

GEORGE

Go, get us some ice cream, Bink.

Bink reluctantly leaves room, never taking his eyes off his father.

Several moments pass. A hint of a smile comes across George's face.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

(dreamily, barely audible)

*Oh yeah. I'm sure alright...*

George sees (though we do not) his ex-wife, Nancy enters spotlight in center of room as it rises. He turns out the light above his bed, puts on the hat on the bedpost, gets out of bed and goes to her. He holds out his arm for her to take, which she does. They exit spotlight -- and stage -- together.

BOY

Well, I figured out pretty early no one -- except mommy -- listened to anyone else. It's still that way. But you could've yelled at me more. At least then I'd know you noticed.

GEORGE

I noticed. You was a good kid. Still are.

BOY

I thought you were funny. When you weren't mad at someone. Well, even then sometimes.

George's eyes start drooping. His head bobs and he weakly opens his eyes again.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Why don't you get me some vanilla ice cream? I'm real hungry all of a sudden.

BINK

Really? You wanna eat something?

GEORGE

Yeah, some vanilla ice cream. Nothing in it, just plain vanilla.

BINK

Okay... I'll wait til the nurse comes to give you your medication.

GEORGE

No, go now, they're always late.

BINK

You sure? I can wait. If that's okay.

Bink sits back down in the recliner.

GEORGE

No, no, go now. This is the first time I've been hungry in ages. Vanilla ice cream sounds good.

BINK

(reluctantly)

Um, okay. The store's just across the street, I'll be back in like two secs. Two secs, I'll be right back.

Bink goes to his father and embraces him. George is too weak to do the same, he merely closes his eyes tightly.

BINK

Today is... Wednesday.

A little smile creeps across George's face.

GEORGE

You were born on a Wednesday. You know why I nicknamed you Bink?

BOY

I'm full of woe?

GEORGE

What?

BOY

I always thought I was born on a Tuesday. Wednesday's child is full of woe.

GEORGE

To hell with that crap. You be whatever you want. I started calling you Bink cos you were always playing video games. And when you weren't, you'd make noises like were -- "bink, boink, bink". You were such a good kid. Never got any trouble from you. Your brother was such an overachiever, always trying so hard to please. And your sister, she was always trying so hard to get my goat. But you, you just did what you did, didn't care what others thought. You were a good kid. I wanted it to stay that way. You was named after me, I didn't want to jinx it. Didn't want you to become me.

BINK

What do you mean?

GEORGE

You know what I mean. I said a lotta stuff I probably shouldn'ta said. I did some things... I coulda been a little nicer to your brother and sister. And your mother.

BOY

You were nice to me.

GEORGE

Yeah well maybe too nice. Shoulda lit more of a fire under your ass. But you were always so sensitive. You just loved to draw and listen to my old records and play those games, all by yourself. I liked it that there was one person in the house who wasn't mad about something. Mad at me. Honestly, I was a little scared of you. You were just this... this complete person from the day you were born. The kinda person I never knew. I didn't know how to talk to you. I shoulda talked to all of you more. And listened. All I did was yell.

PETER

Thanks alot. Yeah, maybe you're right.

LENA

I'm always right.

Lena packs up her laptop and rises.

LENA

I gotta get going too...

Peter gets up and walks over to George.  
Lena joins him there.

PETER

We're gonna take off now.

LENA

You need anything?

George closes his eyes and shakes his  
head "no". His breathing is labored.

GEORGE

No, no I'm okay.

LENA

Good, then. We'll see you tomorrow.

Lena and Peter stroke George's hair /  
kiss his forehead or cheek / squeeze  
his hand and leave. It's become a  
ritual that clearly comforts George.  
They exit together. Bink moves to  
George's bedside.

GEORGE

(to himself, as he opens his  
eyes)

Jesus Christ, I'm still here.

BINK

Howya feelin'?

GEORGE

(more life in his voice than  
we've ever heard)

Hey! Where you been?

BINK

Just been... around...

GEORGE

I've been waiting for you. What's today, Bink?

LENA

What was Bink?

PETER

Who brought up the Fred Garvin Male Prostitute thing.

LENA

No, I said it.

BINK

He's right.

LENA

No it wasn't.

PETER

Yes it was. Look. I still have the text he sent.

Peter finds the text on his cellphone  
and shows her.

LENA

Well shit, I could've sworn...

PETER

Maybe if you'd written it down you'd remember.

BINK

(to Lena)

You know, I'm gonna miss you when you leave. Yeah, it's been  
good having you here.

