

Reading/Lessons
Day 9

by
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A large white wall, maybe a scrim. The words written and typed by the characters will appear here. There won't be "screenshots" of someone typing or photos of a written page. The words themselves appear. Maybe each character has her own font. Keep it unadorned, simple. It's the words that are important.

A small table with stools, a young woman, Sarah, in a military surplus cap, hair escaping. She's in a hoodie, a backpack at her feet, a laptop in front of her.

She types. She thinks. She types. Deletes. Types. She's satisfied. She waits.

Another woman, e, in jeans and a t shirt, enters and greets Sarah with a handshake.

E

Hi, Sarah, you can call me "e," we'll be working to--

Sarah holds up a finger to stop e from talking. She turns the computer to face e. The following words appear on the wall:

"Good morning! I'm deaf."

E (cont'd)

Oh, God, sorry.

She continues to read the screen. The next words appear on the wall:

"We can communicate through gesture or writing. I can also read lips. If you don't talk too fast."

E nods. When she speaks now, it's a combination of whispering and exaggeratedly mouthing the words, unsure of herself.

E (cont'd)

Good morning. You can call me "e." Like the letter? "e."

Sarah is confused. She hands e a piece of paper and a pen. e signs "Thank you." Sarah lights up and begins to sign, "You know sign language?"

E (cont'd)

No, no, that's--

She furiously writes and slides the paper to Sarah. The words appear on the wall:

"I don't speak sign language. I just know thank you and apple."

Sarah looks at e; e signs the word "apple." Sarah smiles and gives a thumbs up.

E writes and the words appear on the wall:

"call me e."

Sarah signs the letter "E."

SARAH

E.

E signs "e."

From here on out, assume that e is writing on paper and that Sarah is typing the lines that follow. The lines, should all appear on the wall, unless it's indicated that the line is said aloud rather than in text. Feel free to add some gesture here and there to augment the text that the actors share.

E

What are you studying?

SARAH

Film and video. I just got a camera.

E

What kind?

SARAH

Canon rebel. SL 1.

E

Wow. You must be rich.

SARAH

(Laughs)

My student loans and not eating for two months.

E

So, what kind of calc are we doing?

SARAH

Photography.

E

People don't usually get tutoring in photography.

SARAH

I need to know what people are talking about in class. They don't always pay attention to things like--

She gestures to her ears.

SARAH (cont'd)

They told me you know photography.

E

I do. What do you want to cover?

Sarah digs in her bag. She furiously searches. Curses. She types.

SARAH

Forgot the camera.

She bumps her head in frustration.

E

(Spoken)

It's okay, don't worry.

She realizes she's speaking and returns to the paper.

E (cont'd)

We can still talk cameras. How much do you know?

Sarah mimes taking a picture with a camera and then shrugs.

E (cont'd)

(Spoken)

That's a start.

(Written)

We can talk about the 4 settings you really need to worry about. Have you used your Canon yet?

Sarah shakes her head "No." She pulls her phone from her pocket and gives a thumbs down.

E (cont'd)

When you use your Canon, here's what to look for. If I said Aperture would you know what I meant?

Sarah thinks.

SARAH

(Gesturing, speaking)

The lens?

E nods.

E

It's the shutter. How wide the shutter opens.

E gestures with her hand, opening and closing her fist as she looks through it like a telescope. Sarah gives a thumbs up.

E (cont'd)

Photos are all about light. Letting light in. It's a game of how much and how long.

SARAH

The larger the aperture, the more light.

E nods.

SARAH (cont'd)

I catch on quick.

E laughs.

SARAH (cont'd)

Sometimes.

E

That's aperture. Do you know what shutter speed is?

SARAH

How quick the shutter opens. How long.

E nods.

E

How does shutter speed change the light?

Sarah thinks. She doesn't understand the question.

E (cont'd)

(Spoken)

No worries, it's okay.

(Thinks, then written)

I'm going to apologize up front. This is going to be a bad metaphor.

SARAH

(Spoken)

Go for it.

E

Imagine your house is underwater.

Sarah cocks an eyebrow.

E (cont'd)

Stick with me on this. Your house is underwater. What happens when you open the door?

Sarah makes a gesture of crashing waves and makes gestures of swimming and drowning. They laugh.

E (cont'd)

Water comes in. What happens if--

E gestures quickly opening and shutting a door.

E (cont'd)

How much water gets in?

Sarah gestures a small amount.

E (cont'd)

(Spoken)

Then what if--

Gestures opening the door slowly. Sarah makes the tidal wave gesture.

SARAH

(Spoken)

Shutter speed.

E

How does shutter speed work with aperture?

Sarah shrugs.

E (cont'd)

Think of the house. Shutter speed is how quick the door opens. What is aperture?

SARAH

The size of the door.

E

EXACTLY!!!

SARAH

A big door would let in a lot of water.

E

But what if you open the door for a split second?

SARAH

Not as much water.

E

Even though it's a big door. What about a small door for a split second?

SARAH

No water pretty much.

Sarah processes it all.

SARAH (cont'd)

(Spoken)

Aperture. Shutter speed.

(Types)

What's next.

E

ISO. You hear of that?

Sarah makes a so-so gesture.

E (cont'd)

It's how sensitive the light sensor is. If we go to the terrible metaphor of the underwater house. Have you seen the Wizard of Oz?

Sarah nods.

E (cont'd)

What happens to the witch with water?

Sarah gestures melting.

E (cont'd)

What if the witch lives in the underwater house?

Sarah gestures a sliced throat.

E (cont'd)

What if the witch is only a little allergic to water? And a little bit of water touches her?

SARAH

She doesn't melt. But if she was really sensitive.

Sarah gestures a tiny drip of water and mimes melting.

E

(Spoken)

ISO.

SARAH

So, if I have a small aperture. A fast shutter speed. But a really high, sensitive ISO, even though a little bit of light gets in, it's sensitive, so I'd still get an OK pic?

E

Quite possibly.

SARAH

What's the 4th thing? Aperture, shutter speed. ISO.

E

White balance.

Sarah shrugs.

E (cont'd)

We don't have time to get into that today. But that can be your homework. I'll give you some reading. Lessons 2 and 3 both cover white balance.

E writes something down, but we don't see the words. She gives a thumbs up as she stands. E signs "Thank you."

SARAH

(Spoken and signing)

No, thank *you*.

E

(Whispered)

I don't know how to say "you're welcome."

SARAH

(Spoken)

That's your homework.

They shake hands. E exits. Sarah thinks. She reads through the notes that E has written and smiles. Lights fade as Sarah closes her laptop and packs.