

Dec. 3, 2017

Greetings!

We've had an amazing response to our postings for *Down Along the Cove* at Heartwood. You've been selected from over 200 applicants to submit for a second round. If you are interested in continuing in the process, there are a few things we need from you by Dec. 15, please. If this is practically impossible for you, let us know, but we hope to contract players in next few weeks. Actors should choose 2 – 3 sides to demonstrate dramatic and lighter contrast. We would like to see a range of age if possible, especially if you are on the younger side of the age range in the play, and need to double into an older role. There are only a handful of monologues in the play, so we'll offer a few scenes which you may record with an off-camera partner. Some of the sides are actually segments meant for presentation by a full ensemble of voices. (Separated lines, not unison). The play has its roots in short story vignettes, so a strong ability to tell stories well is key for this production. We are looking for engagement, interpretation, perceptive responses to the arc of the piece, your best voice, etc.

**PLEASE PROVIDE:**

1. *A video recording of two sides (one light, one dramatic) in a mid coast Maine dialect.*

We have a number of dialect examples at our website and below. This is a primary concern within the production. Here is another excellent resource from an early generation resident. Much of this dialect lingers in our local area. <http://www.dialectsarchive.com/maine-3>

2. *Specifics about your singing and instrumental abilities.* These are not requirements for casting, but we are interested in what you might be able to contribute.

3. *Confirmation that you are not currently a member of the union.* We are unable to cast Equity or SAG-AFTRA members due to restrictions on video recording. Cast members will be required to sign a media waiver allowing us to record the productions for further promotion and development. If your status has changed, we regret that we cannot invite you into our process.

4. *Actors should be prepared to work within the compensation offered. Please let us know up front about any specific issues.*

5. *Memorization of the script (roughly 2 hours running time) is required before we begin the April workshop period. Actors should be very confident that this is within their range of abilities.*

All audition questions from here should be forwarded to Griff, please.

**CONTACT:**

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[www.heartwoodtheater.org](http://www.heartwoodtheater.org)  
Damariscotta, Maine

# SIDES (CHOOSE 2)

## CAST of CHARACTERS:

Margaret (40s) also: Doreen, Edna, Audry

Emma (late 20s to mid 30s) also: Tracey, Woman

Elaine (40s) also: Ethyl, Myra, Gertrude, Ellie

Cy (40s or older) also: Uncle Eugene, Sheriff

Dewey ((late 20s to mid 30s) also: Michael, Dave

Clifton (late 20s to mid 40s) also: Nathan, Handy, Pastor Rodwell, Clarence, Clint

Roger (40s) also: Phil, Lefty, Doug

## LIGHT MALE 1

Summer: it's hot down along the cove. Traffic, lost visitors, bored teenagers and seething locals. Standing room at Moody's Diner. The rat-race of summer tourism and sycophantic relatives - Labor Day weekend comes as a saving grace. Subaru-towing Winnebagos and kayak-backed Caravans trundling off to Massachusetts and New Jersey and beyond. Migrating homeward after grazing the coast of Maine, in search of perfect lobsters, scenic splendors, or the way life ought to be, but, for them, seldom is. (*affecting a downeast accent*) Maybe next time around, they'll get Lincoln County and we'll get Hoboken. Now, mistah-man, there's a scary thought.

Some locals set out a lawn chair to admire the Labor Day doggie drive; others mope about realizing the Red Sox are out of the playoffs. Again. But after weeks of pleading by wife and offspring, Clifton Hart agrees to take his family camping. He packed without dissent. Dummy, their forlorn retriever, collapsed with a groan in the dust, and watched the master of the house shuffle off in a van full of expectant children and already thawing food.

## LIGHT MALE 2

A breezy, but humid day, in late June, followed a week of rain, as Clarence Lang hunkered at the ancient brown picnic table on the front lawn at Back Bay Antiques. His is a horrid lot. His legs ache with pains like hot wires inserted among the tendons and such. He digs the heels of his hands into his thighs, trying to drive the aching tension out from his knees, into his shins, then down to where, perhaps, he can kick it out through his feet. He undertakes this exercise, knowing that it won't work, but, hoping he might rise up walking, with ease, once more.

This is Clarence near the end. Not the one who danced with the girls at the Union Fair or threw hay bales over his head, striding in the prickling summer heat. Bales like a set of five pound hammers, thrown in unison, with the rhythmic precision of an old work song.

