

# Just Because

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## 0.0 Introduction.

English *just* attracts attention for various reasons, the first being, I think, its apparent variety of meanings, which, when they first enter the consciousness of a native speaker, are so disparate that they are as curious and interesting as they are confounding.<sup>1</sup> That same variety is an imposing challenge to the linguist who is trying to understand *just* and to give its usage an explicit, coherent description. *Just* must pose a challenge of a third kind to an infant working to gain command of English. Just [!] how does a child, beginning from innocence with *just*, go about acquiring facility with it.<sup>2</sup> And finally, *just* poses a challenge of a fourth kind for the conception of language. What must language be like so that all this happens?<sup>3</sup>

There is lack of homogeneity (if not disagreement) in how *just* has been treated in the literature.<sup>4</sup> It appears common to make a distinction in principle in the grammars of language between “pragmatic markers”<sup>5</sup> and some remainder, and then to assign *just* to the group of pragmatic markers (Molina & Romano 2012.18).

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<sup>1</sup> There are at least two *justs* in English:

- (i) I am a just man.
- (ii) I am just a man.

The first means something like *fair, non-prejudiced, moderate, upstanding*, etc. The second in its usage specifically here in (ii) means something like *only, no more than*, etc. It is the second *just* that we are concerned with here.

<sup>2</sup> This is a question that will not be addressed in these pages.

<sup>3</sup> What the hell is it that I know that is allowing me to do this, and how did it get into my head?

<sup>4</sup> “In spite of the attention it has received in the literature ..., the contemporary semantics of English JUST remains controversial and a number of questions still lack an undisputed answer” (Molina & Romano 2012.18).

<sup>5</sup> The designation *discourse marker* seems to be used interchangeably with *pragmatic marker*.

Over the last two decades, discourse markers have become a distinct field of linguistic enquiry ... in which several phenomena coexist, as evidenced by the lack of agreement on the classification and naming of these elements. The particle JUST belongs to a broad set of – mostly oral– pragmatic markers (according to Aijmer, 2002:153, in the rank-list of the most frequent words in the London-Lund Corpus, JUST occupies rank 54, placing it among the most frequent words in the spoken language, while it is not among the most frequent 100 written words in either the LOB Corpus or the Brown Corpus) that serve interpersonal functions (in this case, the expression of speaker’s involvement, stance or affect), as opposed to canonical discourse markers, that signal textual relations between clauses. However, the distinction between both sets is not clear-cut, since the textual and interpersonal function can co-occur in the same discourse, and the prevalence of one function over the other is a matter of prototypicality that springs from the potential meanings of the particle.

There is a fair degree of linguist’s talk in this passage, but I think there are two observations which are valid and useful: *Just* is “among the most frequent words in the spoken language,” and *just* is “the expression of the speaker’s involvement, stance or affect.”

In what follows, I shall first luxuriate in the varietal fun of *just* (Section 1), looking for the parts that make sense. Then, in Section 2, I shall propose a more integral way of understanding *just*, hoping to find a coherency. In Section 3, I shall return to previous work on *just* to contrast what has happened here with work done elsewhere. Section 4 considers some implications of the proposed description.

### ***1.0 The Luxuriation.***

Examples of *just* will be taken from two primary kinds of sources: my speech (and yours if you speak English natively) and spontaneous (at least non-elicited) usage. The body of the latter is collected below in the appendices, one appendix for each source. In what follows, only two things are needed: (i) that the reader be a native speaker of English and (ii) the reader be willing to contemplate the *ifs*<sup>6</sup> of his/her language. If there is a conclusion to this discussion of *just*, it does not come from some logical or formal argument. It will come from our (hopefully agreed upon) reactions to and understanding of our experience with *just* in the cited uses.

Looking forward to what we may discover ... First, there seems to be a thread of *proximity* to some of the uses of *just*, and second, there is an alternative expression of *repression* or *restraint*. At first, the two will (may) appear to be distinct and competing families of senses ... but in the end, I

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<sup>6</sup> Per Marsellus Wallace.

think, they can be seen as the product of a much more general condition. We will examine each in turn.

### ***1.1 The Luxuriation: Proximity***

An impression of *proximity* (I shall call it that for lack of some more perfect nomenclature) recurs in various ways across a number of uses of *just*. In this section, I shall try to identify (some of) the senses in an informal way and to discover whatever pattern there may be in them.<sup>7</sup>

#### ***1.1.1 Proximity of Imperatives: En face.***

Let us begin with a familiar example, the Nike motto:

- (1) Just do it!

Reflection seems to reveal at least two prominent aspects to the presence of *just* in (1). The first is the existence of some kind of history. The person to whom (1) is directed has been resistant, reluctant, hesitant, etc. to perform whatever act is intended. There is an urgency to be felt in the use of *just*, an involved encouragement.<sup>8</sup> That sense of history emerges more clearly in the negative. For example, if I were to see you standing on the edge of a multistory building, looking out over the emptiness, and thinking that you were about to jump, my shout would be:

- (2) Don't do it!

not

- (3) Just don't do it!

In the specified life circumstance, example (3) says the wrong thing. It indexes a life context that is not there. Utterance (3) might be appropriate advice to you after we have finished discussing investments in companies that foul the atmosphere. And if uttered in the context of the person on the ledge, then it similarly suggests a preceding discussion/counseling session, and a now present urgency. *Just* seems to demark the culmination of a history and to set it off against the beginning (or not) of — hence boundary with — some

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<sup>7</sup> I say “some of” because the variety is endless.

<sup>8</sup> It is this sense of shared history, introduced by *just* that creates the comradery which in turn makes the slogan an effective marketing device. *Do it!* will not work.

proximate consequence. There is an imminence there that comes from a soon-to-come resolution. The boundary demarked by change. Example (2) would be possible advice as well, but it differs from (3) in that it does not point a finger to our shared history.

The following examples also with imperatives seem to use *just* to index prior history in a manner similar to (1) and (3):<sup>9</sup>

- (39) JULES: I used the same soap you did and when I dried my hands, the towel didn't look like a fuckin' Maxie pad. Look, fuck it, alright. Who cares? But it's shit like this that's gonna bring this situation to a boil. If he were to come in here and see that towel like that... I'm tellin' you Vincent, you best be cool. 'Cause if I gotta get in to it with Jimmie on account of you... Look, I ain't threatenin' you, I respect you an' all, *just* don't put me in that position. (VI/39)

In VI/39, *just* references the concerns that are contained in *that* position,<sup>10</sup> and in so doing, *just* opposes *that position* to the alternative of not being in it. The untaken narrative option of Jules concluding his tirade without *just* and with *I respect you an' all, don't put me in that position* just does not feel right,<sup>11</sup> and it does not feel right because it ignores Jules' extended plea to Vincent to *be cool*. It treats the history as if it were not there. And in doing that, the absence of *just* produces a contradiction that makes *I respect you an' all, don't put me in that position* a wrong use of English.

In VI/54, *Just chill out* is the culmination/resolution of a conflict between Jules and Pumpkin, and witnessed by Honey Bunny.

- (54) HONEY BUNNY: Let him go! Let him go!. I'll blow your fuckin' head off! I'll kill ya!. I'll kill ya! You're gonna die, you're gonna fuckin; die bad!  
 JULES (to Pumpkin): Tell that bitch to be cool! Say, bitch be cool: Say, bitch be cool.  
 PUMPKIN: Chill out, honey!  
 HONEY BUNNY: Let him go!  
 JULES (softly): Tell her it's gonna be okay.

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<sup>9</sup> In citing and referencing examples from the appendices, a roman numeral will identify the Appendix, and an arabic numeral will specify the example in that appendix. Thus (VI/39) is the thirty-ninth example of *just* in the text represented in Appendix VI. Occasionally, instances of *just* in close proximity will be included in the same textual selection and thus share the same arabic number.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Jules' preceding speech.

<sup>11</sup> Pause ... and contemplate it. Mull it over.

PUMPKIN: I'm gonna be okay.  
 JULES: Promise her.  
 PUMPKIN: I promise.  
 JULES: Tell her to chill.  
 PUMPKIN: **Just** chill out.  
 JULES: What's her name?  
 PUMPKIN: Yolanda. (VI/54)

The tenseness generated by Honey Bunny's involvement/reaction in the scene emerges in the hint of exasperation that comes through in Pumpkin's *Just chill out*. It's not just *Chill out*. It's *Just chill out ... please*.<sup>12</sup> VI/54 is further instructive in that it offers — luckily — a contrasting alternative. While Pumpkin's last words in this excerpt are *Just chill out*, his first words are *Chill out*, without *just*. Let us imagine a version of VI/54 altered by exchanging the two:

HONEY BUNNY: Let him go! Let him go!. I'll blow your fuckin' head off! I'll kill ya!. I'll kill ya! You're gonna die, you're gonna fuckin; die bad!  
 JULES (to Pumpkin): Tell that bitch to be cool! Say, bitch be cool: Say, bitch be cool.  
 PUMPKIN: **Just chill out, honey!**  
 HONEY BUNNY: Let him go!  
 JULES (softly): Tell her it's gonna be okay.  
 PUMPKIN: I'm gonna be okay.  
 JULES: Promise her.  
 PUMPKIN: I promise.  
 JULES: Tell her to chill.  
 PUMPKIN: **Chill out.**  
 JULES: What's her name?  
 PUMPKIN: Yolanda.

Pumpkin's final *Chill out* now impresses one as truly odd. It is too curt, too preemptory — simply a mechanical response/repetition to Jules' preceding command. It fails to acknowledge the history. In this recast version, Pumpkin's first *Just chill out, honey* (as opposed to *Chill out, honey*) has still enough preceding context to be referenced as the source of Pumpkin's annoyance, and it is less out of place. It is the second *Chill out* that feels mistaken ... in the same way and for the same reason as *don't put me in that position* (without *just*) feels mistaken in VI/39. It is a mechanical,

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<sup>12</sup> Pause ... and contemplate it. Mull it over.

disinterested repetition.<sup>13</sup>

Passages III/24, VI/42 and VI/55 will provide our last examples of *just* with an imperative:

- (24) INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS/MITCHELL COURTHOUSE - DAY  
 DET. LEANDER SYDNOR sits on the other side of a wide expanse of desk.  
 SYDNOR: ... and if the major could find his ass with his hand, he'd know that this is more than enough for us to be up on a pen register. Lieutenant Carver told him so, but fuck if he isn't trying to shut this thing down.  
 REVEAL that he is talking to an amused JUDGE DANIEL PHELAN.  
 SYDNOR (CONT'D): All's I'm sayin' is a phone call or two and you're gonna find out that they're gettin' some kinda pressure from somewhere to sit on this thing, even though we've tied three killings to this crew.  
 PHELAN: Does the police commissioner know?  
 SYDNOR: Him? He wouldn't know police work if it took down his front door on a warrant.  
 SYDNOR gets up, goes to the door.  
 SYDNOR (CONT'D): *Just* keep my name out of it.  
 SYDNOR exits. (III/24)
- (42) VINCENT: I got a threshold, Jules. I got a threshold for the abuse I'll take. And you're crossin' it. I'm a race car and you got me in the red. Redline 7000, that's where you are. *Just* know, it's fuckin' dangerous to be drivin' a race car when it's in the red. It could blow. (VI/42)
- (55) JULES: Yolanda, I thought you were gonna be cool. When you yell at me, it makes me nervous. When I get nervous, I get scared. And when motherfuckers get scared, that's when motherfuckers get accidentally shot.  
 YOLANDA (more conversational): *Just* know: you hurt him, you die. (VI/55)

Here in VI/55, for example, Yolanda's *Just know* sums the preceding threatening discussion. Her following promise, *you hurt him, you die*, is not made in a vacuum. It is not just *know*. It is *just know*.<sup>14</sup>

In all these examples of *just*, its use (i) references a history, (ii) the existence of an experiential boundary recognized (iii) as it is crossed (or not) and where — on the other side — life is distinctly different. The choice to use *just* in these imperatives references all this and then makes the command more

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<sup>13</sup> "I'm only saying this because I was told to."

<sup>14</sup> Ponder that contrast.

pointed, insistent, and in-your-face than the alternative without *just*. The experiential components are summarized in Figure 1.<sup>15</sup> The arrow points from left to right in recognition of the usual visual linear display of time as we move from an earlier experience on the left into a later one on the right. The

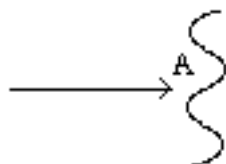


Figure 1: *Some Aspects to the Meaning of English just.*

arbitrary extent of the arrow embodies the *history* of the experience and the A embodies a *boundary* demarked by some *occurrence*, which is present as the wavy line. A identifies the point, where the preamble ceases with the onset of *change*.<sup>16</sup> The A standing between *history* and *occurrence* identifies the focus of the *proximity*<sup>17</sup> that we felt in our examples. These pieces of purport<sup>18</sup> — (i), (ii) & (iii) — are not yet part of language. They are us. They exist first as aspects our lives, the actors/experiencers. It is only when we hear *just* applied to them that they are precipitated as the organized substance depicted in Figure 1. The senses of *pointed* command, *insistent* command, and *in-your-face* command are not a part of language that is represented by *just*. *Just* does not “mean” *pointedness*, *insistence*, *in-your-face*. *Just* is merely a tool that directs us to think of experience (here, a selection of imperatives) from the

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<sup>15</sup> This graphic image will morph through several iterations as we add more uses of *just*.

<sup>16</sup> Lee (1991.48) recognizes this semantics with his specificatory *just*

the set of situations that come within the scope of the specificatory *just* is the fact ... are sharply specified at one end of their semantic range but imprecisely specified at the other

Lee’s examples of this are

- (i) He left just before midnight.
- (ii) It hurts just below my elbow.
- (iii) He just missed the bus.
- (iv) He just missed the target.

The impression of *adjacency* is compatible with the *sharply specified*. In Figure 1, all of this is, I think, captured in the history-abutting-point of change.

<sup>17</sup> The *pointedness*, the *insistence*, and the *in-your-face*.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Hjelmslev.

perspective of Figure 1, and the senses we perceive are the result of that application. *Just* simply exists in experience and when invoked, provides a bit of orientation to experience as permitted by Figure 1. If that is so, then what appear to be “meanings” of *just* are not that. They are the reactions to the direction of *just* — *Look at what is happening from this point of view* — and are therefore constrained in number only by what we can live through, have lived through, and what we know about life.<sup>19</sup> *Just* simply instructs us look at particular moments — wherever you are — in the manner of Figure 1.<sup>20</sup>

### 1.1.2 Proximity in Time.

The *proximity* of Figure 1 is curious in that our orienting experience with it can vary. Figure 2 gives a graphic representation to the variation.<sup>21</sup> Above, our orientation to A had A right before us, face-to-face as an imperative, but the attractor A may also be to the right (with A at our right elbow,<sup>22</sup> and to be anticipated). This is represented in Figure 2 (a). Thirdly, we can view matters retrospectively (with A to our left). This is Figure 2(c).

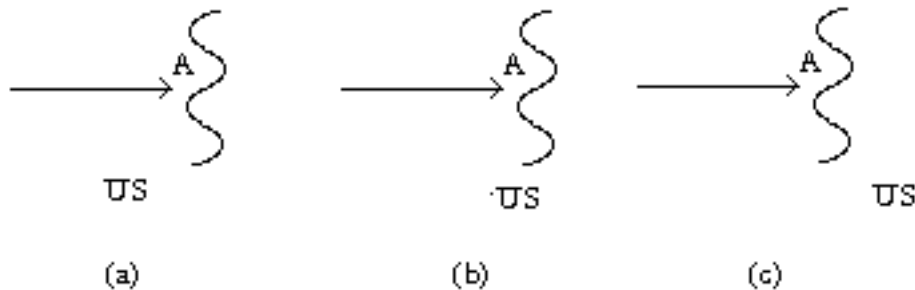


Figure 2: *Vagaries of the Proximity in Time*

<sup>19</sup> Lee (1991.47) also sees the source of the senses of *just* in *interaction*, but with the additional belief that the contexts of the interaction are themselves systematic determinants of the senses:

Clearly, if the general hypothesis is correct that the meanings in question are the product of interactional processes, then it ought to be possible to identify in the borderline cases semantic elements (or other relevant factors) that connect them to unambiguous cases. That is, if meaning-type *A* results from the interaction between *just* and context *X*, and if meaning-type *B* results from the interaction between *just* and context *Y*, then contexts that are ambiguous or indeterminate with respect to meaning-types *A* and *B* ought to share features [the predictive determinacy, PWD] with both context *X* and *Y*.

<sup>20</sup> It would be a mistake to confuse a tool with what the tool can be used to do.

<sup>21</sup> The *US* is you, I, and whoever else may be present to witness the performance.

<sup>22</sup> The future time elbow.



### 1.1.2.1 *Proximity in Time: Release.*

The imminence of *proximity* to A, that we sensed in the earlier examples of *just* in imperatives, is even more prominent in other uses, where the *proximity* is played out in the time of our lives. Specifically in these, the *proximity* is first that of an occurrence which has recently completed, and it is the *proximity* of temporal recency that *just* records. It is as if we are looking at A with it at our left elbow.<sup>23</sup> The following are examples of recent time *proximity* taken from the Appendices:

- (79) Margaret Klimek *just* finished her fourth Boston Marathon, achieving a personal best in the process. After the race, Klimek, 38, sat on the ground in tears. “It’s been two years and I’m a mom, I have two kids — it’s been hard,” Klimek said through tears. “It just feels so good to be out here doing this.”(I/79)
- (84) Thompson now owns around 600 episodes of the show, which ended in 2006, though his collection is clustered mostly in the 1970s and 1980s. “Soul Train,” he explained, is his comfort food, his shortcut to joy. He plays the episodes in a constant loop on whichever screen is closest to him. The first time we met in person, “Soul Train” was playing on both television screens of his tour bus; the last time we talked by phone, he had *just* arrived home from a trip and, before even taking off his coat, had flipped on the show. (I/84)
- (85) On a September afternoon, killing time before a concert in Highland Park, Ill., on a short tour with the Roots, Thompson was thinking about the anointing of a “classic.” Kanye West’s “Donda” had *just* dropped, and clout-chasers were already rushing to dub it so. Thompson was on Twitter, scolding them to give it a second. (I/85)
- (1) PEARL: I’m washing towels. That’s the towel sound.  
She sits. They eat.  
PEARL (CONT’D): Kitty says they *just* got one of those fancy European all in ones. Says it washes and dries. One machine. Can you believe that?  
LESTER NYGAARD: I bet that set them back a penny.  
PEARL: He can afford it, your brother. Kitty said he *just* got a big promotion. After only working there a year. (II/1)
- (16) Hess looks at his guys to see if they’re hearing this.  
SAM HESS: Is he serious?  
Hess closes on him.  
SAM HESS (CONT’D): Only two reasons to come to my shop, friend. Either you need a truck. Or you drive a truck. You a truck driver?

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<sup>23</sup> Our past time elbow. Figure 2 (c).

Malvo is unintimidated.

MALVO: I was *just* talking to your boys. I think the younger one's a little dim. (II/16)

- (20) Hess works towards his big finish, huffing and puffing. Then suddenly, he STOPS. BLOOD pours from his mouth. The hooker screams as Hess falls on top of her, revealing: LORNE MALVO, who has *just* stuck a KNIFE into the back of Hess's head. Hess blocks the hooker's view. (II/20)
- (80) David Parkinson *just* ran his 12th Boston marathon. His wife beat breast cancer twice during the pandemic and he said he ran the marathon for her. (I/80)
- (27) Molly enters, approaches the nurse's station. SUE ROUNDTREE (30s), the same nurse from earlier, is working.  
MOLLY: Slow day.  
SUE ROUNDTREE: Bars *just* opened. Wait an hour. (II/27)
- (36) KURT GRIMLY: Detroit *just* got a touchdown. Over. (beat) Dad? Are you there? Over. (II/36)
- (18) GUTIERREZ reaches the elevator, pushes the button, waits. The door opens and it's HAYNES, getting off. He sees GUTIERREZ, her box, her expression.  
HAYNES: I *just* heard.  
GUTIERREZ: The Carroll County bureau? That's how they punish me? Why not just send my ass all the way to Pennsylvania?  
HAYNES: What did they tell you? (III/18)
- (2) MICHAEL (cont'd): That's why the 'L Word' is just a TV show, and this is real life. And Pam, for what it's worth, if you were a lesbian, you'd be one of the hotter ones.  
PAM: Um, thanks.  
As Michael heads for his office, Pam turns to the camera. Her expression asks, "Did he *just* say that?" (V/2)
- (1) YOUNG MAN: I know that's what I always say. I'm always right too, but —  
YOUNG WOMAN: — but you forget about it in a day or two —  
YOUNG MAN: — yeah, well, the days of me forgetting' are over, and the days of me rememberin' have *just* begun. (VI/1)
- (6) JULES: How you boys doin'?  
No answer.  
JULES (to Brett): Am I trippin', or did I *just* ask you a question?  
BRETT: We're doin' okay. (VI/6)

- (8) BRETT (to Jules): Look, what's your name? I got his name's VINCENT, but what's yours?  
 JULES: My name's Pitt, and you ain't talkin' your ass outta this shit.  
 BRETT: I just want you to know how sorry we are about how fucked up things got between us and Mr. Wallace. When we entered into this thing, we only had the best intentions —  
 As Brett talks, Jules takes out his gun and SHOOTs Roger three times in the chest, BLOWING him out of his chair.  
 Vince smiles to himself. Jules has got style.  
 Brett has *just* shit his pants. He's not crying or whimpering, but he's so full of fear, it's as if his body is imploding. (VI/8)
- (26) BUTCH: Oh, I ... don't remember. It's really rare I remember a dream.  
 FABIENNE: I *just* woke up from it.  
 BUTCH: Fabienne, I'm not lying to you. I don't remember.  
 FABIENNE: Well, let's slook at the grumpy man in the morning. I didn't say you were lying. it's just odd you don't remember your dream .... (VI/26)
- (29) Butch stands frozen, amazed at what *just* happened. His look goes from the grease spot in the bathroom that was once Vincent, down to the powerful piece of artillery in his grip. (VI/29)
- (31) MAYNARD: Zed? It's Maynard. The spider *just* caught a coupl'a flies. (VI/31)
- (35) JULES: Don't do that! Don't you fuckin' do that! Don't blow this shit off! What *just* happened was a fuckin' miracle!  
 VINCENT: Chill the fuck out, Jules, this shit happens.  
 JULES: Wrong, wrong, this shit doesn't just happen.  
 VINCENT: Do you wanna continue this theological discussion in the car, or at the jailhouse with the cops?  
 JULES: We should be fuckin' dead now, my friend! We *just* witnessed a miracle, and I want you to fuckin' acknowledge it! (VI/35)
- (36) JULES: What the fuck's happening?  
 VINCENT: I *just* accidentally shot Marvin in the throat.  
 JULES: Why the fuck did you do that?  
 VINCENT: I didn't mean to do it. I said it was an accident.  
 JULES: I've seen a lot of crazy-ass shit in my time —  
 VINCENT: — chill out, man, it was an accident, okay? You hit a bump or somethin' and the gun went off.  
 JULES: The car didn't hit no motherfuckin' bump!  
 VINCENT: Look! I didn't mean to shoot this son-of-a-bitch, the gun just went off, don't ask me how! (VI/36)
- (43) THE WOLF: You know what you two look like?  
 VINCENT: What?

