

*Hope Town – last revised August 2024*

**Characters – 6 actors total**

*A diverse cast is critical. The actors should reflect the diversity of the community. Be creative and thoughtful when casting.*

Mackenzie – a.k.a. Bike Lady. Mid-20s. Site manager of the NUMMUS Plasma Donation Center in Pencader

Crystal – 40s, lives in a homeless encampment. She is caring and is the “mother” of the camp. She is reluctant to have much contact with the world “up there.”

Jamie – *(Played by the same actor as plays Crystal)* – 40s, works at the NUMMUS Pencader Plasma Donation Center. Her boss is Mackenzie

Hannah – she says she is 21 Or 18. Or 19. Lives in the homeless encampment. She is eager to donate plasma, but is underweight .

Briana – *(Played by the same actor as plays Hannah)* – mid-20s. Site manager of the NUMMUS Plasma Center in the nearby town of Kirkwood. Considers Makenzie a rival. They knew each other in college, and started working at NUMMUS at the same time.

Dustin – 40s, lives in the homeless encampment. He works at two different fast food restaurants and attends AA meetings several times a week. He considers himself the “mayor” of the encampment and speaks for the group, but they frequently do not listen to him.

Brandon – *(Played by the same actor as plays Dustin)* – 40s. A paramedic and new boyfriend of Jamie.

Linda – 60s, lives in the homeless encampment. She acts cranky, but actually cares for people in her own, quirky way.

Donna Sanders-Reed – *(Played by the same actor as plays Linda)* – 60s, CEO of NUMMUS.

Judy – *(Played by the same actor as plays Linda)* – 60s, nurse, works in an assisted living facility

Kenneth – 60s, lives in the homeless encampment. He does not speak.

Gary – *(Played by the same actor as plays Kenneth)* – 60s, executive director of a homeless shelter in Pencader.

Harry - *(Played by the same actor as plays Kenneth and Gary)* – 80s or 90s, Crystal’s grandfather. Lives in an assisted living facility.

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**Time**

Present day

**Setting**

A collection of tents near a busy road.

The Pencader plasma donation center of NUMMUS

My Neighbor's House, a homeless shelter

Harry's room in an assisted living facility

**Notes on the Text**

/ indicates the point when one character jumps in while another character is speaking.

. . . indicates trailing off

When a word is in brackets, [ ], the character thinks, but does not say, that word.

A *Beat* is a short silence

A *Pause* is a slightly longer silence

*Silence* is a sustained silence

When there is text side by side, the characters speak their lines at the same time.

Act One, Scene One

*A fall morning, just after sunrise. Several tents – some in decent shape, some somewhat new, some falling apart – are scattered in a makeshift community. A rugged, clearly homemade sign, proclaiming “Hope Town,” is posted.*

*To the side and above the encampment is a highway; we cannot see the road, but we can hear an occasional passing car or truck. We also hear sounds of slumbering residents in the tents.*

*Suddenly we hear the squeal of brakes and the crunch of metal on metal. A cyclist tumbles down the hill into the camp; she lies motionless.*

CRYSTAL

*Coming out of her tent.*

What the hell was that?

*Sees the cyclist. Then, yelling:*

Oh my God! Oh my God! Oh my God!

*More people in the camp wake and come out of their tents as CRYSTAL runs to the cyclist.*

DUSTIN

He alive?

CRYSTAL

She. And . . . I think . . . Yes, she’s breathing.

LINDA

Damn road’s too damn busy with too many damn people always rushing, rushing, rushing.

DUSTIN

We gotta call 911.

CRYSTAL

No.

DUSTIN

You want her to die?

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HANNAH

*Gets closer*  
She's not bleed- . . . [ing]  
*Sees the cyclist's face*  
It's Bike Lady!

DUSTIN

Get out of here!  
*Gets closer*

LINDA

*Gets closer*  
Well look what we got here: Bike Lady's graced us with her presence in our fair camp. That'll teach her to ignore me up there.

*KENNETH joins the others as they all close in on the woman.*

DUSTIN

Give Bike Lady some space, you guys.

CRYSTAL

She's got a name.

HANNAH

You and Bike Lady friends, Crystal?

CRYSTAL

Never seen her before.

LINDA

Then how do you know her name?

CRYSTAL

Doesn't take a genius to know her name's not Bike Lady.

LINDA

I bet she calls me "Old Homeless Lady" 'stead of Linda. And she don't call him Dustin; he's "Old Homeless Guy"

DUSTIN

I'm not old!

HANNAH

I must be "Hot Homeless Hannah."  
*Laughs*

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LINDA

She don't pay no attention to us, so we don't got to pay no attention to her.

CRYSTAL

She's hurt.

DUSTIN

That's why we gotta call 911

*Pulls out his free flip phone*

CRYSTAL

You want the police down here? You call 911, that's who's going to show up. They'll probably arrest you for assaulting her.

DUSTIN

But she needs help.

CRYSTAL

Put the phone away, Dustin.

DUSTIN

How about Officer Peck?

CRYSTAL

We're only supposed to call her when we're desperate.

*She takes the phone away from DUSTIN, shuts it, hands it back to him.*

LINDA

Listen to your girlfriend, Dustin.

DUSTIN

She's not my girlfriend.

CRYSTAL

Focus, people. We've got to help her.

*CRYSTAL takes a closer look at the VICTIM.*

LINDA

Even though she didn't help me when she ran over my bag last week?

CRYSTAL

*Ignoring LINDA*

She's not bleeding.

No obvious injuries.