Not the Clarence who presided at Grange with a soft smile wide as a barn door, or the one who dumped seasoned hunks of maple in his neighbor's wood box, left empty by unemployment and illness. Not the one who walked the ridgepole on his Grandfather's barn to place the lucky fir. Not that Clarence Lang. This is the old man. Hearing the toll of each hour in his brittle bones.

A solemn ticking begun at fifty, now a pounding damn Sousa march at 70. Days slip into weeks, assaulting his cloudy memory. No doctors; no drugs. Rather sit on the front lawn and let life do its dirty work.

## DRAMATIC MALE 1

Okay, short and sweet. You're always a damn smart boy, Dewey. I was there when your Dad died, and when Myra went off to the Lincoln Home for her final time with us. Standing on that lawn the day you left for college, and the day you come back. Right beside you . . . the memorial service . . . For Buddy. Listened to all you ever had to say, whenever you showed up, from who knows where, to tell me about it – a fair bit of nonsense to be honest. And what I have to say is just this - You listenin'? Most of your book is probably the truth. They'll claim it's lies, but I'm sure . . . You can make a hero of yourself in the big world. But, this ain't the big world. And nobody here will be served by it Dewey. 'Cause nobody spit in your face when things came apart here at the Newtons. We buried your father, and we looked after your mother, and we never thought of doing anything else. Did we wish these things would go away? Yes, we did. But they don't. Not here or anywhere else in the world. We're just tryin' to be good decent people. Are we suspicious of outsiders, people with education, people with different ideas? Of course we are. We love what we have, even when it ain't perfect, which is a whole lot of the time. This chip on your shoulder - no idea why. Because nobody in this town has ever done anything but watch over you. Nobody. And that includes Buddy. He wasn't all smart like you. He wrestled. Used his body; you used your mind. But he lived right here, and he took you as you were. Right to the end.

## DRAMATIC MALE 2

I said he decided to go in after something, but . . . I despised the water. Had nightmares. When my dad would get going, crazy, hitting, lashing out, I would think: “just row out Dewey, until you can't go any further.” Just row out and find the Quiet. My father's public spectacle was bad enough. But mother stayed (*blurting out*) so long – And I - didn't want to look for the mackerel that morning. But, Buddy made me feel like a loser if I didn't keep up, so I went. We were doing fine. I had my lifejacket; my God, he knew *everything* out there. (*a cleansing breath*) He was perfect. Time to head back. And there's a lobster float thing in the water, I guess cut by a prop, and Buddy knew the lobsterman, I guess. . . . And he was standing up and I said, ‘don't Buddy, don't stand up’ and he said, ‘it's fine Dewey, live a little.’”

And then - he went. Over the side, and a line caught his foot and pulled him off. Funny. His head cracked the oar lock. The sound. . . and it knocked him out. So stupid. He could wrestle all Saturday and beat himself silly, and he just whacks the oarlock . . . And I got really nuts, didn't know how to row or turn the boat, and he got away from me. Under the water. Mr. Clabbar. I should have gone in and held him up. Lifejacket right around me. But, I was afraid. I was afraid of the water and dying. And I waited for one second, or maybe two seconds, thinking he might snap awake or come closer so I could grab him. But - The line pulled him down. And it was Quiet. So very Quiet.

### DRAMATIC MALE 3

My dear Emma,

Getting dark here now.  
The Pond is a mirror.  
Finally a chance to sit,  
Watch the sun set.  
Just now, shimmering voices:  
three little girls splashing and laughing down the way.  
Seems early to swim, or I'm getting older.

Pipe smoke,  
scattered pieces of spring light,  
sifting through the open arms  
of an elderly pair of birches.

Mosquitos: mostly leaving me alone.  
A little DEET, a little smoke,  
they get like drunken kamikaze,  
strike, pull off and away,  
to live and fight another day.

All afternoon: the feeling, incessant and powerful,  
that you might walk up from behind and touch me.

Atop the ladder, the air is sullen.  
You approach, an apparition of light and leaves and desire,  
Graceful on the soft gravel road,  
Pine bed soundless beneath your feet.  
Head tilts; mouth still; an endless silent syllable.  
I prepare for your voice, try not to breathe,  
but when I do, you are gone -  
A vapor in the broken-leaf light.  
Wipe a bloody smudge of mosquito from my cheekbone.  
The little girls are shouting - Ready? Set? Go!  
Hurling slight bodies into chilly spring water.