THE WOLF: Like a couple of guys who *just* blew off somebody's head. Yes, strippin' off those bloody rags is absolutely necessary. Toss the clothes in Jim's garbage bag. (VI/43)

- (16) The jury verdict was a swift, resounding victory for the prosecution. The jury came into the courtroom shortly after 2:30 p.m. Friday, *just* over 24 hours after they began deliberating. (I/16)
- (75) Devon Tiller's 6-month-old son, Ayvion, was one of them. *Just* a few months after he was born, Ms. Tiller, a single mother who recently started a second job as a material handler in a warehouse, received a letter explaining that a college account had been opened for her son, with materials on how she could also set up one of her own. (I/75)

As in I/79, the proximity is sometimes achieved by making US (you, I and the author/speaker) out to be witnesses present at the occasion qualified by *just*. In I/79, it is clear that we are standing right there as witnesses as *Margaret Klimek ... finished her fourth Boston Marathon*. In I/84, Thompson's just having arrived home is the orienting precursor for *the last time we talked by phone*. In I/85, *Kanye West's "Donda" had just dropped* is the immediate context for the proximate *Thompson was thinking about the anointing of a "classic"*. In II/1, *Kitty says they just got one of those fancy European all in ones* acts as the proximate center to *Says it washes and dries. One machine. Can you believe that?* In the same way, *Kitty said he just got a big promotion* is center for *He can afford it, your brother*. In II/16, the assertion *I was just talking to your boys* precedes, and is the motivation for, the proximate conclusion — based on that conversation — *I think the younger one's a little dim*. The remaining examples cited above are

- who has *just* stuck a KNIFE into the back of Hess's head (II/20)  
 David Parkinson *just* ran his 12th Boston marathon (I/80)  
 Bars *just* opened (II/27)  
 Detroit *just* got a touchdown (II/36)  
 I *just* heard (III/18)  
 Did he *just* say that? (V/2)  
 ... the days of me rememberin' have *just* begun. (VI/1)  
 ... did I *just* ask you a question? (VI/6)  
 Brett has *just* shit his pants. (VI/8)  
 I *just* woke up from it. (VI/26)  
 ... amazed at what *just* happened (VI/29)  
 The spider *just* caught a coupl' a flies. (VI/31)  
 We *just* witnessed a miracle ... (VI/35)  
 I *just* accidentally shot Marvin in the throat. (VI/36)  
 ... a couple of guys who *just* blew off somebody's head (VI/43)

*just* over 24 hours after they began deliberating.(I/16)

*Just* a few months after he was born (I/75)

The presence of *proximity* as a close by, very recent conclusion in these, and others of their sort, seems straightforward, easy to perceive, to agree upon, and to require no further comment.

### 1.1.2.2 *The Proximity in Time: The verge.*

The complementary alternative to Figure 2 (c) — Figure 2 (a) — places US in proximity to the imminent realization of A. The proximity of the relation between US and A that is embodied in Figure 2 (a) may be so close that it appears that we are on the *verge* of A. Consider

(4) We just made it.

In one usage, the *just* can represent A<sub>3</sub>, as in

(5) We just made it back last night.

The impression again is that there is a lurking history. Some hindrance. Now, we add alternative scenario. You and I have decided to go to the store, but the weather is worsening. The sky is getting dark, yet I insist *Come on. It'll all right*. We get in the car, and by the time we get to the store, rain appears just about upon us. *Come on! Run for it!* We slam the car doors, and running for the shelter of the store, we reach safe cover just as the deluge strikes. I say

(6) Oooh, we just barely made it!

to which you confirm

(7) Yesss! We just made it! We're here!

My (6) is *relief* at the near miss, and your (7) is *exhultation* at the success. Your (7) is an example of the (b) from Figure 2, but what is my (6)? It does not yet have the stable security of (7) and is on the cusp of the A, but is not yet A. It is on the Verge.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Here is one more example from one of the appendices:

(9) Abbasi says this very evenly; non-judgementally. Still, he kinda sounds *just* ever-so-slightly... suspicious. (IV/9)

Here is one more example from one of the appendices:

- (9) Abbasi says this very evenly; non-judgementally. Still, he kinda sounds *just* ever-so-slightly... suspicious. (IV/9)

The *proximity* depicted by (a) in Figure 2 is also realized in (8):

- (10) War, children  
 It's *just* a shot away  
 It's *just* a shot away  
 War, children  
 It's *just* a shot away  
 It's *just* a shot away  
 ...  
 I tell you love, sister  
 It's *just* a kiss away  
 It's *just* a kiss away<sup>25</sup>  
 ....

The subsequence of (a) is measured with respect to *US*. It is *US* looking forward to the proximate presence of *A*, hovering about its realization, that is the key. So long as the subsequence of *A* to *US* is maintained, the unit relation between *US* and *A* may precede the actual now of our speaking. We are the reference and as long as that relation is maintained, we, the *US*, may have an outlook positioned at or before the actual time of speech. Thus, these variants to (10) are possible:

- (11) It was *just* a shot away.  
 It was *just* a kiss away.

The relationship of (a) in Figure 2 is maintained, but the whole is not now to be anticipated. Its time is past. The constant is not the relation between *US* and time, but between *US* and *A*. The relation is probably more aspectual than temporal: aspect played out in time. But since we started out calling this a *time* relation, we will not change terms now. Just keep in mind that *aspect* is probably more accurate.

The proximate subsequence of *war* and *love* in (10) and (11) is repeated in examples from the Appendices, and we find the subsequence of Figure 2 (a) both before and after the time of speech as in (10) and (11). The relation may

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<sup>25</sup> Songwriters: Michael Phillip Jagger & Keith Richards. *Gimme Shelter* lyrics © Mirage Music Int. Ltd. 1969.

be clearest in these:

- (5) State officials stopped sharing counts of new coronavirus cases by county with the public on June 30, *just* as the Delta variant began surging in the United States. (I/5)
- (6) The dashboard was removed *just* as Stephanie Summers, board of education president in David City, was trying to determine the best policy for students and families in her rural community one hour west of Omaha. (I/6)
- (29) Under Mr. de Blasio’s plan — released when he has *just* three months left in office — elementary school students who are currently enrolled in gifted classes would become the final cohort in the existing program. (I/29)
- (30) Mr. de Blasio has been criticized for not taking forceful action to fulfill his promise of tackling inequality in public schools. The announcement comes *just* three months before he must leave office because of term limits, putting the fate of the plan in the hands of his successor. (I/30)
- (50) She also knew the district had struggled with racism in schools. Her predecessor, Gregory J. Pilewski, wrote to parents in May 2017 — *just* weeks before her arrival — about a string of what he called “racially motivated incidents.”(I/50)
- (98) “We are definitely going to file other challenges,” Mr Fein said. “We have no specific names or dates to divulge *just* yet. (I/98)
- (33) LESTER NYGAARD: Ya, I’m, uh -- it’s *just* Pearl’s gonna be home soon and --  
Looking past Lester, Vern sees the basement door is open. He notices something on the floor. A BLOODY FOOTPRINT. Alarmed, Vern DRAWS HIS GUN.  
VERN: Lester. Listen to me very carefully. I need ya to get down on the ground.  
LESTER NYGAARD: No. Wait. Just -- listen to me -- it’s not what it -- (II/33)

In (I/5), *stopped sharing counts* barely precedes the Delta variant surge, which is the landmark A orienting the *stopped sharing*. Similarly, in (I/6), the removal of the dashboard is oriented by its close proximity (*just as*) to Stephanie Summers’ determining the best policy for students. In (I/29), *released plan* precedes Mr. de Blasio’s termination in office by *just* three months. In (I/30), *the announcement* precedes Mr. de Blasio’s leaving again by *just* three months. And in (I/50), *writing to parents* precedes her arrival by

*just* three weeks. In (I/98), the revelation of specific names and dates looks forward to a soon-to-be realized *just yet*. And finally, in (II/33), the concern, the *it* (Lester's concern), is oriented to the about soon-to-be *Pearl's gonna be home soon*.<sup>26</sup>

In these, the speaker is anticipating a proximal, coming *second* or *minute*:

- (14) The nurse walks up.  
 NURSE: Mr. Nygaard.  
 Lester looks at Malvo.  
 LESTER NYGAARD: Ya, that's -- *just* a second.  
 (to Malvo)  
 We're just two fellas talking, right? just blowing off steam?  
 Malvo studies him. (II/14)  
 NURSE: Sir, it's real busy --  
 LESTER NYGAARD: Ya, like I said -- *just* a second.  
 MALVO: Sam. Hess.  
 LESTER NYGAARD: No. Now wait *just* a second -- that's not --  
 (II/14)
- (3) She gestures toward the door. 2 CONTINUED: 2 (CONTINUED)  
 MIKE: Great. I was *just* about to hit the ... (nods to the restrooms). *Just* be a minute.  
 STACEY: Yeah. Sure. Meet you out front? (IV/3)

The piece of of (IV/3) that is *I was just about to hit the ...* repeats the relation of (5), in which the yet-to-be, subsequent and proximal target (i.e. hit the head) precedes the actual time of speech.<sup>27</sup>

### 1.1.2.3 Proximity in Time: Contemporaneous.

In section 1.1.1, we began the inquiry into *just* with an examination of its use in imperatives, which yielded the *en face* (b) in Figure 2.. Here, in 1.1.2.3,

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<sup>26</sup> Lester's "Wait. *Just* -- listen to me -- it's not what it --" seems to have another sense discussed in Section 1.4.

<sup>27</sup> Lee (1991.49) provides this example:

- (11) D: Was there anything else?  
 P: Oh, I was just going to talk about my husband.

The doctor's utterance clearly constitutes a preclosing move ... but the patient's *Oh* indicates that this takes her somewhat by surprise and that she is in fact not ready to cooperate in terminating the consultation. He use of *just* is therefore indeterminate between the specificatory reading ('I was on the verge of talking about my husband') and the depreciatory reading, the latter associated with the fact that it minimises her refusal to comply with the doctor's move.



we return to that *proximity* of *intensity* to examine its presence beyond the domain of commands.

Reconsidering the possible configuration of Figure 2 (b), let us add such uses of *just* as

(12) Just right.

(13) Just now.

In Figure 2 (b), there is a close in boundary on either side of *US* and *A* that seems to limit and to constrain its content, and any *time* differential disappears from our experience of *proximity*. Our face-on proximate opposition to *right* and *now* in (12) and (13), neither preceded nor followed, prompts a perception of *precision*. Such a direct orientation can be equally felt as *emphasis*, or, as in the case of the imperatives above — which are necessarily face-to-face, we experience *insistence*. It is *A*, no more than *A*, and no less.<sup>28</sup>

(51) JULES: I'll *just* be Jules, Vincent – no more, no less.

VINCENT: No Jules, you're gonna be like those pieces of shit out there who beg for change. They walk around like a bunch of fuckin' zombies, they sleep in garbage bins, they eat what I throw away, and dogs piss on 'em. They got a word for 'em, they're called bums. And without a job, residence, or legal tender, that's what you're gonna be – a fuckin' bum!

JULES: Look my friend, this is *just* where me and you differ – (VI/51)

(84) A music guy will argue with you about the genius of his genre's venerated producer of choice — Phil Spector, Linda Perry, Lee (Scratch) Perry — even though you never disagreed with him in the first place. A music guy knows *just* the thing that will change your life: a clip of grainy concert footage from 1975 on YouTube. Music guys are proselytizers with headphones. (I/84)

(18) GUTIERREZ: The Carroll County bureau? That's how they punish me? Why not *just* send my ass all the way to Pennsylvania?

HAYNES: What did they tell you? (III/18)

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<sup>28</sup> The *right-in-front-of-us* orientation is the one that we found first in section 1.1.1, the imperatives.

Lee (1991:59 et passim) identifies a restrictive sense of *just*, a sense that is not separately characterized but suggested by examples. These are some of them (60):

- (i) I just notice it at night.
- (ii) Just in one heel it lifted but not its back in both.

Occasionally even, *precisely* is a decent paraphrase for *just* in these uses:

- (17) “I am a little bit puzzled to be honest,” said Aneta Markowska, chief financial economist for the investment bank Jefferies. “We all waited for September for this big flurry of hiring on the premise that unemployment benefits and school reopening would bring people back to the labor force. And it *just* doesn’t seem like we’re seeing that.” (I/17)
- (24) “This hall of mirrors has to change at a time when accountability does count,” she said. “And I think that what we have to do as journalists is to *just* hold the line.” (I/24)
- (25) Speaking in a phone interview, Ms. Ranada said, “I’m *just* full of gratitude for this recognition. We feel that Maria’s win is a win for our entire news organization and, in general, also for the Philippine press, especially those who’ve been trudging on and shining the light, despite the kind of governance we have now, where journalists are harassed for their work.” (I/25)
- (10) MCNULTY: We lock up every liar, there’s no room at B.D.C. for anyone else, right? More trouble than it’s worth. (into phone) Jay, it’s horseshit. I’m goin’ home.  
On MCNULTY, amid the emergency lights, doing *just* that, (III/10)
- (18) According to the Hall of Fame, he got his nickname when a brother, considering him lazy, called him Budge to make the point that he often failed to do *just* that. (I/18)
- (7) “Our access to testing is so bad right now, and the turnaround so bad, that these numbers are probably vast underestimates, and not accurate *just* because there is not enough testing,” said Dr. Bob Rauner, chief medical officer of OneHealth Nebraska, a group of 65 locally owned medical clinics across the state. (I/7)
- (35) MALVO: Evening, officer.  
GUS GRIMLY: License and registration please.  
MALVO: Well, we could do it that way. You ask me for my papers and I tell you it’s not my car. That I borrowed it. And see where things go from there. We could do that. Or, you could *just* get back in your car and drive away. (II/35)
- (21) The owner, a heavysset WOMAN, is yelling at a sullen TEEN. Malvo enters.  
WOMAN: How many times I gotta tell ya? You can’t *just* take dirty sheets offa one bed and put ‘em on another. It’s unsanitary.  
TEEN: I shake ‘em out first.

WOMAN: You don't have the sense God gave a clam, do you? Go shovel the walk.  
 The sullen teen exits.  
 MALVO: I need a room.  
 WOMAN: *Just* you?  
 MALVO: Pardon?  
 WOMAN: Is it *just* for you? The room.  
 MALVO: What difference does that make?  
 WOMAN: Different rate for two. And if ya got pets -- dog, cat -- that's an extra ten bucks.  
 MALVO: What about a fish?  
 WOMAN: Excuse me?  
 MALVO: Would a fish cost me ten dollars?  
 WOMAN: Well --  
 MALVO: Or say I kept spiders. Or mice. What if I had bacteria?  
 WOMAN: Sir, bacteria are not pets.  
 MALVO: Could be.  
 WOMAN: Sir, perhaps you'd be happier in a different motel.  
 MALVO: I *just* want to know the policy. I'm a student of institutions.  
 WOMAN: (exasperated) Sir, do ya have a pet or not?  
 MALVO: Nope. *Just* me. (II/21)

The face-on delimited perspective of Figure 2 (b) engenders a perception of *insistence* and *precisely*, and in (II/21), it is joined by *only: I just want to know the policy* and *Nope. Just me*. And the classic:

(14) Just the facts, ma'am.

As noted above, the full-on insistence of the here-and-now easily supports *emphasis*<sup>29</sup>:

- (24) VERN: Well, there'll be an autopsy today. And they're real delicate with that. I wanna reassure you. You won't be able to tell a thing.  
 MOLLY: Ya. It's amazin' what those fellas can do. My aunt had a stroke in the bathtub. *just Just* real bloated when they found her. (II/24)
- (47) But the message from Dr. Kane, the first Black superintendent of Queen Anne's County Public Schools, would engulf the small, predominantly white community tucked along the Chesapeake Bay in a yearlong firestorm.

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<sup>29</sup> Lee (1991.52) also proposes an emphatic sense supported by these examples:

- (i) He just infuriated everyone.
- (ii) He is just amazing.
- (iii) The performance was just dazzling.
- (iv) She just terrorises her students.

“When I hit send,” Dr. Kane recalled recently, “everything *just* imploded.” (I/47)

- (66) “Suddenly you would feel one charge upwards and launch itself between your legs,” said Amy Dickman, a senior research fellow at Oxford University and director of the Ruaha Carnivore Project in Tanzania. “Then you have this furry mammal *just* flying into your behind.” Though Dr. Dickman was not involved with the research, her toilet was one of seven examined by Dr. Dorward. (I/68)

And (*Body of Lies*, Russell Crowe’s character to Leonardi di Caprio’s):

- (15) In the words of the great Sam Snead, if you’re not thinking about pussy, you’re *just* not concentrating.

*Precision, only, insistence, and emphasis* are only some of the ways to experience *just* within the directness of Figure 2 (b). There will be others.

If the depiction in Figure 2 is a reasonable characterization of *just*, then all the variety that we have found (and will find) in its senses derives from the engagement of Figure 2 with the actualities of life. Variation is generated by the option of orienting ourselves to A in the manner of Figure 2 (a), Figure 2 (b), or Figure 2 (c).<sup>30</sup> The range of relations between US & A is then projected upon our life experience, and because life is unbounded so will be the impressions/senses that *just* may engender.<sup>31</sup> They are unending.

### 1.1.3 Proximity in Space

The *proximity* of *just* is commonly played out in the experience of *time*, but because *just* is about life, not language, *space* is an equally viable host for the *proximity* of *just*.

- (68) Six of the seven toilets at camp were blessed with bats. The oldest toilet, which was established seven or eight years before the survey, housed 9 to 13 bats. The newest toilet had no bats. A toilet with *just* a foot or two between the hole and the mound of stools had only a few bats. (I/68)
- (69) For anyone unfamiliar with the design of a drop toilet, the published paper included a hand-drawn graphic, complete with a heap of rotting waste, two

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<sup>30</sup> Where it is relevant to distinguish among the three orientations at A, I shall use A<sub>1</sub> for Figure 2 (a), A<sub>2</sub> for Figure 2 (b), and A<sub>3</sub> for Figure 2 (c).

<sup>31</sup> That is, the sense of *close by, very recent conclusion* that we felt in such examples as *We just witnessed a miracle ...* (VI/35) is a product, a precipitate of taking Figure 2 (a) and projecting *just* onto that portion of our lives encapsulated in *We witnessed a miracle*.

bats and a human figure. “The squatting chap is totally superfluous to the paper, but just felt right,” said Dr. Dorward, who drew the sketch.

Fittingly, this illustration was labeled ‘Figure 2’ in the paper, an unintentional homage to what the squatting chap may be doing, *just* above the bats. (I/69)

- (31) Lester looks around. He decides to hide the shotgun against the LIVING ROOM WALL, *just* on the other side of the doorway. (II/31)
- (25) EXT. I-95/FT. MCHENRY TUNNEL APPROACH - DUSK 72  
Returning from Richmond in his personal car, MCNULTY pulls up on the northbound shoulder, *just* after the Washington Boulevard exit. With MR. BOBBLES lolling in the passenger seat, MCNULTY gets out as traffic RUSHES past him on the interstate in both directions. He takes in the landscape of his city, the only home he knows, and he knows it well. On MCNULTY, no longer a police, saying goodbye in a way, staring at the lights and skyline, as we hear the first notes of the Blind Boys singing “Way Down In The Hole”: (III/25)

An important observation about the presence of *proximity* is that there is no absolute measure of it. *Proximity* is, rather, appropriate to the life context in which *just* is employed. Consider these two paired expressions:

- (16) (a) My car got stolen last week, but the police later found it *just* a mile from the house.  
(b) My car got stolen last week, but the police later found it *just* next door.
- (17) (a) Our dog got out of the house last week, but the police found it *just* a mile from the house.  
(b) Our dog got out of the house last week, but the police found it *just* next door.

Sentence (16a) is received with some sympathy perhaps, but otherwise without attention. *Just* fits within a reasonable distance of a recovered stolen car, but in (16b), *next door* does not mesh very well with what we know and expect of stolen cars to have that *proximity* noted by *just*. It sounds a bit off.<sup>32</sup> *My car got stolen last week, but the police found it a mile from the house* sounds — perhaps still surprising for being nearby but — less odd than (16b). There is an unspoken normalcy of distances within which stolen cars are recovered, a measure that accords with (16a) but not (16b). That range is not

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<sup>32</sup> Perhaps I forgot where I parked.

something that speakers sit around discussing and agreeing upon. It is just there in life experience, the way things are. A similar mismatch reappears in (17), but this time, with the escaped dog, the normal *proximity* is reversed, and it is *just a mile from the house* that strikes the ear as unusual, while *just next door* passes without notice. Again, it seems to be something that we just discovered that we know about dogs. Examples like these emphasize that any sense of *proximity* is not an absolute, but is gaged in a nonce fashion dependent on where we are in our life experience.

