

Before Midnight

Written by Richard Linklater, Julie Delpy and Ethan Hawke

Jesse (Ethan Hawke) and Celine (Julie Delpy), longtime lovers, now middle-aged, are on a vacation in Greece with their young twin girls. Here, they take a much-needed night to themselves.

Ext. walk Part 3 — evening.

They are now walking through the town on their way to the shore.

CELINE So if we're going to spend another 56 more years together ...

JESSE Yeah?

CELINE ... What about me would you like to change?

JESSE (*Smirks.*) That's another one of your can't-win questions. I'm not answering that.

CELINE What do you mean? There's not one thing you'd like to change about me? I'm perfect?

JESSE O.K.

CELINE O.K.

JESSE Actually ...

CELINE One thing.

JESSE ... If I could change one thing about you ...

CELINE Uh-huh.

JESSE ... It would be for you to stop trying to change me.

CELINE You're a very skilled manipulator, you know that?

JESSE Well, I'm onto you. I know how you work.

CELINE You think?

JESSE Yeah. I know everything about you. Here we go. Let's go through here.

CELINE I don't think you do, actually.

(*Laughs.*)

JESSE (*Laughs.*) No? Well, I know you better than I know anybody else on the planet. But ... maybe that's not saying much.

CELINE I mean right now?

JESSE What?

CELINE This is great. You know?

JESSE Right. Yeah.

CELINE I feel close to you.

JESSE Yeah.

CELINE But sometimes, I don't know, I feel like you're breathing helium and I'm breathing oxygen.

JESSE (*Helium voice.*) What makes you say that? Huh?

CELINE See? I'm trying to truly connect —

JESSE (*Helium voice.*) What? Come on, I'm just being myself!

CELINE — And you make a joke! That's exactly what I'm talking about!

JESSE Oh, listen, come on, come on. If we're ever going to truly know one another, I think we'd probably have to get to know ourselves better first.