They have not been in love yet.

When they are:  
the lapping water for passing time;  
a mosquito for their lover's touch;  
June breezes to blur the divide  
between make-believe and reality;  
    Here from There;  
    Now from Then.

Leaving at noon tomorrow.  
Home soon,

Yours,  
C.

## DRAMATIC FEMALE 1

Oh, come off it, everybody knows. You come back, cloak of secrecy, uncover all the dirty secrets. Then Dewey Newton gets to reveal the frustrated passions and dark secrets of this little hole in the wall, to the entire world. Right? Book of the month NPR interview? Literary genius? Sifting the dirt far and wide.

Oh, yes. Free. A free country where people like you take every opportunity- (*quiet, direct*) People like you, Mr. Newton, take and take, assuming that the world has more to give. Break down the structure, structure is relative, and who needs structure anyway? Your *freedom* to access my pain. . .

Smarter, more capable, better than the simple people, huh? We aren't stupid. We are not without gifts. We hurt, we just hurt sometimes, and when we hurt, our pain does not belong to your airwaves, to your pages. It's ours. And we will take it, hold it, cherish it. We will live with our families and our friends; and we will let God talk to us again, someday. Someday, we will let Him in again, when the pain subsides, some . . . We will let Him back in. But your magnifying glass. . . we don't need to be your product. Consumed by the high and mighty -

Just leave us alone.

## MALE or FEMALE LIGHTER

So, one spring morning, Clarence arrived, to help plant Ellie's garden, with more than horticulture on his mind. The day's task also included pulling down an old wooden sign from the barn. Clarence mounted the stepladder, unhooked the sign on the right, a gentle elbow against the weathered siding. Thought he heard a truck laboring up the hill in low gear.

“That fellar ought to shift that darn thing!”

But it was no truck. In all his years, Clarence never saw a stream of hornets more hot and determined. By the time he had hung seventy pounds of signage back on the wall and headed down the stepladder, he could feel the furious insects, lost in the darkness of his denim overalls. At the bib opening, the side pockets and a few tracking north up his pant legs. Curiously destined for one location. This excited Clarence in a particularly uncharacteristic manner.

Well now! Clarence leapt to the ground and whisked off his overalls. Buck naked. . . in the scintillating light of a gorgeous spring day. He wished he'd brought the sign down for coverage, stood for a moment, vexed, hornet covered overalls extended. His farmer's intuition rushed to the fore, and he snatched his Red Sox cap, covered his primary parts and hopped bowlegged around the barn.

Only a single sting. Left cheek. This miracle led him to propose and Ellie accepted. What with Ellie able to measure up the goods in advance, the sale was secured! All his life, he declared those wasps the clear hand of fate.

## MALE or FEMALE LIGHTER

Emma drinks in more night.  
Sharp acorns sound down through the oaks on the bank up and behind her.  
Clifton appears in the darkness. Emma glances over her shoulder.  
His bare feet in the sand.  
An unusual sound. A man in shadow.  
His foot weighs upon the dock; the hair, at the top of her neck, rises.  
He does not speak.  
She hopes he won't.  
Fingers fawn along her ear and nape.  
Palm on her side.  
As always.

Hands fall along her upper arms.  
Waist. Hips. His body, tall, heavier than hers.  
Still. No words. Breathing, and the pressure of his touch.  
She settles in. His chin grazing her thick crown of curls.  
Turns her round. Lifts her face.  
Looking. Looking at her.  
Looking through the dark.  
One.  
Quiet.  
Kiss.  
Hand along her spine, a large palm, under the warm vest and light sweater, on her smooth skin.  
Kiss.

Headlights run the ridge across the lake.  
Seconds later, the sound follows.  
Great oaks alight, then flicker dark, as the vehicle wanders the country lane.

**For info on Maine dialects**, follow any of the links here. Please note that Maine's Downeast dialect is often used for humorous effect, as in some of the clips here. Though the basic sounds, inflections, etc. may be right for the locale of DOWN ALONG THE COVE, these clips are somewhat exaggerated. However, if you can do the full on dialect, you can temper it a more normal voicing where needed.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AbnwZuw1Buc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FZDpx1aLovc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bpuR-WeQjc8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qzm5qQjx96l>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjx0CAKaC1M>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Apqe-yiEfWY>