### 1.2 *The Luxuriation: Incompleteness.*

In section 1.1, we have considered a range of examples of *just*, which appear to record our proximal relation (US) to some orienting center A (in both time and space). The variety of senses that we have noted are those that derive from our life experience as *just* orbits US about some A. The A is present (with *just*) or not (without *just*): yes or no. It has not been a matter of degree ... but there is a *just* which precisely fills in this missing *becoming*, *not there yet*. Consider these uses:

(18) Just saying.

In (18), *just* puts a lid on any assertion. The speaker is not outright asserting, but merely suggesting, hinting, pointing out ... certainly not looking for an argument. To say *just saying* implies the presence of two other sides, the option of saying nothing at all on the weaker side and the option of a fullblown assertion on the other. The presence of the stronger — more complete and perfect — implementation is more obvious in (19), the negative of (18):

(19) I'm not *just* saying this.

Now what is verbalized is the stronger version of (18), argumentative assertion, not a mealy mouthed, don't-hit-me mention.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Consider the following dialogue from *Breaking Bad*, Season 1, Episode 7 (44:12):

Tuco's man: (to Heisenberg & Jesse) Just remember who you working for.  
 Pause  
 Tuco: What did you say?  
 Tuco's man: I'm *just* saying ... They got to know that they're working for you.  
 Tuco: Like they don't already know that!? ... Are you saying that, that they're stupid?  
 Tuco's man: Nah ... I'm *just* ... I'm *just* saying.  
 Tuco: OK ... So you're not saying that they're stupid ... So I don't

Consider now these examples from the Appendices.

- (1) “What they are doing is obstruction and utterly exposes the filibuster. And it is not *just* inconvenience. It is desperately dangerous.” (I/1)
- (3) The vaccine is not *just* a first for malaria — it is the first developed for any parasitic disease. (I/3)
- (20) “Where Maynard went, fires started,” Phillip Talbert, the acting U.S. attorney, said in a court filing. “Not *just* once, but over and over again.” (I/20)
- (42) That theme may mirror not *just* an anxious world, but the rise and fall of media trends that produced this series and its peers. (I/42)
- (46) Dr. Kane, the superintendent, saw him in the faces of Black students in her district and heard him crying out for his mother when she spoke to her own sons. So she started her letter with a warning that it would bear not *just* “good news,” but “a bit of a reality check.” (I/46)
- (55) Every time we exhale, we expel not *just* aerosols but also carbon dioxide; the worse the ventilation, the more carbon dioxide builds up in an occupied room. (I/55)

In the above examples, the presence of *not* implies the presence of a condition more complete than the negated one with *just*. Without *just*, the contrasting more perfect condition is not implicated.<sup>34</sup>

In (20), *just* suggests a *merely*, a *no-more-than* effort, some activity that is incomplete, leaving something more perfect yet to come

(20) I’m *just* sittin’ on the dock of the bay

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	understand ... Are you saying that ... I’m stupid?
Tuco’s man:	Nah. Come on, Tuco. I’m <i>just</i> ... I’m <i>just</i> saying.
Tuco:	No [Shouting] You’re just speaking for me! Like I ain’t got the goddamn sense to speak for myself ... [Not shouting] Is that it? Is that what you’re doing?

The *just* in the first sentence (*Just remember ...*) is the *just* of imperatives in section 1.1.1. The *just* in Tuco’s last shouted speech (*You’re just speaking for me!*) is the *just* of 1.1.2.3. The remaining *justs* illustrate the sense that I have in mind here for (18). The use of this *just* by Tuco’s man leaves his first statement, *Just remember who you working for*, in a neverland between assertion and not assertion, between *speaking for me* and *not speaking for me*, which is the puzzle Tuco is trying to solve.

<sup>34</sup> This property reinforces the conclusion in sections 1.2-1.4 that the relation between US & A is more *aspect* than *time*.

Wastin' time

...

So I'm *just* gon' sittin' on the dock of the bay  
 Watchin' the tide roll away, ooh  
 I'm sittin' on the dock of the bay, wastin' time

...

Two thousand miles, I roam  
*Just* to make this dock my home

Now I'm *just* gon' sit, at the dock of the bay  
 Watchin' the tide roll away, ooh yeah ...<sup>35</sup>

'Failed' uses of positive *just* occur commonly in our data set:

- (34) That is *just* a glimpse of the harrowing happenings in "Titane," Julia Ducournau's audacious splatter-drama that opened Friday. (I/34)
- (37) "What Morat tries to do is use simple words to explain complicated feelings," said Pedro Malaver, the band's manager. "We're not trying to be Neruda. We're *just* trying to tell people: you're not alone." (I/37)
- (67) Sospeter Kibiwot, a bat ecologist at the University of Eldoret in Kenya, first saw a toilet bat when he was in elementary school, an encounter that both spooked him and inspired him to learn more about bats. "Since my childhood, I have spotted more than 10 pit-latrines roosts," Mr. Kibiwot wrote in an email. "Not all such latrines are roosts but *just* a few." (I/67)
- (22) VERN: Yer sayin' other than the fact he was *just* wearin' panties.  
 MOLLY: Ya. See, we know from the wreck that whoever was driving the vehicle cracked their head on the windshield. But the fella in the snow -- (II/22)
- (23) VINSON: You know who I am?  
 MICHAEL: Name is Vinson. You used to be Marlo's bank before he figured out how to use lawyers an shit. But Marlo ain't 'round no more, and you still movin' money for other players and now ... (nod at bag) ...I guess some of it need be mine.  
 VINSON: Shit, you *just* a boy. (III/23)
- (15) VINCENT: It costs five dollars?  
 MIA: Yep.  
 VINCENT: You don't get bourbon in it or anythin?

---

<sup>35</sup> (*Sittin' On the Dock of the Bay*. Lyrics © Universal Music Publishing Group.



MIA: Nope.

VINCENT: *Just* checking. (VI/15)

- (38) VINCENT: *Just* tell 'im not to be abusive. He kinda freaked out back there when he saw Marvin.

JULES: Put yourself in his position. It's eight o'clock in the morning. He just woke up, he wasn't prepared for this shit. Don't forget who's doin' who a favor.

Vincent finishes, then dries his hands on a white towel.

VINCENT: If the price of that favor is I gotta take shit, he can stick his favor straight up his ass.

When Vincent is finished drying his hands, the towel is stained with red.

JULES: What the fuck did you just do to his towel?

VINCENT: I was *just* dryin' my hands. (VI/38)

In I/34, we are limited to a glimpse and not permitted a full view. In I/37, we have the modest goal of *just trying to tell* and not of *trying to be*. In I/67, pointedly fewer than *all such latrines* are roosts, *not all*. In II/22, *He was just wearing panties* means that he was otherwise nude, panties and nothing more. In VI/15, Vincent's *Just checking* is not part of the mainstream conversation. It is an aside and is not real talk. In VI/38, *Just tell 'im not to be abusive* references a scale of offensiveness on which *abusive* exceeds a lesser degree of offensiveness, but does not yet attain to a high degree. Also in VI/38, *I was just dryin' my hands*<sup>36</sup> conveys the sense that nothing more than hand-drying was occurring.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Not stealing the towel.  
Compare also

- (34) It hands in its hand-carved wood sheath from a nail on the wall, next to a neon "DAD'S OLD-FASHIONED ROOT BEER" sign.  
Butch takes the sword off the wall, removing it from its sheath. It's a magnificent piece of steel. It seems to glisten in the low-wattage light of the pawnshop. Butch touches his thumb to the blade to see if the sword is *just* for show. Not on your life. It's as sharp as it gets. This weapon seems made to order for the Brothers Grimm downstairs. Holding the sword pointed downward, Takakura Kenstyle, he disappears through the red curtains to take care of business. (VI/34)

That is, restricted to pretend.

<sup>37</sup> Lee (1991.47-48) identifies an aspect of this repression, the less-than-completely-realized, with his depreciatory *just*:

The depreciatory *just*, on the other hand, functions as an exponent of speaker attitude. The latter is relatively unrestricted in terms of its distribution, since practically any situation can be subject to downtoning. In the kind of data discussed in Lee 1987 (extracts from doctor-patient

### 1.3 *The Luxuriation: Spontaneous.*

Beyond the sense of *merely* or *no more than* of (18) and (20), that implies a more fully realized condition yet to come, there is still another sense, that lies further in the direction of an ill-formed experience, one in which a perception of *without cause/reason* is present, or one in which *impulse* is at play, and an execution that is *abrupt*:

- (36) JULES: What the fuck's happening?  
 VINCENT: I *just* accidentally shot Marvin in the throat.  
 JULES: Why the fuck did you do that?  
 VINCENT: I didn't mean to do it. I said it was an accident.  
 JULES: I've seen a lot of crazy-ass shit in my time –  
 VINCENT: – chill out, man, it was an accident, okay? You hit a bump or somethin' and the gun went off.  
 JULES: The car didn't hit no motherfuckin' bump!  
 VINCENT: Look! I didn't mean to shoot this son-of-a-bitch, the gun *just* went off, don't ask me how! (VI/36)

In *the gun just went off*, out of the blue ... there is no rhyme-nor-reason for the event, so the event is less than a normal, proto-typical exemplar. Notice that with the first occurrence of *just* in this passage, *I just accidentally shot Marvin in the throat*, life circumstance could have it so that the event is in the immediate past (and there is temporal proximity), or it could be that life circumstance has it so that *I didn't mean to ... don't ask me how!* Now, it sounds as if Vincent is asking for understanding, perhaps, even, forgiveness. The orientation here is indeterminate: either between US and A (as in Figure 2 [a]) or between US and some spontaneous precursor to a perfect A. You can hear it as you will.

And this example from *Pulp Fiction*:

- (35) JULES: Don't do that! Don't you fuckin' do that! Don't blow this shit off! What just happened was a fuckin' miracle!  
 VINCENT: Chill the fuck out, Jules, this shit happens.  
 JULES: Wrong, wrong, this shit doesn't *just* happen.  
 VINCENT: Do you wanna continue this theological discussion in the car, or at the jailhouse with the cops?  
 JULES: We should be fuckin' dead now, my friend! We just witnessed a miracle, and I want you to fuckin' acknowledge it! (VI/35)

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interviews) the depreciatory *just* was used by patients to minimise the significance of their statements, particularly when describing their symptoms. It was also used by doctors to downplay their utterances and actions, mainly with the aim of reassuring patients. Doctors also used it to minimise (or 'modalise') directives.

Like a quantum particle, the thing just pops into existence. Other examples may include:

- (86) “I think at one point, if Fallon didn’t come along, then we were probably figuring out how to be the Black band that makes its survival in the jam-band route,” he told me. “It *just* became a thing like, ‘Yo, there’s a god out there who will create some kind of Celine Dion situation where we can be in one place’” — a reference to her residency in Las Vegas. “And then Fallon came.” (I/86)
- (88) Last month, he D.J.ed a party for Madonna. He started off with a thematic set — “I’m in a room that sort of looks like a modern update of ‘Paris Is Burning’; I *just* naturally thought, OK, this is a rare chance for me to play a really good house set” — but the reaction was muted. (I/88)
- (96) “They have multiple targets,” he added. It *just* so happens that Madison Cawthorn is the tip of the spear .”

If the orientation toward this precursor to A occurs in some specific life context, where there is no cause, intent, plan, nor anticipation, then those activities that normally happen with planning, cause, or intent will have an odd/forced existence with this *just*:

- (21) Maxine just bought a life insurance policy.
- (22) Maxine just studied for her bar exam.

Ponder the difficulty of getting the *just* in (21) and (22) to be felt as this spontaneous, abrupt, and unplanned/unexpected *just*, and contrast that difficulty with its ease in (23):<sup>38</sup>

- (23) Maxine saw the dead cat and just barfed.

#### ***1.4 The Luxuriation: Proximity Recognized by its Absence***

So far, we have found that *just* suggests a sense of *proximity* between US and a center A, a relation that can be played out with A preceding the here-and-now of US (A<sub>1</sub>), simultaneous with it (A<sub>2</sub>), or with A following (A<sub>3</sub>). Then, we found that the relation between US & A can be diminished so that the completed perfection of A in Figure 2 is not yet present (section 1.2). Furthermore, the perfection can additionally deteriorate so that it just pops

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<sup>38</sup> A difficulty similar to managing Monty Python’s Spanish Inquisition.

into existence (section 1.3). With all that, to this point, the expected presence of *some* focussing orientation with *just* has been satisfied, but what might happen if the expectation is not satisfied at all, just [!] when *just* assures us of its presence? What if there is *no A*?<sup>39</sup>

The following passage illustrates that such usage is possible and that it is quite consistent with we might expect from *just*. Consider this exchange from Joel & Ethan Cohen's televised version of *Fargo*, written by Noah Hawley. Lester Nygaard, who is the center of this story, embodies the Cohens' fascination with characters who just a bit off center.<sup>40</sup>

- (11) MALVO: Sam?  
 LESTER NYGAARD: Hess. He was a bully in high school and he's a bully now.  
 MALVO: So why didn't you? (off Lester) Show him what's what.  
 LESTER NYGAARD: Well, his, uh, he had his sons with him, and --  
 MALVO: So you let a man beat you in front of his children. To send them a message.  
 LESTER NYGAARD: No. That's not -- (frustrated) Heck. *Just* -- heck.  
 MALVO: In my experience, you let a man break your nose, next time he'll try to break your spine.  
 LESTER NYGAARD: Sam? No way. I mean, I don't think. It's *just* -- I guess I embarrassed him in front of his boys.  
 MALVO: You embarrassed him.  
 LESTER NYGAARD: By -- he was telling me about a time when he and my wife -- see, they -- (gesturing) (MORE)  
 LESTER NYGAARD (CONT'D): -- but he didn't know she was my wife, is the thing. And when I told him --  
 MALVO: A man slept with your wife, and you're worried you embarrassed him.  
 LESTER NYGAARD: Not slept with -- they didn't -- he said it was *just* -- she has soft hands, see? -- and I -- (II/11)

(II/11) is a conversation between the evil Lorne Malvo and Lester. Three more times Lester begins and uses *just* with nothing following:

- (30) MALVO: Lester, have you been a bad boy?  
 LESTER NYGAARD: Aw geez. I *just* -- can you come over? It's -- I'm on Willow Creek Drive. Number six thirteen. (II/30)

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<sup>39</sup> As noted above, there will be circumstances, as with the stolen car and the escaped dog, where using *just* is just [!] not congruent with life. That does not prohibit the use of *just*. It just [!] says your life is weird.

<sup>40</sup> In *O Brother Where Art Thou*, Ulyses Everett McGill seeks to be *bona fide*. In *A Serious Man*, Larry Gopnik has the wrong *perspective*. In *Fargo*, Lester Nygaard is a *G.D. screw up*.

- (32) Lester goes to the front door, takes a deep breath, opens it. VERN THURMAN stands outside.  
 VERN: Evenin', Lester.  
 LESTER NYGAARD (nervous): What -- what do ya want?  
 VERN: Well, I suppose first I'd like ta come in.  
 Lester looks behind him.  
 LESTER NYGAARD: Uh, ya. Well -- it's *just* -- now's not a good --  
 VERN: Just take a second. (II/32)
- (33) LESTER NYGAARD: Ya, I'm, uh -- it's just Pearl's gonna be home soon and --  
 Looking past Lester, Vern sees the basement door is open. He notices something on the floor. A BLOODY FOOTPRINT. Alarmed, Vern DRAWS HIS GUN.  
 VERN: Lester. Listen to me very carefully. I need ya to get down on the ground.  
 LESTER NYGAARD: No. Wait. *Just* -- listen to me -- it's not what it -- (II/33)

In II/30, Lester's mind grinds to a halt ... *I just* —. There is nothing there, and he has to start again ... *Can you come over?* In II/32, Lester cannot escape by simply responding *No* to Vern's request, but because Lester has just murdered his wife, neither can he easily allow Vern, the police officer, into his house. Lester is verbally trapped. There's nowhere to go ... *Uh, ya. Well.* The conversational well is empty, and acknowledged to be so with *It's just*. The void is immediately filled with Lester's *Now's not a good* — [time] and by Vern's interrupting, and void filling, *Just take a second*. The emptiness (the brokenness) of this *just* is recognized by the disconnectedness in the responses that follow *just*.

Consider again the example of II/11 from Lester's speech: *Not slept with -- they didn't -- he said it was just -- she has soft hands, see?* Lester's thought dissipates; the emptiness is acknowledged with *just*<sup>41</sup>; and then Lester begins again in a completely different direction with *soft hands*. The conversational disruption produced by this empty *just* prompts/allows the new direction of II/11 and again in IV/8:

- (8) CALDERA: You're new in town?  
 MIKE: Yeah.  
 CALDERA: Sticking around or passing through?  
 MIKE: Why?  
 CALDERA (easy, simple): No reason. *Just*, if you're relocating to the Land

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<sup>41</sup> Observe also the pause noted by the '—'. Thoughts are collected and decisions, made.

of Enchantment, I know people. (then) I could get you some work.

Note the emptiness created by the *No reason* preceding *Just*.<sup>42</sup>

In the presence of *just* the real life response<sup>43</sup> to the absence of any announced proximal target is ... frustration. Or anxiety. Cf. Lester's *Heck. Just -- heck* in II/11.<sup>44</sup>

### 2.0 The Gist of Just.

Such uses as those above in 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4 suggest that the historical aspect of *just* represented by the flat left-to-right arrow in Figures 1 and 2 in

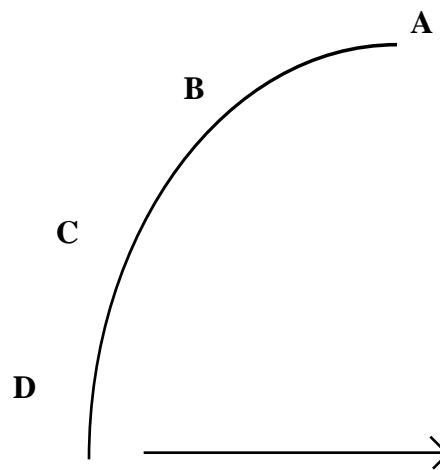


Figure 3: *The Parabolic Aspect of just.*

<sup>42</sup> Echoing the emptiness of this *just*, it is common for it to appear with ground clearing negatives. Compare these farom above:

- (11) LESTER NYGAARD: No. That's not -- (frustrated) Heck. *Just* -- heck. (II/11)
- (11) LESTER NYGAARD: Sam? No way. I mean, I don't think. It's *just* -- (II/11)
- (11) LESTER NYGAARD: Not slept with -- they didn't -- he said it was *just* -- (II/11)
- (32) LESTER NYGAARD: Uh, ya. Well -- it's *just* -- now's not a good -- (II/32)
- (33) LESTER NYGAARD: No. Wait. *Just* -- listen to me -- it's not what it -- (II/33)

<sup>43</sup> *Meaning*, if you want.

<sup>44</sup> Notice that Noah Hawley marks this emotion overtly with his "(frustrated)" in the script. And Lester does as well with his *Heck*.

fact has more content to it. There is not only a history, but a history of growth, of becoming, of perfection, a movement towards a point of completion, an epitome ... which is the A we first encountered in 1.1. Figure 3 tries to represent this aspectual configuration visually. Geometrically, the pattern takes the shape of a parabola, with its vertex at A. In time, A is approached from an inchoate, frustrated D (*Heck. Just — heck.*), through an emerging C (*The gun just went off*), through a partially shaped, but limited realization B (*Just saying*), until a perfected A (*Not just saying or Just barely made it*) is reached. Before we begin this journey that leads to the perfected shape of a circumstance, there is the unformed Oort Cloud of source D, which, when noted, is associated with disorientationa (*No. That's not -- [frustrated] Heck. Just -- heck.*). This is the gist of *just*.

Once we have Figure 3, it provides a perspective, a point of view upon our life experience. It is a resource which allows us to understand, to organize what is happening in a particular way by placing the organization of Figure 3 between US and our sensory experience thereby giving it a particular flavor. It acts as something of a lens<sup>45</sup> through which we may — if we so choose — view that experience, thus permitting it to impress its own particular shape onto our cognitive lives.

There are options in how the lens can be used. As noted in Figure 2, US can be configured about A in at least three distinguishable ways. And now, US can be oriented<sup>46</sup> to B, C, and D, as well. Figure 4 adds US speakers of English to the mix by orienting US to the shape of Figure 3.

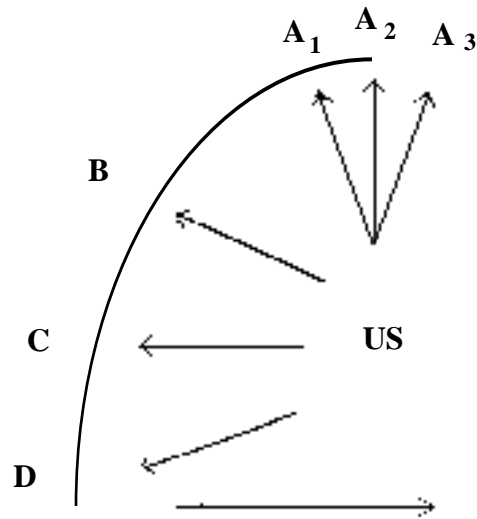


Figure 4: *The Parabola of just with US.*

<sup>45</sup> Akin to a jeweler's loupe.

<sup>46</sup> As we figuratively turn our heads.

