

***We Are Here***  
**By Lauren Yee**

**Wright Now Play Later: January**

**Prompt: Newmethos, “To what end is a particular renovation? To restore the glory of what was? Or to obliterate what was and become new? “**

**Scene**

Main street

(CLEM and WALT looks around at the main street, which is largely empty)

**IN WHICH THE NEW ROAD TAKES ITS TOLL**

CLEM

Things’ve sure have changed around here since they opened that new road.

WALT

It’s Tuesday.

They opened it yesterday.

CLEM

Things change fast.

All the people who used to be here, all the cars that used to pass through.

Sure did seem like we used to have something that we don’t have now, now that they’ve opened that new road.

(Pause)

CLEM

You should get a name for the office door.

One that says your name on it, you should get that.

WALT

For what?

CLEM

As sheriff—

WALT

Interim

CLEM

(shrugs) Interim sheriff—

And town administrator.

Dual role, big deal.

You should!

So every day when you go to work, you should get to see a door that has your name on it so you

know it's your door and everything inside is yours!  
(Even if it's only for the interim.)

WALT  
Awful quiet out here.

CLEM  
People can just go around us now, that's what it is.

WALT  
Faster, I guess.

CLEM  
Fastest way to get from Wadena to Forest Creek's around us now, you know that?  
Fastest way to get through us is around us?  
No reason to go by the fountain  
And the mailbox  
And the old furnace  
And the one stoplight at the corner that broke last year.  
No reason for any of that now.  
Who knows if we're even still here anymore!

WALT  
Yeah  
...  
Though  
We are, still here.

CLEM  
Oh. Yeah. I mean, *we're* still here, but who knows that!

WALT  
And the post office

CLEM  
And the post office

WALT  
And the library

CLEM  
And the library

WALT  
And the MUSEUM  
It's all still here.

CLEM  
Museum's real nice, I admit that, better than what I've seen in Wadena, but what can you do?

WALT  
Well, they should.

CLEM  
Who?

WALT  
They should do something about it.  
We have everything else in this town—

CLEM  
We don't have a mall.  
We don't have a paint store.  
We have to drive to Wadena for the Starbucks.  
Maybe we should get a mall.  
People like malls.  
Malls provide everything you need.  
People who have malls have some place for people to go

WALT  
Malls must be pretty hard thing to come by.

CLEM  
Yeah.  
Probably.  
You should get on that.

WALT  
Me?

CLEM  
Well, doesn't have to be a mall, but something!  
As interim sheriff and town administrator.

(WALT thinks)

WALT  
We need something that says we are here.

CLEM  
"Here we are!"

WALT  
"Here are WE!" Us?

CLEM  
Better.

WALT  
Which one?

CLEM  
(nods) Better.

**Scene**

Walt's office

**IN WHICH WALT AND CLEM DISCUSS THE OPTIONS**

(WALT and CLEM in the office)

CLEM  
Did she like it? The sign?

WALT  
She didn't like it.

CLEM  
At first. Nobody likes anything at first,  
Just ask babies.  
The world, it's horrible.  
But what you do:  
You gotta let things catch,  
Catch on.  
Way I see it:  
You put it right at the entrance to town.  
At the exit on the road.  
A sign is a wave.  
Lets people know:  
We exist!  
I am me!  
I am a thing  
Of me!

WALT  
But you think that's right  
For a sign?  
"We are here?"

CLEM  
Could be!  
Signs're anything you think of.  
Lots of things end up as signs. Useless ones!  
"No Xing!"  
"Stop! I am an octagon!"  
"Children over here!"  
"People walking about every day all over!"  
They have signs for everything.  
"Here lives me! A thing!"

As long as you have a post, people'll attach any combination of words to it.  
"I am a post office and here is a post!"

WALT  
You think?

CLEM  
Yeah.

WALT  
Yeah!

CLEM  
You should take up a collection.  
Here—

(CLEM finishes his sandwich and hands WALT his plate. He places a dollar in the plate)