

SCENE 13

The Shirt

PAM. Last summer I lost my favorite shirt. Or to be more accurate, my favorite shirt vanished into thin air. When I got home from being away for the summer and I unpacked my bags, the shirt simply never materialized. I have replayed the sequence of events in my mind several times, and I have theories about what happened to it, but the fact remains that the shirt just ceased to be. The really sad part was that this came at the end of a summer when that shirt gradually revealed itself to be the perfect shirt. It was flattering (I always felt pretty in it), I liked the color and the cut, it went with all my favorite pants, it was casual and dressed down but not crappy and falling apart, it was comfortable. It was one of those shirts you have to make yourself NOT wear, because it seems every day's outfit would be improved by it. And as silly as it may sound, I am generally happier when I have clothes like this in my life, when there's something I know I can put on and feel good in. Something to fall back on. When I realized the shirt was gone, I couldn't think of anything else I owned that served remotely the same function, and I felt cheated out of something truly rare and precious.

I realize that I sound like I'm talking about death, or about lost love — and maybe I am. It's probably worth noting that my rela-

tionship with my boyfriend was ending at just the same time I lost the shirt. But I could have sworn to you at the time that I was not transferring my feelings about the loss of my boyfriend onto the shirt, but was actually mourning the loss of the shirt itself. The main lesson to be learned from this experience came from the purchase of eight different shirts, which each had some likeness to the lost shirt, whether it be in color, cut, material, casualness. But none of them in any way replaced it, and I eventually had to resolve to be thankful for the time I had with the shirt and move on. At least I know what I'm looking for.