To complete the picture, Figure 5 includes PURPORT, the continuous raw sensory experience of life that is impressed and shaped by our by peering at it through the parabolic lens of *just*.<sup>47</sup> As speakers of English, what we are aware

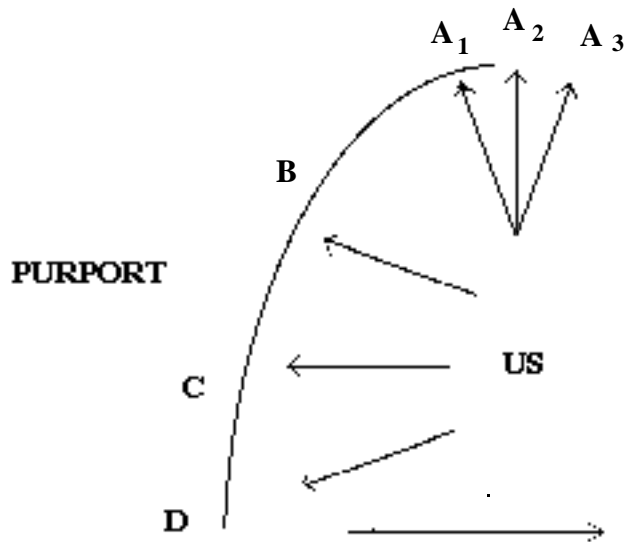


Figure 5: *The Parabola of just with US Embedded in the PURPORT of Life.*

of when we hear or employ *just* is just [!] that interaction with the experience ... how life looks and feels differently in its presence.<sup>48</sup> Because *just* guides us in forming our understanding of what is happening to us, there can be no limit to its operation because there is no limit to the life experience which *just* affects ... and therefore there is no limit to the variety we may associate with *just*.

Because of that fluidity, we can oftentimes not know which *just* we are presented with and where on the parabola we find ourselves. Recall from above

(36) JULES: What the fuck's happening?

VINCENT: *I just* accidentally shot Marvin in the throat. (VI/36)

<sup>47</sup> In Hjelmslevian terms, that *purport* is thereby rendered as *substance*. The parabola would be the Hjelmslevian *form*.

<sup>48</sup> Because the impact of *just* is a matter of life, and not language, any constraint to its usage cannot be grammatical in nature. Hence, there is no limiting *just* to occurrence of some grammatical category (Nouns, Adjectives, Verbs, whatever). Nevertheless, Brubaker (2015) discusses the grammaticalization of *just* in these terms (2, 20): "... the adjective usage of *just* grew to include adverb, noun, and verb ... I limit my analysis of *just* to adjective JUST and adverb JUST."



that *just accidentally shot Marvin* can be heard as either C or A<sub>3</sub>. It is the accompanying *I didn't mean to do it. I said it was an accident ... Don't ask me how* that clarifies the intent as C. In

- (11) KLEBANOW: Those pictures were sent to him. The police have confirmed...  
 HAYNES: It begins with something true, something confirmed. But tonight he *just* happened to be coming in the Guilford entrance when a mysterious grey van... (III/11)

*just happened to be coming in* might be C, B, or A<sub>1</sub>. But it seems that A<sub>1</sub> is the more likely.

The endless array of possible senses associated with *just* suggests that *polysemy* is the wrong term to be using.<sup>49</sup> *Cacosemy* may be closer to the

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<sup>49</sup> Lee (1991.44, 45) has reached a negative conclusion very similar to this one:

The concept of polysemy, moreover, is part of a more general theory of meaning that is open to serious question ... As a very basic level, as we have noted, it does not **explain** how the hearer assigns the appropriate interpretation in a particular case. Nor does it explain why the item in question has the particular range of meanings that it has ... The notion of polysemy ... is applied to situations where there is clearly some **motivation** for the different meanings of an item [e.g. *glass* as material, container, contents, and barometer] ... Yet polysemy does nothing to explicate the nature of these relationships, treating them for all practical purposes as distinct meanings ... It is a characteristic of alternatives to the container view that they focus on the way meaning is produced by the interaction between language and other elements of context, such as cognitive models or cultural assumptions and norms of interpretation. In this paper, we will be concerned to contribute to the debate by focusing on the wide range of interactional processes that come into play in the interpretation of *just*.

Yet ... the compulsion to predict persists (Lee 1991.47):

In that study [Lee 1987] I attempted to make a preliminary investigation into the semantic factors that cause one or another category of meaning to emerge in a particular utterance ... I also noted that there were cases where the distinctions between the relevant semantic categories were blurred. In the present study we will focus on these borderline cases ... Clearly, if the general hypothesis is correct that the meanings in question are the product of interactional processes [This is the embodiment of *prediction*. PWD], then it ought to be possible to identify in the borderline cases semantic elements (or other relevant [?] factors) that connect them to the unambiguous cases. That is, if meaning-type *A* results from the interaction between *just* and context *X* and meaning-type *B* results from the interaction between *just* and context *Y*, then contexts that are ambiguous or indeterminate with respect to meaning-types *A* and *B* ought to share [This is the embodiment of *prediction*. PWD] features with both context *X* and *Y*.

Even though *polysemy* is replaced with *interactional processes*, the key reliance on prediction remains, and the affinity with the basic taxonomic character of linguistics remains.

truth.

### 3.0 *The Description of Just.*

In this section we turn to a brief consideration of the manner in which *just* has been described, and then I will propose an alternative.

How do we talk about *just*? Those ways will come from the arsenal of techniques used elsewhere in the description of English (or any other language). And they will, more generally, reflect what one thinks English (or any other language) is, or is like ... the nature/ontology of English (or another language).

### 3.1 *Polysemy.*

The interest in understanding *just* and the explicit expression of that understanding has been, historically, acted out within the field of study usually called *linguistics*.<sup>50</sup> The linguistic mode of description has, for the last 100 years, at least, not escaped the bonds of taxonomy. What are identified as patterns of language are deemed to have been understood and solved when the problematic data are distributed into classes and rules written for that distribution and the behavior (distribution) of those taxa. The creation of phonology is a convenient example of that orientation. One begins with recording phones, observes their occurrence (complementary distribution, contrast, free variation), and distributes them (now as phonetically similar allophones) into contrasting phonemes, which in turn have congruent patterns of occurrence producing a phonotactics. The same approach recurs throughout, adapted to the change from phonology, to morphology, to syntax, and to semantics.<sup>51</sup>

It is the taxonomic life style that has created polysemy.<sup>52</sup> Practically, one

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<sup>50</sup> And by (professional) *linguists*, although anyone is free to join in and to contribute an opinion.

<sup>51</sup> I have to add the usual caveats. Certainly not every one who thought of him/herself as a *linguist* behaved/behaves in this way. And certainly, there were patterns in addition to the taxonomic ones ... but the non-taxonomic patterns, e.g., transformation or Merge (Chomsky 2005.11), depend crucially on the continued existence of taxonomies. I wager that there are no introductory texts to linguistics that fail to mention phrase structure.

<sup>52</sup> Lee (1991.44):

The normal way of handling differences of this kind is, of course, to invoke the notion of polysemy, suggesting that there are two distinct (but possibly connected) meanings for the same word.

first finds/encounters some range of identifiable senses<sup>53</sup> associated with some fixed grammar (morpheme, construction, etc.). Here, the relevant grammar is *just*. Then the task is to reconcile the variety<sup>54</sup> ... to create the taxonomy. One direction might be to discern a common core of meaning that was always present, despite varying additional senses.<sup>55</sup> A second response is to seek a prototype meaning that is surrounded by outlying senses.<sup>56</sup> A third of the

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<sup>53</sup> Lee (1991.64-65) finds five senses:

- (i) Depreciatory
- (ii) Restrictive
- (iii) Specificatory
- (iv) Intensificatory
- (v) Emphatic

Gibbs & Matlock (2011.218-219) discover six:

- (i) Comparative *just*
- (ii) Exact *just*
- (iii) Specificatory *just*
- (iv) Emphatic *just*
- (v) Depreciatory *just*
- (vi) Restrictive *just*

<sup>54</sup> “The notion of polysemy, however, raises a number of difficult issues. One obvious question is how the hearer knows which interpretation to assign in a particular case.” (Lee 1991.44)

<sup>55</sup> Lee (1991) proposes that the common semantic core (“one notion”) of *just* is *restriction* (Lee 1991.64-65):

**there does seem to be one notion — that of restriction — that is shared by all members of the category: depreciatory, restrictive, specificatory, intensificatory, emphatic.**

**The apparent uncontrolled variety of *just* is to be understood through its interaction with context (Lee 1991.43):**

**The fact that *just* is associated with a range of meanings (labelled depreciatory, restrictive, specificatory and emphatic in a previous study) raises the question of whether the most appropriate way of describing this situation is in terms of the concept of polysemy. Focus on borderline cases suggests that an alternative model is to be preferred, in which meaning is seen as the product of interaction between a relatively homogeneous *just* [prototype?] and features of context. These include not only other semantic entities present in the utterance but also a considerable range of pragmatic and cognitive factors involving the interpersonal dimension of the speech event and alternative cognitive models applicable to situations falling within the scope of the adverb.**

<sup>56</sup> Aijmer 1985 is an example of this approach:

directions has been to identify the contexts when one or the other of the senses occurs.<sup>57</sup> A fourth direction might be to relate the varying senses using metaphor, metonymy, etc.<sup>58</sup>

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The meaning of *just* is dynamic and flexible and is therefore difficult to define. There is not a single meaning but we can distinguish a number of different senses which are more or less similar to each other. One sense functions as a 'prototype'. This may be regarded as a conceptual core to which other uses of the word can be related. It is more basic than other meanings and serves as the focus for the development of new senses ... Meanings organized around the prototype may exhibit greater or less similarity to the prototype and to each other; they may overlap partially or they may be so far removed from each other that they appear as opposites ... The meaning of *just* is vague and can be extended in various directions depending on what conversational strategy the speaker wants to achieve. (1-2, 9)

The result is a listing of a number of distinguishable uses of *just*, but no greater grasp of what underlies the variety.

<sup>57</sup> Kishner & Gibbs (1996.21) echo this reliance on context:

... it is possible to discover how speakers choose among the senses of polysemous words. In order to accomplish this task, we must first study the meanings of *just* so that we may then explore the process of sense selection. What features of context constraint the various senses of *just* so that one sense is dominant? To what extent does *just* get its meanings through interaction with specific lexical items or through its interaction with specific characteristics of discourse situations. By "interaction" we refer to what occurs during sense selection when two or more words co-occur, given that at least one of these words does not have one fixed sense. The findings of the following studies generally show that *just* gets the various meanings it has from people's different conceptualizations of various real-world events and their communicative intentions in discourse.

Gibbs & Matlock (2011.220) write:

Overall, the corpus data indicate that, in each of its senses, *just* is followed most frequently by words belonging to one (or at most) two particular word class(es). This would suggest, then, that *just* gains its meaning by its frequent co-occurrence with specific types of words.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Gibbs & Matlock (2001.215):

... cognitive linguists have suggested that the meanings of polysemous words can be [sic] successfully described by making use of such notions as metaphor, metonymy, and different kinds of image schemas ... some psycholinguistic research showed that speakers are, under some conditions, aware that meanings of polysemous words are related to one another ... Another set of experiments demonstrated that the interrelatedness of the different senses of polysemous words might best be handled by positing one or more central senses with other senses being peripheral ... Finally one study that investigated speakers' immediate, online processing of polysemous words showed that some contextually unrelated senses of a polysemous word remain active for quite

The clarity we seek, the release, is somehow to come from *interaction*, *co-occurrence*, etc. Lee, for example, comments (1991.64-65) on his solution to the polysemy of *just* in this way:

... there does seem to be one notion — that of restriction — that is shared by all members of the category [the taxonomy, PWD]: depreciatory, restrictive, specificatory, intensificatory, emphatic ... The price that we have to pay for postulating a unitary *just* involves interpreting the range of meanings associated with it as emerging from a complex of interactional processes involving a wide range of factors: marginal phase, affect, prosodic features, paralinguistic features and scope.

If we assume the path to understanding depends upon the neutralization of difference by some consistent prediction/association, then *restriction* could be it/the answer, but now the solution has, in turn, introduced a second order problem, a “price”. The *interactional processes* themselves (*marginal phase*, *affect*, *prosodic features*, *paralinguistic features* and *scope*) are all so chaotically disparate that they themselves require understanding. A second puzzle has replaced the first, and there is no answer to the polysemy.

The final, and best, but unpursued response to *just* is this (Lee 1991.65):

Of particular interest is the fact that the interactional processes in question are rooted in human cognition.

That, I think, is where the present effort has begun.

### 3.2 *The Inverse of Polysemy.*

The problem we face with *just* and its understanding is systemic. The familiar scientific tact is to assume that somehow the final pattern is embedded/embodyed in the data. It is in there, and it is our challenge to recognize it and to ferret it out. With *just*, we begin with a number of senses and move from there to our conclusion.

This attitude has been a defining characteristic of American linguistics. The suite of analytic tools that led from phonetics to phonology, then morphology, syntax, and finally to semantics was based on this belief. That is, if we look long enough and hard enough at the phonetic transcriptions of any language (usually American Indian), we can discover/see the phonemic

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some time after the word has been encountered. These findings suggest that speakers might be activating a network of related senses when they hear polysemous words, part of which remains active even when the contextually appropriate sense of a word has been determined.

pattern. It's in there somewhere, hiding, and it will yield to the mechanics of distribution.

When we encounter *just*, what we see first and what entertains us is the apparent endless variety of meanings — the polysemy. The same attitude that guided the inductive trail from phones to phonemes prompts us to accept first the variety of meanings and then to resolve the apparent chaos by careful inductive thought.<sup>59</sup> But there is another way.

What I have in mind is not uncommon or strange. The examples I will use to illustrate the commonness of the alternative come from two sources. First, Mark Twain's learning to become a steamboat pilot on the Mississippi River. And second, James Watson, Francis Crick, and Rosalind Franklin's grappling with the nature of the molecule that is DNA.

### 3.2.1 *Life on the Mississippi.*

As a young man, Samuel Langhorne Clemens aka Mark Twain decided to learn to be a pilot on the Mississippi River. The experience is recorded in his *Life on the Mississippi* (1883). Forsaking travel to the Amazon basin,

... it followed that I must contrive a new career. The "Paul Jones" was now bound for St. Louis. I planned a siege against my pilot, and at the end of three days he surrendered. He agreed to teach me the Mississippi River from New Orleans to St. Louis for five hundred dollars, payable out of the first wages I should receive after graduating. (47)

The lesson here concerns what it means "to learn a man the river" (70). Mr. Bixby, Twain's teacher, speaks first:

"You see, this has got to be learned; there isn't any getting around it. A clear starlight night throws such heavy shadows that if you didn't know the shape of a shore perfectly you would claw away from every bunch of timber ... Then there's your pitch-dark night; the river is a very different shape on a pitch-dark night from what it is on a starlight night ... Then there's your gray mist. You take a night when there's one of these grisly, drizzly, gray mists, and then there isn't *any* particular shape to a shore." (65) ...

"My boy, you've got to know the shape of the river perfectly. It is all there is left to steer by on a very dark night. Everything else is blotted out and gone. But mind you, it hasn't the same shape in the night that it has in the day-time."

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<sup>59</sup> It appears all to hinge upon a sequence of *if... then*. For example, Lee (1991.47) again:

That is, *if* meaning-type *A* results from the interaction between *just* and context *X* and meaning-type *B* results from the interaction between *just* and context *Y*, *then* contexts that are ambiguous or indeterminate with respect to meaning-types *A* and *B* ought to share features with both context *X* and *Y*.

“How on earth am I ever going to learn it, then?”

“How do you follow a hall at home in the dark. Because you know the shape of it. You can’t see it.”

“Do you mean to say that I’ve got to know all the million trifling variations of shape in the banks of this interminable river as well as I know the shape of the front hall at home?”

“On my honor, you’ve got to know them *better* than any man ever did know the shapes of the halls in his own house.”

“I wish I was dead!” (65) ...

“Oh, don’t say any more, please! Have I got to learn the shape of the river according to all these five hundred thousand different ways? If I tried to carry all that cargo in my head it would make me stoop-shouldered.”

“*No!* you only have to learn the shape of the river, and you learn it with such absolute certainty that you can always steer by the shape that’s in your head, and never mind the one that’s before your eyes.” (65-66)

Mark Twain’s difficulty is clear. He is focussed on the polysemy of the River in all its variant manifestations, and his own best solution is to commit all that variety to memory. Mr. Bixby’s response is to declare that what is “before your eyes” is accidental. The essence of the River is a constant ... “the shape that’s in your head,” although “you can’t see it.”

In this comparison, the “million trifling variations of shape” are the polysemous multitude of *just* and the “shape that’s in your head” is the parabolic curve of Figures 3-5.

### 3.2.2 *The Double Helix*<sup>60</sup>

In the early 1950’s, the understanding of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA), the physical organization of the molecule, was the focus of intense research. The importance of this pursuit had been guaranteed by a recent publication by Erwin Schrödinger, Nobel Laureate in physics, who speculated on the physical and chemical requirements for life, and further, on how those requirements might be satisfied (Markel 2021.9).

To this end, Schrödinger hypothesized the existence of an aperiodic crystal or solid, “a gene — or perhaps the whole chromosome fiber,” which is made up of molecules that repeat or arrange themselves in a specific, regular sequence. He further suggested that within the chemical bonds of these genes resided the genetic information guiding life, disease, and reproduction. This focus convinced the young James Watson — and many others — of the critical importance of determining the exact position of the gene’s constituent atoms, not only the many chemical bonds but also their precise arrangement in space.

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<sup>60</sup> The historical content of this section is taken from Markel 2021.

In the UK, there were two groups of scientists which had been funded by the British government to pursue the answer.<sup>61</sup> The first was hosted at Trinity College, University of London. This cohort was primarily a single individual, Rosalind Franklin.<sup>62</sup> The second group worked at the Cavendish Laboratory, Cambridge University and consisted of James Watson and Francis Crick.<sup>63</sup> The two followed distinct styles of research, and it is the character of the styles that is our interest here.

It is not the case that the competing groups employed an approach that completely excluded the alternative. It was a matter of weighting. Rosalind Franklin was an accomplished technician using X-ray photography, and her approach to the problem depended on information contained in these photographs of the DNA molecule. Her technological expertise had significantly improved upon the images from the late 1930's, and in her attempts to understand the molecule "she had hard data on her side" (Markel 2021.346).<sup>64</sup> Nevertheless, "Unable to discern the answers within the crystal-clear "X" she produced on the photographic plate, Franklin put this picture aside and occupied the next several months analyzing the time-consuming Patterson equations ..." (Markel 2021.205).<sup>65</sup> On February 23, 1953, Franklin "return[ed] to the interpretation of Photograph 51" (Markel 2021.322). And this time, "she was a mere two deductive steps from definitively winning the race" (Markel 2021.322). Unfortunately, on February 24, the paper trail of Franklin's lab notes stops. "Franklin did not make the connection, as Watson and Crick would soon do, of how the purine and pyrimidine nucleotide bases related to one another within the helix" (Markel 2021.323).

On the other side, James Watson's and Francis Crick's focus was on "model building" first, and "hard data" second (Markel 2021.310 et passim). This approach, as it turns out, was in turn dependent on the machine shop at

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<sup>61</sup> In the USA, Linus Pauling was a notable researcher on DNA.

<sup>62</sup> Although there were others, e.g., Maurice Wilkins & Raymond Gosling.

<sup>63</sup> Additionally, there were personal incompatibilities between the groups. Watson and Crick got on famously, but the relation between those two and Rosalind Franklin was not amicable. As Markel (2021.226) frames it, there was a "hate affair" between Watson and Franklin.

<sup>64</sup> And Rosalind Franklin "was hardly shy about expressing her view of him [Watson] as little more than a scientific dilettante who flitted and fluttered about without producing any of his own experimental data" (Markel 2021.207).

<sup>65</sup> The X refers to the image "that Franklin produced [in] the 'beautiful' X-ray diffraction Photograph No. 51 on May 2, 1952" (Markel 2021.204).



the Cavendish to “make a slew of tin pieces representing the purines and pyrimidines so that he [Watson] might build a model” (Markel 2021.319). As it happened, Watson had seen Franklin’s Photograph N° 51,<sup>66</sup> an image which necessarily constrained his model building (Markel 2021.357):

Because all the technology-dependent measurements had already been made by Rosalind Franklin, Watson and Crick’s laboratory armamentarium was no more advanced than a grade-schooler’s pencil box — pencils, a ruler and a compass — plus a carpenter’s plumb line “to obtain the relative positions of all atoms in a single molecule.” These simple utensils, however, cannot diminish their accomplishment since they had no road maps or diagrams beyond the King’s College X-ray diffraction data. It was Watson and Crick’s brilliance, curiosity, and intuition that built the three-dimensional model now so recognizable around the world.

Without road maps, like Mark Twain, Watson & Crick learned the *shape of the river*.

### 3.2.3 *Parabolic just.*

Being the sole PhD in the family, I am the default resource for solving all intellectual questions, regardless of their nature. So, when my grandson needed help with pre-calc, I was summoned.

Sixty-five years ago when I was in high school, pre-calc did not exist. At least, I was not aware of it by that name even though I took all the available math courses: algebra 1 & 2, geometry, plain and solid, and trigonometry. AP courses did not exist. Now, when called upon, I did recognize — from somewhere — quadratic equations and recalled solving them by factoring. But that was all I could dredge up. Googling things, I learned about the Quadratic Function, completing the square, etc. New to me.<sup>67</sup> Then I learned that the quadratic equation was the algebraic equivalent of a geometric shape ... the parabola, that is normally presented on a graph using an  $x$ - and a  $y$ -axis. The gradual inevitable approach of a point along a curve, advancing to an extreme, its vertex, the unique position on the parabolic curve that shares no numerical value with some second point, before it retreats. That was revealing.

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<sup>66</sup> “[Raymond] Gosling handed him [Watson] Franklin’s Photograph N° 51 and informed him [Watson] that it was his to keep and use as he wished once Franklin left the King’s College group” (Markel 2021.303-304). The story of how Watson was given the image is involved and is the subject of continued debate as to its ethics. The exchange was clearly not a decent thing.

<sup>67</sup> Alec Wilkinson’s *A Divine Language: Learning algebra, geometry, and calculus at the edge of old age* (2022) is relevant here.

In Figure 3, the parabolic pattern just sits inertly like the stone monolith in *2001*. It is only when placed in the midst of human experience<sup>68</sup> that it comes to life and contributes to how we English speakers can organize what happens to us (depicted in Figures 4 & 5).

As I can best remember now, the shape of Figure 3 and its association with *just* was an accident. It just happened.

#### 4.0 *The Way Out.*

There are three primary ways one may react to the proposal made here. The first is to declare it to be complete nonsense. I respect that. If you see no interest in the alternative, nor point of merit that may serve as a basis of discussion, then we part ways.

