if I stay over?

Elias remembers that he wanted to ask Salinas a question. Elias’s speech is a little belabored and his voice is a little deeper. He cannot quite finish the question before time intervenes.
ELIAS

Hey, I wanted to ask: did David win or did you let him go?

The bus driver stops mid-motion.

A gong sounds. As it resonates, It's All I Can Do by the Cars fades in.

Blackout.

The end.
—FOR STEVE AND DAVEY