

# The Break Room

By

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Poems by Janet Bingham

## Cast of Characters

Helen Seymour.....An Idealist  
Lotty Johnson.....Friend and Ally  
Meg Ryan.....The Office Flirt  
Doctor Alice Huang.....Department Head  
George Howell .....Hospital Security  
Edward Jackson.....CEO of Food Services  
Doctor Joe Barnard..... Plastic Surgeon  
Doctor Al Jacobs..... . A Philanderer

## Prologue

Remember those days right after World War II? Those were heady times, full of hope for the future: better homes, kitchen appliances and cars. As in any war, the walking wounded came back remembering the nightmare of Europe or the Pacific. The sorrows and disappointments of war met with the positive ideas of improving our society. Even those countries who lost in the war went through remarkable transformations into the states we know today. It is this process of renewal that is necessary in our lives and in history. As in anything worth doing, a great effort was put forth.

# Act I

## Scene 1

(The environment in this outdated hospital, is suffocating and grim. Low ceilings and dark hallways create a windowless tomb in which to work. The only light is artificial, the air is recycled and it smells slightly of death. Doctors, nurses and hospital scurry like rats in a maze. The morgue next door is often full, and bodies line the hallway. There is an accepted gallows humor among the characters. Doctor Bernard is sitting at the coffee table, and Helen is making her mail run. Helen is a poet, more interested in ideas than appearances. Lotty Johnson is a "go-to" Secretary to George Howell, Head of Security. She is a very hard worker. Doctor Bernard is a hopeless flirt always wishing to advance his status. He drinks too much. The break room is functional only, with a counter for coffee and fixings, the prerequisite posters and bulletins, and a bulletin board. It looks like an afterthought and a temporary shelter for those seeking rest.)

Helen: (looking briefly at Dr. Bernard) I must keep going, I have a load of mail. It is important to be on time...Oh, here's Lotty.

(Lotty enters through a cubbyhole entryway.)

Lotty: (overly cheerful) How are we today?

Helen: I'll tell you at the end of the day.

Lotty: Helen, how was your weekend?

Helen: I was entertained in good company the whole weekend through, with the likes of Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost and a host of others but...why do you ask? I was home reading by myself.