The second reaction is that of the sceptical agnostic. There may be some interest in the curious novelty of it.<sup>69</sup> But there are reservations ... it is incomplete somehow. Just how is it going to work? Come back when you have the answers.

Third, there is the enthusiasm of the convert. Yeah, Dude! That's it!

I think that I am somewhere between two and three.<sup>70</sup> I am fascinated by the ordered curve of the parabola. Consider again this sequence:

D I just ... (Stuttering, at a loss for words.)

C I just did it. (For no reason, without thinking.)

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<sup>68</sup> As when the hominins caress the monolith.

<sup>69</sup> The following observation is relevant (Josselyn, Köhler & Frankland 2017.4647):

The sentiment that scientific knowledge is cumulative continues today. At a recent meeting, one of us (S.A.J.) overheard a current scientific leader paraphrase this idea remarking “if you think your idea is novel, it just means you haven't done your reading.”

That attitude cannot be entirely correct. If there is no *novel*, there is only *stasis*. The supposed accumulation of knowledge is merely an accretion of the same, without change. Against this, contemplate Newton's idea of gravity, Galileo's idea of heliocentrism, Einstein's idea of relativity, Bohr's quantum mechanics. After each of these, our “scientific knowledge” was “continued”, but not in a “cumulative” way. There was a rupture — a novelty — and everything was henceforth different. This, of course, is Kuhn's (1970) paradigm shift.

Note also the use of *just* in the quotation ... *it just means* ... no more, no less, i.e.,  $A_2$ .

<sup>70</sup> Wilkinson (2022.55) observes:

No idea is bad unless a person is uncritical. Accepting a guess as a truth, as superstitious people do, is misguided, but so is ignoring a guess, as pedantic people do. As regards ideas, it is only bad not to have any.

B I just did it. (I'm just the tool. I had no other involvement)

A<sub>1</sub> I just did it. (Barely.)

A<sub>2</sub> I just did it. (OMG! I won the lottery!)

A<sub>3</sub> I just did it. (Finished and now I'm free)

These examples illustrate the ordered sweep of *do* out of the nothingness at D to the unmotivated eruption at C, to the now motivated, but yet-to-be-formed/maximized performance at B, to the accomplishment at A<sub>1</sub>, to the before-our-eyes astonishment at A<sub>2</sub>, to a retrospective perspective of the attainment at A<sub>3</sub>. That there should be such a perspective on experience that permits us to recognize its emergence from the nothingness of D through the uncontrolled eruption of an unanticipated presence at C, and onward to a formed, but still incomplete condition at B, until at A<sub>1</sub>, it attains its final form, and then stands facing us perfected at A<sub>2</sub> ... that's hypnotizing ... that it should actually exist ... that it *should* actually exist.<sup>71</sup>

#### 4.1 The Vertex Effect.

There are two families of observations that remain to be made about the parabolic metaphor.<sup>72</sup> Both in some way concern the constitution of the Vertex (A<sub>2</sub> in the labeling here).

**First**, because A<sub>2</sub> is the Vertex, it necessarily represents the maximum value on the parabolic path. And because it is the maximum value, it by definition exceeds every other value. The result is the Vertex Effect which is created by A<sub>2</sub> and often perceived as *emphatic, exact, specificatory, comparative, restrictive, intensificatory*, etc.<sup>73</sup> But the life experience

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<sup>71</sup> And with the same four words.

I know that it is just [!] hubris, but I cannot resist making this comparison (Markel 2021.361):

... Crick and Watson felt in their guts that their model was true. Almost trance-like they kept telling themselves "a structure this pretty just had to exist" ...

<sup>72</sup> And perhaps a fourth point as well. Assuming that the description of the meaning of *just* as presented here is accepted to some degree, then one result is to reopen the question of the meaning of *meaning* (Ogden & Richards 1945). Whatever *meaning* is, it is not the particulate Saussurean sign (nor some substitute) that supports a structure (and polysemy).

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Kishner & Gibbs 1996.34-35 and Lee 1991.64-65.

associated with the Vertex Effect extends into an endless number of additional experiences. Given *OMG! The pipe is just burst to pieces*, representing  $A_2$ , the sense of *just* may be *astonishment*, *discovery*, *awe*, *disbelief* as well as *emphatic*, *exact*, *specificatory*, *comparative*, *restrictive*, or *intensificatory*. The conclusion, I think, is that the specific life experiences are endless. The only uniqueness lies in the Vertex Effect. *Non plus ultra*. The **second** point is this. The Vertex requires the parabola for its creation, and it cannot exist without the parabola to support it.  $A_2$  does not exist without the parabolic curve, and if  $A_2$  exists, then so, potentially, must  $A_1$ , B, C, and D ... simply because the curve exists. Whether they are actualized is a separate matter, and that brings us to the **third** point. The invocation of a parabolic curve as the metaphor for grasping the semantics of *just* came initially from discovering the coherency produced by “plotting” what appeared to be the discrete senses of *just* onto the meaningful interpretation of the parabolic shape. Continuing to find coherency in the engagement of the parabola with English *just* is the only reason to maintain the parabola as an explanatory device. It earns its keep, as it is about to again. The ease with which Vertex (and hence its implied parabola) accommodates the patterns *Inclusion* (4.1.1), *Exclusion* (4.1.1), and *Congruence* (4.1.2), in both time and space, while not conclusive,<sup>74</sup> are certainly arguments in its favor.

#### **4.1.1 The Vertex Effect: Inclusion & exclusion.**

Given that the Vertex is the parabolic epitome, we are left with discovering the ways in which it can be recognized. The Verge of the Vertex appears one way that it reveals its presence. But there are others.

Consider the brief utterance

(24) Just there.

You and I walk into the backyard so that I can show you where I saw the UFO. As we approach the side fence, I raise my index finger, point and say (21), meaning, I suppose, something like *Precisely there*. You say *OK* and look about for other indications. Seeing none, you say to me *Are you certain it was no where else about?* Since I am convinced of my experience, I shake my head and, with my hands in my pockets, I repeat:

(25) Just there.

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<sup>74</sup> Nothing ever can be.

meaning now *Only there, nowhere else*. *Just* in (24) and (25) have achieved the same Vertex Effect, but they have done it in different ways. In (24), the extreme is demarked positively by description or identification. By *inclusion* in the unique Vertex,  $A_2$ . In (25), the same Vertex Effect is achieved, but in a complement manner of *exclusion*. It removes all content referencing everything that does *not* compose the Vertex,  $\sim A_2$ , leaving the Vertex  $A_2$  as the remainder  $\sim(\sim A_2)$ .

Consider further in this vein, a response to *Who do you love?*

(26) Just you.

This *just* seems clearly to produce the Vertex Effect following the *exclusionary* path ... I love no one else (leaving you as  $A_2$ ). An inclusionary interpretation to (26) is difficult to compose. In the other direction, the exultation of (7) appears to be an example of the Vertex Effect that is reached by *inclusion* to the exclusion of *exclusion*.

Consider lastly, a response to *How do you like your Starbucks latte macchiato?* Your answer is

(27) Just so.

My guess is that the Vertex Effect is here now reached by both routes, *inclusion* and *exclusion*. The drink is intended to contain all the necessary ingredients (*inclusion*), and it must not be soiled by any that do not belong (*exclusion*): Vertex coming and going.

If the variety of *just* (24) - (27) is confirmed, then the notion of Vertex seems even more embedded and dependent on the parabola that defines it.

#### 4.1.2 *The Vertex Effect: Congruence.*

The Vertex Effect has at least one more path to its realization. Consider

- (14) But, *just* as incongruously, he once sang a heartfelt version of “Send In the Clowns” for no particular reason, bolting offstage afterward overcome with emotion as the audience stood and applauded. (I/14)
- (43) Her two overtures from 1834 — Pablo Heras-Casado and the Pittsburgh Symphony perform the first on *Oct. 22 and 24* — look back to Haydn and Mozart, *just* as some of her études trained players in Baroque styles. But they have a spirit, even in their darkness, that is wholly their own. (I/43)

- (71) To home in on the most likely source, the researchers analyzed published records of charcoal found in each of the three places. Charcoal reveals that woody material *was* burned nearby, and changes in its abundance over time can be traced, *just* like soot records in ice. (I/71)
- (97) “Congress may by two-thirds vote of each house, remove such disability. Congress did *just* that, he said, with the Amnesty Act of 1872. (I/97)
- (3) YOUNG WOMAN (talking to idea): I bet in places like this you could cut down on the hero factor.  
YOUNG MAN: Correct. *Just* like banks, these places are insured. The managers don’t give a fuck, they’re just trying to get out the door before you start pluggin’ diners. Waitresses, forget it, they ain’t taking a bullet for the register .... (VI/3)

In each of the above, the contents *incongruously*, *some of her études trained players in Baroque styles*, *soot records in ice*, *that*, and *banks* are identified by *just* to be content that is exactly repeated, with nothing added nor removed. The accompanying *as* or *like* expresses the link to the target and *just* expresses the *congruence*. Each of these assertions is, by that precision, maximal. There are none closer, and *each* is, therefore, by that sameness, a Vertex.

- (7) Lester, now sitting, lifts an ice pack to his nose. He is on a bench in the emergency room. And *just* as we realize this, we see that sitting next to him is LORNE MALVO, a nasty bruise and cut on his forehead from the car crash. (II/7)

In II/7, *just as we realize this* plays out the congruency in time, now *simultaneity*.

#### 4.2 The End.

Accepting that the parabolic metaphor is a reasonable understanding of the way things are, then the change in perspective on *just*, and on language, will solve some puzzles and make some things clearer, but at the same time the change will raise further questions. Where did *just* come from and how? If we acknowledge that this *just* was not always present in English, then what is its diachrony?<sup>75</sup> Is it unique to English, or do some other languages have some

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<sup>75</sup> From the perspective here, with one grammatical thing ... *just* ... what history could have produced it? The notions of grammaticization would seem difficult to apply. It’s not grammar that has changed. It is the perceptions of the possibilities of life experience that have changed. Oddly, it is as if *just* has created itself from nothing by self-referencing the self-same parabolic path that it now is. It made itself.

version of it? If *just* is in English, how does a child recognize it and learn it? These three questions are fascinating, but I have no answer for them, and that pushes me back in the direction of agnosticism.

So why believe it?

Non Sequitur by Wiley



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[First Completed Version: May 30, 2022]

[Version: August 30, 2022]

## Appendices

Some examples of the usage of *just* are listed below. None is elicited speech. Some come from written usage, and some are from quoted spontaneous speech. Some are mimics of spontaneous speech, having been created as screenplays. They are simultaneously artificial and real. They are all valid usages of *just*.

The examples in Appendix I were taken from *The New York Times* webpage, where digital versions of printed stories are archived. Examples in Appendices II - VI are from the named screenplays.

Examples cited from this pool will be identified by appendix number and example number. Thus, the 17th example in Appendix IV is IV/17:

- (17) She starts to go further, stops herself. More on her mind.  
 MIKE: What? What is it, honey?  
 STACEY: Mike, I gotta ask you... I mean, I know I ***just*** need to, to move on from this, but... (“fuck it”) I keep thinking about something.  
 MIKE: What?

Each example of *just* will be embedded in preceding and following context in order to assist the reader in getting a reasonable understanding of the sense of *just* that is present. To assist the reader in discovering where *just* occurs in the example, it is printed in ***bold red italics***.

### Appendix I *The New York Times*

#### *Democrats Weigh Filibuster Change to Solve Debt Ceiling Fight.*

By Carl Hulse, Oct. 6, 2021, Updated 3:14 p.m. ET

- (1) “What they are doing is obstruction and utterly exposes the filibuster. And it is not ***just*** inconvenience. It is desperately dangerous.”
- (2) “Look, the best way to get this done is ***just*** for Republicans to get out of the way,” Senator Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York and the majority leader, said Tuesday.

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A *'Historical Event': First Malaria Vaccine Approved by W.H.O.*

By Apoorva Mandavilli, Oct. 6, 2021, Updated 12:12 p.m. ET

- (3) The vaccine is not *just* a first for malaria — it is the first developed for any parasitic disease.

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*'We're not out of danger': A threat lingers even as new U.S. cases and deaths decline.* — Adeel Hassan

- (4) New coronavirus cases, hospitalizations and deaths are falling as the United States begins to recover from a persistent summer surge that strained hospitals across the country and killed over 100,000 Americans in *just* three and a half months.

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*Nebraska restores its Covid data dashboard after taking it down over the summer.*— Adeel Hassan and Lisa Waananen Jones

- (5) State officials stopped sharing counts of new coronavirus cases by county with the public on June 30, *just* as the Delta variant began surging in the United States.
- (6) The dashboard was removed *just* as Stephanie Summers, board of education president in David City, was trying to determine the best policy for students and families in her rural community one hour west of Omaha.
- (7) “Our access to testing is so bad right now, and the turnaround so bad, that these numbers are probably vast underestimates, and not accurate *just* because there is not enough testing,” said Dr. Bob Rauner, chief medical officer of OneHealth Nebraska, a group of 65 locally owned medical clinics across the state.

*In a building in Brooklyn, residents stopped paying rent. Thank the pandemic for their activism.*— Mihir Zaveri

- (8) It also pours through a crack in the bathroom ceiling so big that Ms. Edwards needs an umbrella *just* to use the toilet.

*Researchers find a higher than expected risk of myocarditis in young men after full vaccination.*— Maria Cramer

- (9) Across all age groups and sexes, the overall incidence was *just* over two cases per 100,000 people, the study found. But when the researchers analyzed the results by age and sex, they found the highest incidence among males 16 to 29 years. The risk in females of every age was negligible.

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*An Asylum-Seeker's Wrenching Decision: Stay on the Run or Save His Child's Life?* By Andrew Higgins, Oct. 6, 2021, Updated 3:25 p.m. ET

- (10) “Many more will die as weather conditions get worse,” Mr. Bystrianin said. “Our government treats these people worse than criminals, who get taken to prison, as if they are not human beings, *just* rubbish to be thrown away. What is the plan — to get people killed?”
- (11) He denounced Mr. Kaminiski’s account of eastern Polish towns besieged by violent sexual deviants arriving from Belarus as “vile” lies. “These people are not criminals and have not disturbed order in any way in my town. They are peaceful, desperate people who *just* want to cross to a better life,” said the mayor, a former police officer.

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*Nobel Prize in Chemistry Awarded to Scientists for Tool That Builds Better Catalysts.* By Sabrina Imbler, Marc Santora and Cora Engelbrecht, Oct. 6, 2021, Updated 12:49 p.m. ET

- (12) H. N. Cheng, the president of the American Chemical Society, said Dr. List and Dr. MacMillan’s tool goes beyond a new player. “It’s more than *just* a chess piece. They have opened up the board,” Dr. Cheng said. “Now it is up to you to play the game.”
- (13) But asymmetric catalysis can produce *just* one of these asymmetric molecules, the left or the right, a boon for safety and

for reducing chemical waste.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Alan Kalter, Longtime Voice of Letterman's 'Late Show,' Dies at 78.*  
By Neil Genzlinger, Published Oct. 5, 2021, Updated Oct. 6, 2021, 11:39 a.m. ET

- (14) But, *just* as incongruously, he once sang a heartfelt version of “Send In the Clowns” for no particular reason, bolting offstage afterward overcome with emotion as the audience stood and applauded.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Global Deal to End Tax Havens Moves Ahead as Nations Back 15% Rate.* By Alan Rappoport and Liz Alderman, Oct. 8, 2021, Updated 4:32 p.m. ET

- (15) Mr. Le Maire said France would drop its tax on Amazon, Google and other American digital giants most likely in 2023, after the new tax rules were put in place. France collects *just* € 350 million a year with the tax, which has been a largely a symbolic measure aimed at achieving a broader global deal for digital taxation.

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*2 Parents Are Convicted in the Varsity Blues Admissions Trial.*  
By Anemona Hartocollis, Oct. 8, 2021, Updated 4:06 p.m. ET

- (16) The jury verdict was a swift, resounding victory for the prosecution. The jury came into the courtroom shortly after 2:30 p.m. Friday, *just* over 24 hours after they began deliberating.

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*U.S. employers added only 194,000 jobs in September as the Delta wave persisted.* By Ben Casselman, Oct. 8, 2021, Updated 9:21 a.m. ET

- (17) “I am a little bit puzzled to be honest,” said Aneta Markowska, chief financial economist for the investment bank Jefferies. “We all waited for September for this big flurry of hiring on the premise that unemployment benefits and school reopening would bring people back to the labor force. And it *just* doesn’t seem like

we're seeing that.”

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*Budge Patty, Elegant Tennis Champion of the 1950s, Dies at 97.*  
By Richard Goldstein, Oct. 8, 2021, Updated 4:30 p.m. ET

- (18) According to the Hall of Fame, he got his nickname when a brother, considering him lazy, called him Budge to make the point that he often failed to do *just* that.

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*An Expert on the Criminal Mind, Now He's Suspected in an Arson Spree.* By Thomas Fuller and Livia Albeck-Ripka, Oct. 8, 2021, Updated 11:56 a.m. ET

- (19) Mr. Nordskog, who has interviewed more than 300 arsonists in his career, says it is a crime that crosses race and gender lines. The Hollywood portrayal of serial arsonists excited by fire and doing it for a thrill applies to a small subset of arsonists, he said. But more common are people frustrated with their jobs or family life or suffering mental health crises. “Most arsonists are *just* angry people,” he said.
- (20) “Where Maynard went, fires started,” Phillip Talbert, the acting U.S. attorney, said in a court filing. “Not *just* once, but over and over again.”

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*After Denying Care to Black Natives, Indian Health Service Reverses Policy.* By Mark Walker and Chris Cameron, Oct. 8, 2021, Updated 4:37 p.m. ET

- (21) “It brings tears to my eyes,” Reggie Knighton, the chief of the Dosar-Barkus Band — one of the Freedmen tribal bands in the Seminole Nation — said of the announcement by the I.H.S. “I *just* won’t feel any better until we get all the rights that we’re entitled to.”

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*Awarding the Nobel to journalists recognizes the growing repression of*

*media.*— Roger Cohen

- (22) It reported that, with respect to freedom of the media, “32 countries are declining substantially, compared to only 19 *just* three years ago.”

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*Maria Ressa says of her work as a journalist: ‘Trust is what holds us together.’*— Sui-Lee Wee

- (23) “I’ve *just* seen my rights being taken away, very slowly,” she said. “What we’re seeing is a thousand cuts to the body politic, to our democracy.”
- (24) “This hall of mirrors has to change at a time when accountability does count,” she said. “And I think that what we have to do as journalists is to *just* hold the line.”

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*Ressa’s colleagues call the Nobel ‘a win for our entire news organization.’*— Sui-Lee Wee

- (25) Speaking in a phone interview, Ms. Ranada said, “I’m *just* full of gratitude for this recognition. We feel that Maria’s win is a win for our entire news organization and, in general, also for the Philippine press, especially those who’ve been trudging on and shining the light, despite the kind of governance we have now, where journalists are harassed for their work.”

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*Jenny Saville’s Nudes Bring Renaissance Masters Down to Earth.*  
By Laura Rysman, Oct. 8, 2021, Updated 12:11 p.m. ET

- (26) Yeah, I was using color like never before. I think it was a sort of resistance to the disease. I *just* thought, “My gosh, people I love could die.” I *just* worked harder and faster, like a kind of mania almost. I was making marks with this sort of urgency because I thought, “What’s going to happen to the art world? What’s going to happen to everybody?”

- (27) I love making the big heads because it's a chance to be very abstract. The moment I put eyes on something, it seems that the world coalesces in the painting, because humans are *just* drawn to eyes.
- (28) I think people see you less seriously. I felt like that towards other women who'd had children, if I was honest. I thought that if you're having a family, you haven't put your work at the center — which was wrong. You're not less of an artist because you've become a parent. You would never put that on a male artist. So I *just* did the work, put it out and grew from there. It was a great lesson for me at that time.

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*De Blasio to Phase Out N.Y.C. Gifted and Talented Program.* By Eliza Shapiro, Oct. 8, 2021, Updated 4:59 p.m. ET

- (29) Under Mr. de Blasio's plan — released when he has *just* three months left in office — elementary school students who are currently enrolled in gifted classes would become the final cohort in the existing program.
- (30) Mr. de Blasio has been criticized for not taking forceful action to fulfill his promise of tackling inequality in public schools. The announcement comes *just* three months before he must leave office because of term limits, putting the fate of the plan in the hands of his successor.
- (31) "If we're *just* dumping a bunch of resources into gifted and talented," she said, "everybody else suffers because they didn't know somebody or they couldn't afford a tutor."
- (32) "We can't *just* rest and rely on the way things have been, we need to have the courage and drive to move forward," Mr. Williams, who himself attended a gifted program in New York, said in a statement.
- (33) "Differentiation is like a fuzzy blue unicorn, said Jonathan Plucker, a professor at the Johns Hopkins University School of Education and a proponent of gifted education whom the city



consulted on its plan. “It would be great if everyone had one, I’m *just* not sure it’s possible.”

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*Their Film Is One of the Weirdest Prizewinners of the Year. Deal With It.* By Erik Piepenburg, Oct. 1, 2021

- (34) That is *just* a glimpse of the harrowing happenings in “Titane,” Julia Ducournau’s audacious splatter-drama that opened Friday.
- (35) At 37, after *just* two feature films, Ducournau, a Paris native, has already become a genre film sensation.

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*Amid Conflicting Accounts, Tourists Plead Not Guilty in Carmine’s Fight.* By Precious Fondren, Oct. 6, 2021

- (36) “Everybody got it wrong,” Mr. Solano said. “The part they mostly got wrong was that all three of the women didn’t have vaccination cards or refused to show proof of vaccination, which *just* wasn’t true.”

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*How the Colombian Band Morat Is Winning Over a Global Audience.* By Jordan Salama, Oct. 7, 2021

- (37) “What Morat tries to do is use simple words to explain complicated feelings,” said Pedro Malaver, the band’s manager. “We’re not trying to be Neruda. We’re *just* trying to tell people: you’re not alone.”
- (38) “He said, ‘I think you guys are talented, but you won’t ever have a song on the radio. You probably should have been born in Argentina in the late 1970s, because your music is *just* not right for what’s happening right now.’”

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*Can TV Get Big Again?* By James Poniewozik, Published Sept. 10, 2021  
Updated Sept. 16, 2021

- (39) In spring 2019, as “Game of Thrones” aired its final season, the talk among TV-industry pundits was that the age of dragons was not the only era coming to an end. “Thrones,” the thinking went, might *just* be the *last big TV series ever*: That is, the last blockbuster-level behemoth that would dazzle and focus the obsession of a mass audience.
- (40) But if we focus *just* on the TV part of TV — that is, series made for home-and-device distribution rather than for theaters — the post-“Thrones” question remains: Can any one program, in an age of bingeing, streaming and thousands of choices, bring together a mass audience?
- (41) It’s pointless by now to distinguish whether Marvel and Star Wars are movie universes that extend to TV or vice versa; the shows and films are *just* tributaries in a giant network of content, each promoting the other.
- (42) That theme may mirror not *just* an anxious world, but the rise and fall of media trends that produced this series and its peers.

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*Louise Farrenc, 19th-Century Composer, Surges Back Into Sound.*  
By David Allen, Oct. 8, 2021, Updated 9:53 a.m. ET

- (43) Her two overtures from 1834 — Pablo Heras-Casado and the Pittsburgh Symphony perform the first on *Oct. 22 and 24* — look back to Haydn and Mozart, *just* as some of her études trained players in Baroque styles. But they have a spirit, even in their darkness, that is wholly their own.
- (44) But Farrenc’s development was, perhaps, cut short. After the death of her daughter in 1859, she retreated from composition, writing *just* a few miniatures.

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*Major Climate Action at Stake in Fight Over Twin Bills Pending in Congress.* By Brad Plumer and Winston Choi-Schagrin, Oct. 10, 2021, Updated 9:47 a.m. ET

- (45) In a recent study, Mr. Larsen found that the biggest climate provisions would only get the United States halfway to Mr. Biden’s emission pledge. But, he said, “getting halfway there in *just* one bill would be huge.”

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*Black Lives Matter, She Wrote. Then ‘Everything Just Imploded.’*  
By Erica L. Green, Oct. 10, 2021, Updated 2:31 p.m. ET

- (46) Dr. Kane, the superintendent, saw him in the faces of Black students in her district and heard him crying out for his mother when she spoke to her own sons. So she started her letter with a warning that it would bear not *just* “good news,” but “a bit of a reality check.”
- (47) But the message from Dr. Kane, the first Black superintendent of Queen Anne’s County Public Schools, would engulf the small, predominantly white community tucked along the Chesapeake Bay in a yearlong firestorm. “When I hit send,” Dr. Kane recalled recently, “everything *just* imploded.”
- (48) She said the Kent Island Patriots’ movement was spreading to neighboring counties. “We *just* want common sense back, and we’re taking our country back,” she said.
- (49) “I saw some of the names in the group, and thought, ‘There are people whose children I have loved and guided and given my best to on here attacking me,’” she said of the Kent Island Patriots. “It was *just* heartbreaking.”
- (50) She also knew the district had struggled with racism in schools. Her predecessor, Gregory J. Pilewski, wrote to parents in May 2017 — *just* weeks before her arrival — about a string of what he called “racially motivated incidents.”
- (51) “I’m oriented to what’s going on in the nation, but like a lot of people here, I care about Queen Anne’s County,” Mr. Smith said. “I *just* don’t know if it was the appropriate time to put that in, with everything else like Covid going on. It was very disruptive.”

- (52) “For anybody to say there’s no racism in Queen Anne’s County, when I’ve been here and have experienced and seen it, *just* goes to show what we’re dealing with,” he said. “People had been suffering for years; we just never had anyone to speak up.”
- (53) “She made me feel like I could do anything,” Ms. Wright said. “If her presence can move a room, and shake an atmosphere, imagine what her power could cause. I think they were scared of the change that was going to happen *just* from her being here.”
- (54) “There is no systemic racism against anyone in our public schools, and we cannot make one up *just* because it is politically fashionable at the moment,” she told the host.

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*The Hot New Back-to-School Accessory? An Air Quality Monitor.*  
By Emily Anthes, Oct. 10, 2021, Updated 11:30 a.m. ET

- (55) Every time we exhale, we expel not *just* aerosols but also carbon dioxide; the worse the ventilation, the more carbon dioxide builds up in an occupied room.  
“If we see the CO2 rising, then that also implies that the concentration of aerosols are rising,” Dr. Huffman said. “Even *just* bringing sensor for a day or two can give you a really interesting and useful window into the world of the ventilation of that space.”  
“They *just* hadn’t been very transparent about their ventilation,” she said. “They say that it’s fine and that they did their own testing but then they wouldn’t share that data with me.”

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*After Whistle-Blower Goes Public, Facebook Tries Calming Employees.*  
By u Isaac, Ryan Mac and Sheera Frenkel, Oct. 10, 2021, 2:17 p.m. ET

- (56) “We care deeply about issues like safety and well-being and mental health,” he said at one point. “So when you see press coverage that *just* misrepresents our work and takes that out of context and then uses that to tell narratives that are false about our motives, it’s really hard and disheartening to see that.”

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*'What Have We Done With Democracy?' A Decade On, Arab Spring Gains Wither.* By Vivian Yee, Oct. 10, 2021, 1:47 p.m. ET

- (57) But as the revolution's high hopes curdled into political chaos and *economic failure*, Mr. Bousselmi, like many Tunisians, said he began to wonder whether his country would be better off with a single ruler, one powerful enough to *just* get things done.
- (58) "People don't necessarily support Saied, they *just* hated what Saied broke," Mr. Megerisi said. "That's going to be gone pretty quickly when they find he's not delivering for them, either."
- (59) "The people pushing for Parliament, democracy, freedoms, we weren't the biggest part of the revolution," said Yassine Ayari, an independent Tunisian lawmaker recently imprisoned after he denounced Mr. Saied's power grab. "Maybe a lot of Tunisians didn't want the revolution. Maybe people *just* want beer and security. That's a hard question, a question I don't want to ask myself," he added.
- (60) "I don't think that a Western-style liberal democracy can or should be something that can *just* be parachuted in," said Elisabeth Kendall, an Oxford University scholar of Arabic and Islamic studies. "You can't *just* read 'Liberal Democracy 101,' absorb it, write a constitution and hope that everything works out. Elections are just the start."

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*Back in Lesbian Paradise, at Long Last.* By Melissa Kravitz Hoeffner, Oct. 9, 2021

- (61) With so few lesbian bars left in America — some estimates put the number at 21 — and most major metro areas devoid of a single space for L.G.B.T.Q. women to gather, the Dinah, which has, perhaps miraculously, grown and stayed relevant over three decades, creates an urgently needed, if temporary, queer space. Many attendees traveled hundreds, if not thousands, of miles *just* to be with like-minded people.

- (62) Many single attendees, accustomed to a small dating pool, found themselves suddenly overwhelmed with potential romantic prospects. “I *just* don’t know who to catch,” a woman on the dance floor said with some frustration, opting to walk another lap before setting her sights on one of hundreds of potential dates, all dancing in swimwear.
- (63) “I’m excited to be a little picky,” said TC Click, 26, likening the experience to straight people going to bars and *just* knowing who may be attracted to them. With women, except for in dedicated queer spaces, it’s not typically like that. “I’m so happy,” she said. “I want to meet friends and hopefully my future wife.”
- (64) “There’s nothing better than a bunch of queer women together. It’s so safe, so positive,” Laura Myers, 32, said. “Every time we leave, we wish it was longer. We *just* keep coming back. There’s nothing else like this.”

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*After Killings, U.K. Asks: Should Misogyny Be a Hate Crime?*  
By Megan Specia, Oct. 10, 2021, Updated 12:35 p.m. ET

- (65) But Dr. Duggan said viewing misogyny as a hate crime is *just* part of the complicated process of dismantling a broken system. She would prefer to see more early intervention, education and prevention work as well.

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*When You Go to the Loo, a Bat Might Go Boo.* By Sabrina Imbler, Oct. 8, 2021

- (66) “Suddenly you would feel one charge upwards and launch itself between your legs,” said Amy Dickman, a senior research fellow at Oxford University and director of the Ruaha Carnivore Project in Tanzania. “Then you have this furry mammal *just* flying into your behind.” Though Dr. Dickman was not involved with the research, her toilet was one of seven examined by Dr. Dorward.
- (67) Sospeter Kibiwot, a bat ecologist at the University of Eldoret in

Kenya, first saw a toilet bat when he was in elementary school, an encounter that both spooked him and inspired him to learn more about bats. “Since my childhood, I have spotted more than 10 pit-latrines roosts,” Mr. Kibiwot wrote in an email. “Not all such latrines are roosts but *just* a few.”

- (68) Six of the seven toilets at camp were blessed with bats. The oldest toilet, which was established seven or eight years before the survey, housed 9 to 13 bats. The newest toilet had no bats. A toilet with *just* a foot or two between the hole and the mound of stools had only a few bats.
- (69) For anyone unfamiliar with the design of a drop toilet, the published paper included a hand-drawn graphic, complete with a heap of rotting waste, two bats and a human figure. “The squatting chap is totally superfluous to the paper, but *just* felt right,” said Dr. Dorward, who drew the sketch.

Fittingly, this illustration was labeled ‘Figure 2’ in the paper, an unintentional homage to what the squatting chap may be doing, *just* above the bats.

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*How Maori Arrival in New Zealand Was Frozen in Antarctic Ice.*  
By Katherine Kornei, Oct. 6, 2021

- (70) Since the 1960s, researchers have been extracting long cores of ice from Antarctica, Greenland and other snowy locales. Ice cores, which are made up of layers of snow that accumulated annually and were compressed over time, consist of more than *just* ice, however. They can also contain particulate matter like soot and volcanic ash that was once airborne.
- (71) To home in on the most likely source, the researchers analyzed published records of charcoal found in each of the three places. Charcoal reveals that woody material was burned nearby, and changes in its abundance over time can be traced, *just* like soot records in ice.

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*Boosters Are Complicating Efforts to Persuade the Unvaccinated to Get*

*Shots.* By Jan Hoffman, Oct. 11, 2021, 2:00 p.m. ET

- (72) “One day we *just* hit a wall,” said *Dr. Steven Furr*, who practices family medicine in rural Jackson, Ala., where he has even made house calls to give patients their Covid shots. “We had vaccinated everybody who wanted to be vaccinated and there was nobody left.”
- (73) The rising vaccination rates of late reflect the steady shrinking of a different group — those who say they had been waiting to decide and could be convinced. They now total *just* 7 percent, down from 39 percent in December.
- “You have to overcommunicate to an incredible degree,” Dr. Priest said, “because we still get questions on things that I think, ‘This was well-known 18 months ago.’ But that’s where people are, so you *just* have to keep answering that question and answering it and answering it.”

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*Seeding Accounts for Kindergartners and Hoping to Grow College Graduates.* By Tara Siegel Bernard, Oct. 11, 2021, Updated 5:37 p.m. ET

- (74) Devon Tiller’s 6-month-old son, Ayvion, was one of them. *Just* a few months after he was born, Ms. Tiller, a single mother who recently started a second job as a material handler in a warehouse, received a letter explaining that a college account had been opened for her son, with materials on how she could also set up one of her own.
- (75) But proponents believe that automatically starting accounts will help change that, and can ultimately contribute to narrowing the wealth gap; New York’s so-called baby bonds program is *just* one part of a broader economic justice initiative. In the pilot school district, certain Astoria students living in public housing already have more than \$1,500 in their accounts, thanks in part to scholarships raised through the tenant association.

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*Boston Marathon Live Updates: Benson Kipruto and Diana Kipyokei*



*Win After a Lost Year.* Alexandra E. Petri, Reporting from the marathon.

- (76) Kristina Rivera was wearing a Boston Marathon jacket with “Finally caught my first unicorn” — a nod to the marathon’s symbol and her first Boston race — stitched across the back. “My bus got lost this morning,” she said, confirming reports that some buses got lost on the way to the starting line. “It’s an untraditional race given that it’s in October — *just* finishing it ...” she said, trailing off. “It’s amazing.”

Alexandra E. Petri, Reporting from the marathon.

- (77) As they make their way down Boylston street, runners limp. They hobble. They drag their legs. Some are crying from the pain and the joy. “That’s *just* too many miles to run,” I heard one man say.

Alexandra E. Petri, Reporting from the marathon

- (78) Margaret Klimek *just* finished her fourth Boston Marathon, achieving a personal best in the process. After the race, Klimek, 38, sat on the ground in tears. “It’s been two years and I’m a mom, I have two kids — it’s been hard,” Klimek said through tears. “It *just* feels so good to be out here doing this.”

Oct. 11, 2021, 1:18 p.m. ET, 5 hours ago. Allison Dinner.

- (79) David Parkinson *just* ran his 12th Boston marathon. His wife beat breast cancer twice during the pandemic and he said he ran the marathon for her.

Oct. 11, 2021, 8:55 a.m. ET. Matthew Futterman Ran the marathon.

- (80) It’s *just* your basic school bus full of fast masked folks today. These bus rides to the start are generally super quiet — lots of people catching a little extra sleep and trying to conserve energy.

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*Indigenous Peoples’ Day, Explained.* By Melina Delkic, Oct. 11, 2021, 3:00 a.m. ET

- (81) “I think it really recognizes that Indigenous people are still here,” said Alannah Hurley, executive director of United Tribes of Bristol Bay, a consortium of Indigenous communities in Southwest Alaska, and a Yup’ik fisherwoman in Alaska. “We *just* have been struggling for so long for the vast majority of mainstream America and culture to recognize that — that we are not *just* in history books.”

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*The Passion of Questlove*. By Jazmine Hughes, Oct. 12, 2021

- (82) Thompson now owns around 600 episodes of the show, which ended in 2006, though his collection is clustered mostly in the 1970s and 1980s. “Soul Train,” he explained, is his comfort food, his shortcut to joy. He plays the episodes in a constant loop on whichever screen is closest to him. The first time we met in person, “Soul Train” was playing on both television screens of his tour bus; the last time we talked by phone, he had *just* arrived home from a trip and, before even taking off his coat, had flipped on the show.
- (83) On a September afternoon, killing time before a concert in Highland Park, Ill., on a short tour with the Roots, Thompson was thinking about the anointing of a “classic.” Kanye West’s “Donda” had *just* dropped, and clout-chasers were already rushing to dub it so. Thompson was on Twitter, scolding them to give it a second.
- (84) A music guy will argue with you about the genius of his genre’s venerated producer of choice — Phil Spector, Linda Perry, Lee (Scratch) Perry — even though you never disagreed with him in the first place. A music guy knows *just* the thing that will change your life: a clip of grainy concert footage from 1975 on YouTube. Music guys are proselytizers with headphones.
- (85) Thompson likens the time he saw West perform at Dave Chappelle’s Block Party in 2004 to a car accident, a near-death experience. He believes that hip-hop operates in cycles, and with the rise of the new, his time had run out. He wasn’t panicked, *just* resigned.

- (86) “I think at one point, if Fallon didn’t come along, then we were probably figuring out how to be the Black band that makes its survival in the jam-band route,” he told me. “It *just* became a thing like, ‘Yo, there’s a god out there who will create some kind of Celine Dion situation where we can be in one place’” — a reference to her residency in Las Vegas. “And then Fallon came.”
- (87) He hadn’t been keen on taking up filmmaking — his first thought, he told me, was, How do I get out of this? — but before “Summer of Soul” even debuted, he had already formed the production company Two One Five Entertainment with Trotter and committed himself to upcoming film projects, including a documentary about Sly Stone and another about the Negro Leagues. “It’s less about like, Hey, what’s my legacy going to be?” he said. “It’s *just* that I’m always asking: ‘Who’s going to do it? Who’s going to do it?’”
- (88) Last month, he D.J.ed a party for Madonna. He started off with a thematic set — “I’m in a room that sort of looks like a modern update of ‘Paris Is Burning’; I *just* naturally thought, OK, this is a rare chance for me to play a really good house set” — but the reaction was muted.
- (89) He trailed off. I asked him about the discordance between his efforts of preservation and the ways people my age approach history. “I’m *just* trying to figure out if this is a transition I might not want to face.”
- (90) The objects tell a story, and their preservation asserts that there’s a story worth telling. Over and over, his friends told me that Thompson’s prolificness wasn’t his most impressive feature; it’s that he never stopped being a fan. “Somebody’s gonna have to do a term paper in 2050,” he told me, “and I *just* want to make sure they’ve got their information right.”

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*What Comes Next for an Artist Whose Work Goes Viral?* By Sasha Weiss, Dec. 1, 2021

- (91) Bennani’s work combines the frenetic surrealism of a Ryan

Trecartin video, the argot of memes, Hollywood special effects and hand-held smartphone cinematography. Even as she poses a complicated question — how do we locate reality in an increasingly surreal and dystopian world? — she’s *just* doing what comes naturally to her, guided by pleasure and joy. As a child, “I got to spend a lot of time in my room doing my thing,” Bennani says. “I feel like my life hasn’t changed since childhood.”

- (92) She gives me an example of the different pacing possibilities she’s learned. “There are these videos that people make, and before making them there’s always a five-minute intro of greetings. You would never have that in America. They’re not patient,” she says. “But here, they all start with five minutes of *just* being polite.”

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*Omicron Is Fast Moving, but Perhaps Less Severe, Early Reports Suggest.* By Lynsey Chutel, Richard Pérez-Peña and Emily Anthes, Dec. 6, 2021, Updated 9:20 p.m. ET

- (93) Dr. Gurley, of Johns Hopkins, noted that the severity of disease reflects not *just* the variant but also who it is infecting. Two years into the pandemic, far more people have some level of immunity to the virus through vaccination, natural infection, or both, and that could translate to milder cases.
- (94) Dr. Abdullah also looked at all 166 patients with the coronavirus who were admitted to the Biko-Tshwane complex between Nov. 14 and Nov. 29, and found that their average hospital stay was *just* 2.8 days, and fewer than 7 percent died.

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*Inflation Hits 7%, Highest Since 1982; Supply Chains Lag.* By Jeanna Smialek & Ana Swanson. January 13, 2022, A1,P1.

- (95) “It’s *just* a lot of wood to chop to get down to anything approaching the good days,” Mr. Sharif said.

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*Legal Challenge Hangs on Word “Insurrectionist.”* By Jonathan Weismann January 26, 2022. A13.

- (96) “They have multiple targets,” he added. It *just* so happens that Madison Cawthorn is the tip of the spear .”
- (97) “Congress may by two-thirds vote of each house, remove such disability. Congress did *just* that, he said, with the Amnesty Act of 1872.
- (98) “We are definitely going to file other challenges,” Mr Fein said. “We have no specific names or dates to divulge *just* yet.

## Appendix II

*Fargo*

Based on the Film

By Joel and Ethan Coen

Episode 101

Script by

Noah Hawley

ProductionDraft

April 3, 2013

- (1) PEARL: I'm washing towels. That's the towel sound.  
She sits. They eat.  
PEARL (CONT'D): Kitty says they *just* got one of those fancy European all in ones. Says it washes and dries. One machine. Can you believe that?  
LESTER NYGAARD: I bet that set them back a penny.  
PEARL: He can afford it, your brother. Kitty said he *just* got a big promotion. After only working there a year.
- (2) We can tell his brother is a touchy subject for Lester.  
PEARL (CONT'D): Kitty said they got one of those new surround-sound systems too. (Lester eats) Guess I married the wrong Nygaard. That's what I said. We had a good laugh.  
LESTER NYGAARD: It's *just* slow now. At the shop.
- (3) LESTER NYGAARD: So, that's -- like I said, there's two kinds of policies you should be thinking about. You got your Whole Life and your Whole Life Plus. Which is -- has all the benefits of Whole Life -- plus a heck of a lot more.  
YOUNG MAN: We *just* came in to get Charline on my health care.
- (4) YOUNG WOMAN: On account of I'm having a baby.  
YOUNG MAN: Ya. A boy we're hoping.  
YOUNG WOMAN: Or a little girl.  
YOUNG MAN: But definitely one or the other.  
YOUNG WOMAN: Ya. I'd *just* about hug the pants off a little girl.

- (5) They stand, head for the door.  
LESTER NYGAARD: Oh. Okay, well -- at least let me give you a brochure. Or I got these nifty pens. Look at that. Black and red ink. You *just* click the -- Okay, well, come on back if you --  
The couple exits. Nygaard sits for a moment.  
LESTER NYGAARD (CONT'D): Well, heck.
- (6) Then Hess drops his fist and smiles to show it's all *just* a big joke. Lester starts to relax. Then HESS FAKES A PUNCH. Lester panics, turns and RUNS FACE FIRST into the PLATE GLASS WINDOW of the appliance store -- CRACK! He falls to the ground, lays on his back.
- (7) Lester, now sitting, lifts an ice pack to his nose. He is on a bench in the emergency room. And *just* as we realize this, we see that sitting next to him is LORNE MALVO, a nasty bruise and cut on his forehead from the car crash.
- (8) He hands Malvo the soda. Malvo tips it back and drains it. Lester tries not to stare at Malvo's head injury.  
MALVO: Obligated. (puts down the can) What happened to your nose?  
LESTER NYGAARD: Oh, well. That was *just* -- a misunderstanding.
- (9) LESTER NYGAARD: It was -- I was outnumbered if you wanna know the truth. Three to one. Big guys too. Well, one of them. The other two were *just* kids. But big fer their age. (beat, getting worked up) Ya know -- if I was any kind of man -- I'da shown that Sam what's what.
- (10) MALVO: So you let a man beat you in front of his children. To send them a message.  
LESTER NYGAARD: No. That's not -- (frustrated) Heck. *just* -- heck.
- (11) MALVO: In my experience, you let a man break your nose, next time he'll try to break your spine.  
LESTER NYGAARD: Sam? No way. I mean, I don't think. It's *just* -- I guess I embarrassed him in front of his boys.

- (12) MALVO: A man slept with your wife, and you're worried you embarrassed him.  
LESTER NYGAARD: Not slept with -- they didn't -- he said it was *just* -- she has soft hands, see? -- and I --  
MALVO: Mister, we're not friends. Maybe one day we will be. But I gotta say, if that was me -- in your position -- I woulda killed that man.
- (13) LESTER NYGAARD (beat): Well -- heck -- I mean, okay. Okay. But what am I supposed ta do? (beat) Heck, you're so sure about it, maybe you should *just* kill him for me.  
MALVO: (beat) Are you asking me to kill this man?  
LESTER NYGAARD: No. That was -- I was joking.
- (14) The nurse walks up.  
NURSE: Mr. Nygaard.  
Lester looks at Malvo.  
LESTER NYGAARD: Ya, that's -- *just* a second.  
(to Malvo)  
We're *just* two fellas talking, right? *just* blowing off steam?  
Malvo studies him.  
NURSE: Sir, it's real busy --  
LESTER NYGAARD: Ya, like I said -- *just* a second.  
MALVO: Sam. Hess.  
LESTER NYGAARD: No. Now wait *just* a second -- that's not --
- (15) VERN (beat): Molly found a wreck out one thirteen. Looks like the driver tried ta head out on foot, but got lost, froze ta death in the woods.  
IDA: Oh my.  
VERN: Ya. Funny thing is, the fella was *just* wearing underpants.
- (16) Hess looks at his guys to see if they're hearing this.  
SAM HESS: Is he serious?  
Hess closes on him.  
SAM HESS (CONT'D): Only two reasons to come to my shop, friend. Either you need a truck. Or you drive a truck. You a truck driver?  
Malvo is unintimidated.



MALVO: I was *just* talking to your boys. I think the younger one's a little dim.

- (16) SAM HESS: I'm gonna restrain myself -- on accounta you got an obvious head injury -- and not beat you with you to death with a tire iron. But I'm gonna` ask you again. What the heck do ya want?

MALVO: *Just* wanted to get a look at you. Malvo gives Sam a slow once over.

MALVO (CONT'D): Okay. That'll do it.

- (17) RON: -- took the whole team down to Duluth Tuesday. Big spread at the Marriot.

PEARL: Ooh. I've always wanted ta stay there.

RON: Ya. It's real sweet. King sized bed. View of the lake. You name it. Boss took me out for dinner.

KITTY: *Just* the two of them.

- (18) KITTY: Oh, we make Scotty try stuff all the time. Ron says we hafta open his horizons.

RON: Broaden his horizons. It's a big world, ya now. There's more to life than *just* Minnesota.

- (19) RON: Ever since you were -- And now Kitty said she talked to Pearl last week. And she's had it. Your wife. Said yer acting *just* plain weird. Mopin' around. Said she caught you standing in the bathroom with yer toothbrush in yer hand just looking in the mirror. Said foam was comin' outta yer mouth like a rabid dog.

LESTER NYGAARD: That's -- come on -- that's not -- how I may -- or may not -- be feeling. And fer yer information I was -- I hadn't had a lotta sleep the night before. So the toothpaste -- that was *just* --

- (20) Hess works towards his big finish, huffing and puffing. Then suddenly, he STOPS. BLOOD pours from his mouth. The hooker screams as Hess falls on top of her, revealing: LORNE MALVO, who has *just* stuck a KNIFE into the back of Hess's head. Hess blocks the hooker's view.

- (21) The owner, a heavysset WOMAN, is yelling at a sullen TEEN.

Malvo enters.

WOMAN: How many times I gotta tell ya? You can't *just* take dirty sheets offa one bed and put 'em on another. It's unsanitary.

TEEN: I shake 'em out first.

WOMAN: You don't have the sense God gave a clam, do you? Go shovel the walk.

The sullen teen exits.

MALVO: I need a room.

WOMAN: *Just* you?

MALVO: Pardon?

WOMAN: Is it *just* for you? The room.

MALVO: What difference does that make?

WOMAN: Different rate for two. And if ya got pets -- dog, cat -- that's an extra ten bucks.

MALVO: What about a fish?

WOMAN: Excuse me?

MALVO: Would a fish cost me ten dollars?

WOMAN: Well --

MALVO: Or say I kept spiders. Or mice. What if I had bacteria?

WOMAN: Sir, bacteria are not pets.

MALVO: Could be.

WOMAN: Sir, perhaps you'd be happier in a different motel.

MALVO: I *just* want to know the policy. I'm a student of institutions.

WOMAN: (exasperated) Sir, do ya have a pet or not?

MALVO: Nope. *Just* me.

- (22) VERN: Yer sayin' other than the fact he was *just* wearin' panties.  
MOLLY: Ya. See, we know from the wreck that whoever was driving the vehicle cracked their head on the windshield. But the fella in the snow --
- (23) BRUCE GOLD: When you talk to the police *just* keep it simple. Thanks but no thanks in other words. I've already talked to Fargo and they want to deal with this themselves. They're sending guys.  
GINA HESS: Deal with what? He was in a whorehouse. I'm glad he's dead.
- (24) VERN: Well, there'll be an autopsy today. And they're real

delicate with that. I wanna reassure you. You won't be able to tell a thing.

MOLLY: Ya. It's amazin' what those fellas can do. My aunt had a stroke in the bathtub. *Just* real bloated when they found her.

Outside, MICKEY CLOBBERS MOE with a hockey stick. Moe staggers. Mickey hits him again.

MOLLY (CONT'D): Puffed up like a fish. But -- what do ya know? -- we had an open casket.

Moe goes down. Mickey BEATS him mercilessly.

GINA HESS (stares at Molly): What the hell are you talking about?

MOLLY: -- *just*, they do nice work is --

- (25) MALVO (dangerous): Who said anything about a court of law?  
LESTER NYGAARD: No. I *just* mean -- Aw geez. He had a wife. And those boys.
- (26) LESTER NYGAARD: How do ya figure?  
MALVO: It's a red tide, Lester. This life of ours. The shit they make us eat. Day after day -- the boss, the wife, etcetera -- wearin' us down. If you don't stand up to it -- show 'em you're still an ape deep down where it counts -- you're *just* gonna get washed away.
- (27) Molly enters, approaches the nurse's station. SUE ROUNDTREE (30s), the same nurse from earlier, is working.  
MOLLY: Slow day.  
SUE ROUNDTREE: Bars *just* opened. Wait an hour.
- (28) MOLLY: Can you describe him?  
SUE ROUNDTREE: Real intense. Average height. Brown pants, if that helps.  
Molly takes out her notepad, writes.  
MOLLY: Brown pants. Anything else?  
SUE ROUNDTREE: *Just* real intense. His eyes, ya know? (beat) Oh, and he was talkin' ta this other fella
- (29) He puts the screwdriver down.  
LESTER NYGAARD (CONT'D): Okay. Give that a try.  
PEARL: But there's nothing in it.  
LESTER NYGAARD: I'm sayin' *just* fer a test.

Pearl turns the machine on. Beat. It fills with water, then the agitator kicks in. A harsh shriek fills the air.

- (30) MALVO: How did you get this number?  
 LESTER NYGAARD: What? I was -- I saw you this morning on my way ta -- look, I'm freakin' out here -- I don't know what ta do.  
 MALVO: Lester, have you been a bad boy?  
 LESTER NYGAARD: Aw geez. I *just* -- can you come over? It's -- I'm on Willow Creek Drive. Number six thirteen.
- (31) Lester looks around. He decides to hide the shotgun against the LIVING ROOM WALL, *just* on the other side of the doorway.
- (32) VERN: Evenin', Lester.  
 LESTER NYGAARD (nervous): What -- what do ya want?  
 VERN: Well, I suppose first I'd like ta come in.  
 Lester looks behind him.  
 LESTER NYGAARD: Uh, ya. Well -- it's *just* -- now's not a good --  
 VERN: *Just* take a second.
- (33) LESTER NYGAARD: Ya, I'm, uh -- it's *just* Pearl's gonna be home soon and -- Looking past Lester, Vern sees the basement door is open. He notices something on the floor. A BLOODY FOOTPRINT. Alarmed, Vern DRAWS HIS GUN.  
 VERN: Lester. Listen to me very carefully. I need ya to get down on the ground.  
 LESTER NYGAARD: No. Wait. *Just* -- listen to me -- it's not what it --
- (34) Visible at the bottom of the stairs.  
 LESTER NYGAARD (CONT'D): -- That's not -- I didn't do nothin' -- I *just* got home. I *just* got home and --  
 He reaches out his other hand, then realizes it's bleeding. There's a shotgun pellet buried in the meat of his thumb. Then Lester becomes aware that his injured hand is now lit by flashing red and blue lights. Another police car has *just* pulled up outside.
- (35) MALVO: Evening, officer.

GUS GRIMLY: License and registration please.

MALVO: Well, we could do it that way. You ask me for my papers and I tell you it's not my car. That I borrowed it. And see where things go from there. We could do that. Or, you could *just* get back in your car and drive away.

(36) KURT GRIMLY: Detroit *just* got a touchdown. Over. (beat) Dad? Are you there? Over.

Appendix III  
*The Wire*  
 Season 6, Episode 10  
 —30—

- (1) FREAMON: Forty thousand at the Showboat on the Boardwalk. Twenty-six at the Borgata. Eighty over the last year at the Taj Mahal... and that's *just* the Atlantic City casinos.
- (2) DANIELS (CONT'D) (nod at City Hall): Instead of cleaning house like we need to, he's up there figuring out how to hide the dirt. I swear, I gotta mind to call the governor myself and *just* let it fly...  
 PEARLMAN: Cedric, you can't.  
 DANIELS: Why not? If I let this thing stand, I might as well *just* roll over and play dead for every police who knows about this. We cover this up and...
- (3) STEINTORF (CONT'D): And you know what, Bill? You're not far off. You do have a little leverage here, but *just* a little. And I wouldn't overplay your hand.  
 RAWLS: How would you play it?  
 STEINTORF: I'd shut the fuck up and wait your turn, and when Tommy gets to the statehouse, he brings you with him to be State Police Superintendent, because while you may be a shade too white to run the Baltimore department, you're *just* about right for the M.S.P.
- (4) DUKIE waits, watching a BOY *just* a couple years younger than he is slip out of the school, then shake the front bushes for his pocket knife. The knife slips out, and the boy -- a Michael or Namond to be -- glides down the street. The door opens again and ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL MARCIA DONNELLY stares at him, walkie-talkie in hand.
- (5) DUKIE: I *just* came past to see Mister Prezbo.
- (6) DUKIE: If you can. I mean, it'd *just* be like a loan until I get settled.

- (7) FLETCHER: The part of the story about the kid still bothers him, and when he told me about it, he was *just* talking...  
HAYNES: Well, you told him you were gonna write about him, right?  
FLETCHER: I know. But I'm putting the guy's life out there and, I dunno, I *just* wanna feel clean about it. You know what I'm sayin'?
- (8) WALON (CONT'D): And it's like he's saying that the giving back you're doing, he's putting that up against Sherrod, you know? He ain't takin' you off the hook for shit, but he's *just* puttin' it all out there. The good, the bad.
- (9) TEMPLETON: I was surprised, I guess. I *just* thought, whoa, what's he doing?
- (10) MCNULTY: We lock up every liar, there's no room at B.D.C. for anyone else, right? More trouble than it's worth. (into phone) Jay, it's horseshit. I'm goin' home.  
On MCNULTY, amid the emergency lights, doing *just* that,
- (11) KLEBANOW: Those pictures were sent to him. The police have confirmed...  
HAYNES: It begins with something true, something confirmed. But tonight he *just* happened to be coming in the Guilford entrance when a mysterious grey van...
- (12) MCNULTY: Some were real and I *just* linked 'em with the ribbons. Some I juked as strangle jobs. (ashamed) If it matters, I know now that...
- (13) PEARLMAN: Let's *just* say Mister Levy has problems of his own to deal with.
- (14) LANDSMAN :Reporter is in there waiting for a photo array.  
MCNULTY: What? Jay, he's bullshit.  
LANDSMAN: I know he is. But the newspaper made such a fuss that the major wants us to jerk him off, *just* to say we did.
- (15) DANIELS: He go for all of them?

MCNULTY: No, sir. *Just* the last two.

RAWLS: He deny the others?

- (16) HERC (false modesty): I'm *just* doin' what I do, right? You need to know something, alls you gotta do is ask. (pause, proud) That's what a detective is, right?
- (17) MARLO: I'm sellin' the connect.  
 SLIM CHARLES: How much?  
 MARLO: Ten million. Or a high bidder if I hear ten from more than one of y'all.  
 BUISE: The fuck?  
 MARLO: That's a nice round number. Easy to remember. You think it ain't worth that, I can put this shit in my pocket and y'all can go back to runnin' stepped-on New York shit.  
 SLIM CHARLES: You don't mind me askin', why you want to sell? I mean, even from inside here, you can take a slice for *just* layin' in the cut.
- (18) GUTIERREZ reaches the elevator, pushes the button, waits. The door opens and it's HAYNES, getting off. He sees GUTIERREZ, her box, her expression.  
 HAYNES: I *just* heard.  
 GUTIERREZ: The Carroll County bureau? That's how they punish me? Why not *just* send my ass all the way to Pennsylvania?  
 HAYNES: What did they tell you?
- (19) LANDSMAN pretends to get weepy, emotional. He pauses, daubs an eye, as CRIES of "Aw..." and "Don't cry..." are heard from the CROWD. LANDSMAN quickly turns the corner.  
 LANDSMAN (CONT'D): But Christ, what an asshole. (LAUGHTER) I mean, not *just* the ordinary, gaping orifice that all of us possess. But an all-encompassing, all-consuming, out-of-proportion-to-every-otherfacet-of-his-humanity chasm from whose borne, if I may quote Shakespeare, no traveler has ever returned.
- (20) GREGGS eyes them, waits.  
 GREGGS (CONT'D): Anyway, it was great bein' on the job with y'all. I *just* wanted to say that, too, I guess.



- (21) CHEESE: See now, to me, that's just the wrong way to look at it. 'Cause Joe had his time and Omar ended it, and then Marlo had his time -- short though is was -- an' the police put an end to that. And now, motherfucker, it's our time. Yours and mine. And instead of *just* shuttin' up and kickin' in, you gonna stand here cryin' that back-in-the-day shit.  
FATFACE RICK: Cheese, man...  
CHEESE: There ain't no back in the day. Ain't no nostalgia to this here. There's *just* the street and the game and what happen here today.
- (22) CARVER: Thank you, sir. I'm *just* sorry it won't be you I'm serving under.  
DANIELS: Word gets around, huh?
- (23) VINSON: You know who I am?  
MICHAEL: Name is Vinson. You used to be Marlo's bank before he figured out how to use lawyers an shit. But Marlo ain't 'round no more, and you still movin' money for other players and now ... (nod at bag) ...I guess some of it need be mine.  
VINSON: Shit, you *just* a boy.
- (24) 1NT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS/MITCHELL COURTHOUSE - DAY  
DET. LEANDER SYDNOR sits on the other side of a wide expanse of desk.  
SYDNOR: ...and if the major could find his ass with his hand, he'd know that this is more than enough for us to be up on a pen register. Lietenant Carver told him so, but fuck if he isn't trying to shut this thing down.  
REVEAL that he is talking to an amused JUDGE DANIEL PHELAN.  
SYDNOR (CONT'D): All's I'm sayin' is a phone call or two and you're gonna find out that they're gettin' some kinda pressure from somewhere to sit on this thing, even though we've tied three killings to this crew.  
PHELAN: Does the police commissioner know?  
SYDNOR: Him? He wouldn't know police work if it took down his front door on a warrant.  
SYDNOR gets up, goes to the door.

SYDNOR (CONT'D): *Just* keep my name out of it.  
SYDNOR exits.

- (25) EXT. I-95/FT. MCHENRY TUNNEL APPROACH - DUSK 72  
Returning from Richmond in his personal car, MCNULTY pulls up on the northbound shoulder, *just* after the Washington Boulevard exit. With MR. BOBBLES lolling in the passenger seat, MCNULTY gets out as traffic RUSHES past him on the interstate in both directions. He takes in the landscape of his city, the only home he knows, and he knows it well. On MCNULTY, no longer a police, saying goodbye in a way, staring at the lights and skyline, as we hear the first notes of the Blind Boys singing "Way Down In The Hole":
- (26) INT. BASEMENT/RAE'S ROWHOUSE/EDMONDSON VILLAGE - DAY 84  
Song CONTINUES. BUBBLES comes in the back door, trudges up the stairs and, with *just* a moment's hesitation, enters to find RAE and her DAUGHTER at the table, where a third setting awaits her BROTHER. On BUBBLES, sitting down to dinner:

Appendix IV  
*Better Call Saul*  
 “Five-O”  
 Episode #106  
 Written by Gordon Smith  
 Directed by Adam Bernstein

- (1) INT. ALBUQUERQUE STATION - WAITING AREA - CONTINUOUS 3 Mike scans the station. Spare, down at the heels but with Southwestern charm. Fairly empty -- a CLERK, a HOMELESS GUY asleep, a LISTLESS JANITOR sweeping. No one else. He checks the clock: a little after noon. She should be here. Guess he’ll get comfy. Mike sets down his bag next to a bench and sits. A slight wince as he settles in, but could be he’s *just* travel-sore.
- (2) STACEY (forcing a smile): Hey.  
 MIKE (genuine): Hey. Thank you for coming.  
 STACEY: Yeah. Of course.  
 A PAUSE, then she goes for a hug. Not a good hug, mind you: it’s stiff, cool. The kind where only your shoulders touch. She breaks it off.  
 STACEY: I’m *just* parked across the street.  
 She gestures toward the door.
- (3) She gestures toward the door. 2 CONTINUED: 2 (CONTINUED)  
 MIKE: Great. I was *just* about to hit the... (nods to the rest-rooms). *Just* be a minute.  
 STACEY: Yeah. Sure. Meet you out front?
- (4) MIKE: How you doing? How to answer that? She struggles to find words.  
 STACEY (a half-shrug): I’m... I’m okay. Y’know... adjusting.  
 MIKE: And Kaylee?  
 STACEY: She’s settling in. Still asks about him. “Where’s Daddy..?” (then) She *just* misses him.  
 MIKE: (“Me, too”) Yeah...
- (5) She starts to go further, stops herself. More on her mind.

MIKE: What? What is it, honey?

STACEY: Mike, I gotta ask you... I mean, I know I *just* need to, to move on from this, but ... (“fuck it”). I keep thinking about something.

MIKE: What?

- (6) NEW ANGLE: Over his shoulder, we can see Stacey looking out from a window. She’s not sneaky about it; *just* checking to see if Mike’s still there. He can feel her watching.
- (7) MIKE: So, five hundred?  
CALDERA: Five hundred. I can throw in some pills for the pain. This stuff’s essentially Vicodin -- I can give it to you for twenty-five a pill. Could cut that to fifteen for something a bit less human-centric. Mike counts out five one hundred-dollar bills from his wallet. After that’s gone, there’s very little left. Maybe *just* a few tens and ones. Maybe Caldera notices..?
- (8) CALDERA: You’re new in town?  
MIKE: Yeah.  
CALDERA: Sticking around or passing through?  
MIKE: Why?  
CALDERA (easy, simple): No reason. *Just*, if you’re relocating to the Land of Enchantment, I know people. (then) I could get you some work.
- (9) Abbasi says this very evenly; non-judgementally. Still, he kinda sounds *just* ever-so-slightly... suspicious.
- (10) (As with Huell’s magic fingers back in “Breaking Bad” 412, we don’t see the details of Mike’s lift. Let’s *just* suggest that, with skill and aplomb, he got it done.)
- (11) Jimmy thought that was the coup-de-grace. Mike, though, *just* flips the notepad closed. Bland as unbuttered toast:  
MIKE: Yep. Wow. It’s hitting Jimmy how badly he underestimated Mike. Who the hell is this guy?? He knows better than to ask, now.
- (12) Lotta COPS here. Off-duty PLAINCLOTHES mostly. He eyes

two in particular wearing uniforms, eating at a high top. The older of the two cops notices Mike. Nudges his buddy. They return Mike's gaze. They nod, somber. Hoist their pints. A silent, respectful toast to the fallen.

Meet HOFFMAN and FENSKY. Matt Ehrmantraut's partner and Sergeant. Mike doesn't return the salute. He climbs off his stool. Unsteady. *Just* a bit tipsy. He makes his way to them.

- (13) Now, a COP CAR rolls up next to him (eagle-eyed viewers will note it's the same one that he picked the lock on earlier). Keeping pace. The window rolls down. Hoffman pokes his head out.

HOFFMAN: Hey Mike. Mikey! (no response) Wanna ride?

Mike keeps walking. Mumbles something barely audible. It's a no. Fensky nods to Hoffman. He pulls past Mike and then to a stop *just* ahead. Fensky climbs out and casually waits for Mike to catch up to him.

FENSKY: Come on. Let us drive ya. It's colder than my ex-wife's tit out there.

Tries to take Mike's arm and guide him. Mike pulls it away.

MIKE: 'M good. *Just* walkin'...

- (14) MIKE: You killed him. Killed Matty. Oh, he's got their full attention now. Hoffman's fingers tighten on the wheel.

MIKE: Killed him... for nothing. *Just* because you were scared. Of what you thought he might do. ("Here's how it went") You got him in that crack house. Staged it. Made it look like some junkie with a gun. But it was you.

- (15) Fensky turns forward slowly. Takes a deep breath. He locks eyes with a *just*-shy-of-pissing-himself Hoffman.

- (16) Hoffman draws. He's no slouch, but Mike has him dead to rights. Mike drops him with one clean headshot, spinning him to the ground, blood and brain flying. This gives Fensky *just* enough time to draw his own sidearm and BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! One round NAILS Mike in his left shoulder, lodging there. The impact knocks him back a little, but --

- (17) She starts to go further, stops herself. More on her mind.

MIKE: What? What is it, honey?

STACEY: Mike, I gotta ask you... I mean, I know I *just* need to, to move on from this, but... (“fuck it”) I keep thinking about something.

MIKE: What?

- (18) NEW ANGLE: Over his shoulder, we can see Stacey looking out from a window. She’s not sneaky about it; *just* checking to see if Mike’s still there. He can feel her watching.

Appendix V  
*The Office*  
“The Masseuse”  
by John Chang

- (1) MICHAEL: Morning, Pam. Did you catch the ‘L Word’ last night?  
PAM: No. I missed it.  
MICHAEL: It was a great episode. Tim found out that Jenny was cheating on him with Marina, and Dana and Lara broke up. But the whole thing was totally unbelievable.  
PAM: Why?  
MICHAEL: Because. There’s no way that lesbians are that hot in real life. I know that we all have our fantasies about a pair of hot lesbian chicks making out with each other, but that’s *just* not how it is in the real world.  
PAM: Um, o-kay.  
MICHAEL: I mean, seriously, Pam. There’s no way in a million years that a smoking hot lesbian babe would come up to you and ask you out on a date. It *just* wouldn’t happen. I mean, I’m sure you must be very attractive to plenty of lesbians out there, but let’s face facts: they don’t look like Jennifer Beals, look like Rosie O’Donnell.
- (2) MICHAEL (cont’d): That’s why the ‘L Word’ is just a TV show, and this is real life. And Pam, for what it’s worth, if you were a lesbian, you’d be one of the hotter ones.  
PAM: Um, thanks.  
As Michael heads for his office, Pam turns to the camera. Her expression asks, “Did he *just* say that?”
- (3) He marches over from his cubby.  
MICHAEL: Is it bring a supermodel in to work day, or did you *just* wander in here on your own?
- (4) HOLLY: Corporate okayed it. In fact, they’re paying Marci to be here.  
MICHAEL: Wow. That is awesome! (turns to Marci) So you’re *just* gonna like ...

MARCI: Give you a massage.

MICHAEL: Oh, ho. (he breaks into giggles) *Just* like right here in the office?

(5) PAM TALKING HEAD

PAM: The last time something like this happened, it was a girl named Katy who came by the office to sell handbags. (beat) She ended up dating Jim. (beat) Not that I'm worried or anything. This was way before we started going out. It's *just* that I've never had a massage before. I don't know if Jim's ever had one either. In fact, I can't even picture someone giving him one... or me one for that matter.

(6) The chair ready, she demonstrates by sitting in it, putting her forehead against the headrest.

MARCI: You *just* sit down in the chair like this.

MICHAEL: Should I take my clothes off first?

MARCI: *Just* your jacket. You can keep your shirt on.

MICHAEL: Oh. This takes some of the wind out of his sails, but he removes his jacket and settles into the chair.

ANOTHER ANGLE As we look at Michael's face from below the massage chair, through the opening in the headrest.

MICHAEL: Now what do I do?

MARCI: *Just* close your eyes and relax.

(7) Michael approaches her desk.

PAM: How was it?

MICHAEL: Wow. I *just* can't stop smiling.

PAM: Um, what did she do?

MICHAEL: She worked her magic, on me!

(8) DWIGHT TALKING HEAD

DWIGHT: Am I going to get a massage? (beat) No. (beat) Why on earth would I turn my back to a complete stranger, and allow myself to enter into a relaxed alpha-wave state? (beat) It's *just* asking for someone to insert a knife in your back.

(9) INT. BREAK ROOM ANGELA microwaves some water for her tea, while Dwight pops open a can of soda.

ANGELA: I can't believe that woman is in here, doing what



she's doing.

DWIGHT: I can't believe people are letting her. (he bites into a candy bar) If this were medieval times it'd be equivalent to lowering the drawbridge over the moat, opening the gates, and letting the enemy *just* walk right and murder everyone in their sleep.

- (10) INT. BREAK ROOM It's *just* Pam and Angela sitting at a table.
- (11) HOLLY: What about you, Pam?  
PAM: Um, I... I'm not sure.  
HOLLY: It's not going to kill you.  
PAM: I know, it's *just* that I'm not sure I'd feel comfortable.
- (12) INT. ACCOUNTING AREA  
ANDY: Kevin and I were *just* talking about the masseuse, and whether she gives...  
KEVIN: Happy endings.
- (13) ANDY: Oh, man. She is gorgeous. (beat) Hey, when you go to get a massage, ask her what she thinks of me.  
JIM: I'm not going to get one.  
KEVIN: You're not?  
ANDY: Whoa, Tuna, how could you pass up a free massage? That's *just* plain crazy. (beat) It's like if there were free donuts in the breakroom, would you be like, "nah, I don't want one." Of course not! You'd be cramming your jelly donut.
- (14) INT. CONFERENCE ROOM Marci's back in session, and it's Kelly's face we see through the headrest.  
KELLY: Oh my god, if you opened a day spa, I would so totally be there like twentyfour-seven. I love being pampered, and having stuff done to me. I mean, who doesn't, right? I'd even want to work in one. I can give massages. I used to give Ryan, my ex-boyfriend, who's now in prison, one all the time. Although I'm not sure I'd want to give everyone a massage, *just* the cute ones. I mean I don't know how you do it. I see someone with bad skin, and I think to myself: there is no way I am touching that. Maybe if I wore some plastic gloves or something, you know the kind that leaves your hands all chalky after you

take them off. What do you think? Do you ever wear gloves when you massage?

(15) INT. CONFERENCE ROOM We see Pam's face through the headrest.

MARCI: You really should try and relax. You're very tense.

PAM: Sorry.

MARCI: *Just* close your eyes and pretend you're in bed, ready to fall asleep.

Pam closes her eyes, then opens them again.

PAM: So um, what were you and Jim talking about?

MARCI: What?

PAM: I heard you laughing... a lot.

REVERSE ANGLE Marci stands over Pam, kneading her shoulders.

MARCI: Jim was *just* telling me about the times he pranked Dwight.

PAM: Oh. (beat) Did he enjoy his massage?

(16) REVERSE ANGLE

MARCI: We actually *just* sat down and talked the whole time. He made me promise not to tell anyone; he wants the office to think he went through with it. Oops. I guess I spilled. Don't tell Jim I told you, okay?

PAM: Um, yeah, sure.

MARCI: Wow. You're really starting to relax now. I can feel all the tension *just* melting away.

PAM: (starting to enjoy it) Yeah. This is really nice.

(17) Pam's eyes flash open.

PAM: You... um, you're...

MARCI: Actually, I *just* made that up, but it does get them to back off.

Appendix VI  
*Pulp Fiction*  
by  
Quentin Tarantino & Roger Avary

- (1) YOUNG MAN: I know that's what I always say. I'm always right too, but —  
YOUNG WOMAN: — but you forget about it in a day or two —  
YOUNG MAN: — yeah, well, the days of me forgetting' are over, and the days of me rememberin' have *just* begun.
- (2) YOUNG WOMAN: You wanna rob banks?  
YOUNG MAN: I'm not sayin' I wanna rob banks. I'm *just* illustrating that if we did, it would be easier than what we been doin'.
- (3) YOUNG WOMAN (talking to idea): I bet in places like this you could cut down on the hero factor.  
YOUNG MAN: Correct. *Just* like banks, these places are insured. The managers don't give a fuck, they're *just* trying to get out the door before you start pluggin' diners. Waitresses, forget it, they ain't taking a bullet for the register ....
- (4) They move a little away from the door, facing each other, still whispering.  
JULES: Look, *just* because I wouldn't give no man a foot massage, don't make it right for Marcellus to throw Antwan off a building into a glass-motherfucking-houose, fuckin' up the way the nigger talk ....
- (5) JULES: You're gonna be takin' Mia Wallace out on a date?  
VINCENT: It ain't a date. It's like when you and your buddy's wife to to a movie or sonethin'. It's *just* ... you know ... good company.  
Jules *just* looks at him.  
VINCENT: It's not a date.  
Jules *just* looks at him.
- (6) JULES: How you boys doin'?

No answer.

JULES (to Brett): Am I trippin', or did I *just* ask you a question?

BRETT: We're doin' okay.

- (7) Vincent moves to the bed, reaches underneath it, pulling out a black snap briefcase.

VINCENT: Got it.

Vincent flips the two locks, opening the case. He can't see what is inside, but a small glow emits from the case. Vincent *just* stares at it, transfixed.

- (8) BRETT (to Jules): Look, what's your name? I got his name's VINCENT, but what's yours?

JULES: My name's Pitt, and you ain't talkin' your ass outta this shit.

BRETT: I *just* want you to know how sorry we are about how fucked up things got between us and Mr. Wallace. When we entered into this thing, we only had the best intentions —

As Brett talks, Jules takes out his gun and SHOTS Roger three times in the chest, BLOWING him out of his chair.

Vince smiles to himself. Jules has got style.

Brett has *just* shit his pants. He's not crying or whimpering, but he's so full of fear, it's as if his body is imploding.

- (9) ENGLISH DAVE (O.S.): Hang back for a second or two, and when you see the white boy leave, go on over. In the meanwhile, can I make you an espresso?

VINCENT: How 'bout a cup of *just* plain ol' American?

ENGLISH DAVE: Comin' up. I hear you're taking Mia out tomorrow?

- (10) BUTCH (to English Dave): Can I get a pack of Red Apples?

ENGLISH DAVE: Filters?

BUTCH: Non.

While Butch waits for his smokes, Vincent *just* sips his coffee, staring at him. Butch looks over at him.

BUTCH: Lookin' at something, friend?

VINCENT: I ain't your friend, palooka.

Butch does a slow turn toward Vincent.

BUTCH: What was that?

VINCENT: I think you heard me *just* fine, punchy.

(11) VINCENT: Remember. I just got back from Amsterdam.

(12) VINCENT: Give me three hundred worth of the madman. If it's as good as you say, I'll be back for a thousand.

LANCE: I *just* hope I still have it ....

(13) LANCE: Still got your Malibu?

VINCENT: You know what some fucker did to it the other day?

LANCE: What?

VINCENT: Fuckin' keyed it.

LANCE: Oh man, that's fucked up.

...

VINCENT: I *just* wish I caught 'em doing it, ya know? Oh man, I'd given anything to catch 'em doin' it. It'a been worth him doin' it, if I coulda *just* caught 'em, you know what I mean?

(14) MIA: I'll have the Durwood Kirby burger — bloody — and a five-dollar shake.

BUDDY: How d'ya want that shake? Martin and Lewis of Amos and Andy.

MIA: Martin and Lewis.

VINCENT: Did you *just* order a five-dollar shake?

(15) VINCENT: It costs five dollars?

MIA: Yep.

VINCENT: You don't get bourbon in it or anythin'?

MIA: Nope.

VINCENT: *Just* checking.

(16) MIA: What are you doing?

VINCENT: Rollin' a smoke.

MIA: Here?

VINCENT: It's *just* tobacco.

(17) MIA: Marsellus said you *just* got back from Amsterdam.

(18) MIA: Uncomfortable silences. Why do we feel it's necessary to

yak about bullshit in order to be comfortable?

VINCENT: I don't know.

MIA: That's when you know you found somebody special. When you can *just* shit [sic] the fuck up for a minute, and comfortably share silence.

VINCENT: I don't think we're there yet. But don't feel bad, we *just* met each other.

- (19) MIA: You can't promise something like that. I have no idea what you're gonna ask. You could ask me what you're ask me, and my natural response could be to be offended. Then, through no fault of my own, I woulda broken my promise.

VINCENT: Then let's *just* forget it.

- (20) VINCENT: That's one way to say it. Another way is, he was thrown out. Another way is, he was thrown out by Marsellus. And even another way is, he was thrown oout of a window by Marsellus because of you.

MIA: Is that a fact?

VINCENT: No it's not. It's *just* what I heard.

- (21) MIA: Let me help you Bashful. Did it involve the F-word?

VINCENT: No. They *just* said Rocky Horror gave you a foot massage.

- (22) The front four FLINGS open, and Mia and Vincent dance tango-style into the house, singing a capella the song from the previous scene. They finish their little dance, laughing.

Then ...

The two *just* stand face to face looking at each other.

- (23) LIVING ROOM

We follow behind Vincent as we walks from the bathroom to the living room, where he finds Mia lying on the floor like a rag doll. She's twisted on her back. Blood and puke are down her front. And her face is contorted. Not out of the tightness of pain, but *just* the opposite, the muscles in her face are so relaxed, she lies still with her mouth open. Slack-jawed.

- (24) VINCENT (to Lance): Yoou two are a match made in heaven.

LANCE: Look, *just* keep talkin' to her, okay? While she's gettin' the shot, I gotta get a medical book.

(25) CAPT. KOONS: This watch I got here was first purchased by your great-granddaddy. It was bought during the First World War in a little general store in Knoxville, Tennessee. It was bought by private Doughboy Ernie Coolidge the day he set sail for Paris. It was your great-granddaddy's war watch, made by the first company ever to make wrist watches. You see, up until then, people *just* carried pocket watches ....

(26) BUTCH: Oh, I ... don't remember. It's really rare I remember a dream.

FABIENNE: I *just* woke up from it.

BUTCH: Fabienne, I'm not lying to you. I don't remember.

FABIENNE: Well, let's look at the grumpy man in the morning. I didn't say you were lying. it's *just* odd you don't remember your dream ....

(27) Butch goes to the closet.

FABIENNE: I'm sorry.

Butch puts on his high school jacket.

BUTCH. Don't be. It *just* means I won't be able to eat breakfast with you.

(28) Sure enough, there's the watch *just* like he said it was: On the bedside table, hanging on his little kangaroo statue.

(29) Butch stands frozen, amazed at what *just* happened. His look goes from the grease spot in the bathroom that was once Vincent, down to the powerful piece of artillery in his grip.

(30) Butch quickly takes measure of the situation, then stands next to the door.

MAYNARD: Now you *just* wait one goddamn minute

Before Maynard can finish his threat, Marsellus CHARGES in. He doesn't get past the doorway because Butch LANDS his fist in Marsellus' face.

(31) MAYNARD: Zed? It's Maynard. The spider *just* caught a

coupl'a flies.

- (32) MAYNARD: I think The Gimp's sleepin;.  
 ZED: Well, I guess you'll *just* wake 'em up then, won't you?
- (33) The Gimp slaps his knee laughing In the back room, we hear:  
 MAYNARD (O.S.): That's it... that's it boy, you're goin' fine.  
 Oooooooh, *just* like that... that's good (grunting faster) Stay  
 still... stay still goddamn ya! Zed goddammit, git over here and  
 hold 'em!
- (34) It hands in its hand-carved wood sheath from a nail on the wall,  
 next to a neon "DAD'S OLD-FASHIONED ROOT BEER" sign.  
 Butch takes the sword off the wall, removing it from its sheath.  
 It's a magnificent piece of steel. It seems to glisten in the low-  
 wattage light of the pawnshop. Butch touches his thumb to the  
 blade to see if the sword is *just* for show. Not on your life. It's as  
 sharp as it gets. This weapon seems made to order for the  
 Brothers Grimm downstairs. Holding the sword pointed  
 downward, Takakura Kenstyle, he disappears through the red  
 curtains to take care of business.
- (35) JULES: Don't do that! Don't you fuckin' do that! Don't blow  
 this shit off! What *just* happened was a fuckin' miracle!  
 VINCENT: Chill the fuck out, Jules, this shit happens.  
 JULES: Wrong, wrong, this shit doesn't *just* happen.  
 VINCENT: Do you wanna continue this theological  
 discussion in the car, or at the jailhouse with the cops?  
 JULES: We should be fuckin' dead now, my friend! We *just*  
 witnessed a miracle, and I want you to fuckin' acknowledge it!
- (36) JULES: What the fuck's happening?  
 VINCENT: I *just* accidentally shot Marvin in the throat.  
 JULES: Why the fuck did you do that?  
 VINCENT: I didn't mean to do it. I said it was an accident.  
 JULES: I've seen a lot of crazy-ass shit in my time –  
 VINCENT: – chill out, man, it was an accident, okay? You hit  
 a bump or somethin' and the gun went off.  
 JULES: The car didn't hit no motherfuckin' bump!



VINCENT: Look! I didn't mean to shoot this son-of-a-bitch, the gun *just* went off, don't ask me how!

(37) JULES: Well you better be thinkin' about it now, motherfucker! We gotta get this car off the road. Cops tend to notice shit like you're driving a car drenched in fuckin' blood.

VINCENT: Can't we *just* take it to a friendly place?

(38) VINCENT: *Just* tell 'im not to be abusive. He kinda freaked out back there when he saw Marvin.

JULES: Put yourself in his position. It's eight o'clock in the morning. He *just* woke up, he wasn't prepared for this shit. Don't forget who's doin' who a favor.

Vincent finishes, then dries his hands on a white towel.

VINCENT: If the price of that favor is I gotta take shit, he can stick his favor straight up his ass.

When Vincent is finished drying his hands, the towel is stained with red.

JULES: What the fuck did you *just* do to his towel?

VINCENT: I was *just* dryin' my hands.

(39) JULES: I used the same soap you did and when I dried my hands, the towel didn't look like a fuckin' Maxie pad. Look, fuck it, alright. Who cares? But it's shit like this that's gonna bring this situation to a boil. If he were to come in here and see that towel like that... I'm tellin' you Vincent, you best be cool. 'Cause if I gotta get in to it with Jimmie on account of you... Look, I ain't threatenin' you, I respect you an' all, *just* don't put me in that position.

(40) JULES: That's all we want. We don't wanna fuck up your shit. We *just* need to call our people to bring us in.

(41) VINCENT: I don't mean any disrespect. I *just* don't like people barkin' orders at me.

(42) VINCENT: I got a threshold, Jules. I got a threshold for the abuse I'll take. And you're crossin' it. I'm a race car and you got me in the red. Redline 7000, that's where you are. *Just* know, it's fuckin' dangerous to be drivin' a race car when it's in the red. It

could blow.

- (43) THE WOLF: You know what you two look like?  
VINCENT: What?  
THE WOLF: Like a couple of guys who *just* blew off somebody's head. Yes, strippin' off those bloody rags is absolutely necessary. Toss the clothes in Jim's garbage bag.
- (44) JULES: Ha ha ha. They're your clothes, motherfucker.  
JIMMIE: I guess you *just* gotta know how to wear them.
- (45) THE WOLF: Spoken like a true prodigy. (to Vincent) How 'bout you, Lash Larue? Can you keep your spurs from jingling and jangling?  
VINCENT: I'm cool, Mr. Wolf. My gun *just* went off, I dunno how.
- (46) RAQUEL: I have character.  
WINSTON: *Just* because you are a character doesn't mean you have character.
- (47) Jules and Vincent sit at a booth. In front of Vincent is a big stack of pancakes and sausages, which he eats with gusto. Jules, on the other hand, *just* has a cup of coffee and a muffin. He seems far away in thought. The Waitress pours a refill for both men,
- (48) VINCENT: Are you Jewish?  
JULES: I ain't Jewish man, I *just* don't dig on swine.
- (49) VINCENT: Good for you. Lighten up a little. You been sittin' there all quiet.  
JULES: I *just* been sittin' here thinkin'.
- (50) JULES: You know, like Caine in "KUNG FU." *Just* walk from town to town, meet people, get in adventures.
- (51) JULES: I'll *just* be Jules, Vincent – no more, no less.  
VINCENT: No Jules, you're gonna be like those pieces of shit out there who beg for change. They walk around like a bunch of fuckin' zombies, they sleep in garbage bins, they eat what I

throw away, and dogs piss on 'em. They got a word for 'em, they're called bums. And without a job, residence, or legal tender, that's what you're gonna be – a fuckin' bum!

JULES: Look my friend, this is *just* where me and you differ –

(52) MANAGER: Please don't! I'm not a hero. I'm *just* a coffee shop manager. Take anything you want.

PUMPKIN: Tell everyone to cooperate and it'll be all over.

MANAGER: Everybody *just* be calm and cooperate with them and this will be all over soon!

(53) PUMPKIN: Okay people, I'm going to go 'round and collect your wallets. Don't talk, *just* toss 'em in the bag. We clear?

(54) HONEY BUNNY: Let him go! Let him go!. I'll blow your fuckin' head off! I'll kill ya!. I'll kill ya! You're gonna die, you're gonna fuckin; die bad!

JULES (to Pumpkin): Tell that bitch to be cool! Say, bitch be cool: Say, bitch be cool.

PUMPKIN: Chill out, honey!

HONEY BUNNY: Let him go!

JULES (softly): Tell her it's gonna be okay.

PUMPKIN: I'm gonna be okay.

JULES: Promise her.

PUMPKIN: I promise.

JULES: Tell her to chill.

PUMPKIN: *Just* chill out.

JULES: What's her name?

(55) JULES: Yolanda, I thought you were gonna be cool. When you yell at me, it makes me nervous. When I get nervous, I get scared. And when motherfuckers get scared, that's when motherfuckers get accidentally shot.

YOLANDA (more conversational): *Just* know: you hurt him, you die.

JULES: That seems to be the situation. Now I don't want that and you don't want that and Ringo here don't want that. So let's see what we can do. (to Ringo) Now this is the situation. Normally both of your asses would be dead as fuckin' fried chicken. But you happened to pull this shit while I'm in a

transitional period. I don't wanna kill ya, I want to help ya. But I'm afraid I can't give you the case. It don't belong to me. Besides, I went through too much shit this morning on account of this case to *just* hand it over to your ass.

VINCENT (O.S.): What the fuck's goin' on here?

Yolanda WHIPS her gun toward the stranger Vincent, by the bathroom, has his gun out, dead-aimed at Yolanda.

JULES: It's cool, Vincent! It's cool! Don't do a goddamn thing. Yolanda, it's cool baby, nothin's changed. We're still *just* talkin'. (to Pumpkin) Tell her we're still cool.

- (56) JULES: Nothin' I can't handle. I want you to *just* hang back and don't do shit unless it's absolutely necessary.

VINCENT: Check.

JULES: Yolanda, how we doin, baby?

YOLANDA: I gotta go pee! I want to go home.

JULES: *Just* hang in there, baby, you're doin' great, Ringo's proud of you and so am I. It's almost over. (to Pumpkin) Now I want you to go in that bag and find my wallet.

- (57) I been sayin' that shit for years. And if you ever heard it, it meant your ass. I never really questioned what it meant. I thought it was *just* a coldblooded thing to say to a motherfucker 'fore you popped a cap in his ass.