Lena highlights the last sentence she  
just wrote, types over it:

EMAIL

I'm going to stay  
here a little  
longer than  
expected. You  
should come for a  
visit. The boys  
miss you.

LENA

I'll miss you  
too.

Lena sends the message, and closes  
laptop. She puts her arm around Bink  
and pulls him closer.

LENA

(to Peter)

Hey, why don't you go home and get some rest. You look like  
shit.

EMAIL

If you're still in my life during my final days, whether I'm young or old, please don't let me go slowly. If it's this hard for us to watch, it must be torture for him. The one thing I do know: I can't wait to get the hell out of here and back to civilization.

BINK

You writing to that guy? Jay?

LENA

Actually, it's Stan. Don't look at me like that, I don't know, I don't know what I'm doing.

A tapping is heard at the door.

LENA

That's weird, no one ever knocks around here.

Lena goes to the door.

LENA

Hey Smitty, how you doin' today?...No, it's Lena, you remember me... Um, yeah, this is 204... Okay, yeah then I guess I'm 204... no, you can't come in... because I said so... yeah, that's the way it is... I'm afraid so... you have a good day....

Lena returns to the chair. Her look is confused.

LENA

I think the guy next door has lost it. Smitty. He just mistook me for a hooker.

GEORGE

How much did he offer you?

LENA

Very funny.

PETER

Maybe he thought you were a male prostitute.

LENA

You know, I still can't believe you don't remember that. I can look on Youtube and see if someone posted the sketch. There's a whole world of cultural references from our childhood I could reacquaint you with.

PETER

Actually, that was Bink.

LENA

Ya know what? We just ordered some pizza from the Bootlegger. Why don't you pick it up?

PETER

Yeah, I'll do that.

BINK

You want me to come with?

PETER

No, I need to be alone for a while.

Peter hands over the iPod to Lena, puts on his jacket and leaves.

LENA

Wow. No comment. Listen, I don't blame you for not wanting to go see dad. I know it's hard. He looks horrible, he's suffering, he doesn't want to be here. But you need to go.

BINK

I know, I know it's just that... I stopped by the hospital, when he was there for that infection ya know? And he started talking to mommy, like she was there. He didn't even see me. It was so weird and I haven't been able to stop thinking about her. I haven't thought about her in so long, and now I can't stop thinking of her and I really miss her so much and now he's going to die and I just... I don't want him to die. I don't want him to suffer either, but... I don't want him to die.

LENA

Well, the fact is, he is going to die soon, and you need to see him. You don't have a choice: he needs you. Plus you'll never forgive yourself if you don't. Fuck what Peter said, that's between him and him. You go see dad for dad. Not me, not Peter. For dad. And yourself. Hell, maybe you'll get to say hi to mom while you're there. Why not?

SCENE 7

INT -- NURSING HOME ROOM -- DAY

George's head occasionally bobs as he unsuccessfully fights sleep. Lena writing an email. Peter is doing a crossword puzzle in the reclining chair.

Bink enters and sits on the arm of Lena's chair.

PETER

You know there were signs. There were other symptoms and I missed them. I avoided him as much as possible in this house, him and his criticism, and I missed... I should have seen it. So that must give you some satisfaction: I failed.

LENA

Peter...

PETER

Don't....

Peter gets on his knees and inspects the broken iPod.

LENA

Stan left me.

PETER

What?

LENA

Yeah, Stan left me. So... I'm about a million miles from cool right now.

PETER

Why?

LENA

He said I don't communicate with him.

PETER

But you never shut up.

LENA

He said that too. But I guess I don't listen.

PETER

(Standing, with iPod in hand.)  
(Sorry. I had no idea. I need to get another one of these before Jess and Christopher get here. Just tell them I had to run to the office for a while, okay?)

LENA

Listen Peter, I get these for next to nothing from a friend of mine in the city. Let me take Christopher's and I'll tell him I sent it in for a free upgrade. He'll never know the difference. It'll be FedEx'd here in 2 days.

PETER

Alright. Thanks. I'm still... I need to go for a drive.



BINK

No, I mean now. The way he is now. I don't like him like this.

PETER

*You don't like him like this?* Newsflash: this isn't about you. How would you like him to be? What would make you happy?

BINK

Stop, I don't mean like that.

PETER

You need to grow up fast and go see him, because this is it.

BINK

I don't think I can...

PETER

You can and you will.

BINK

What, because you said so? What are you in dad mode now?

PETER

When I need to be, yeah. If you're going to be in child mode. You need to go see him. He needs to see you. You're all he talks about, "Where's Bink, where's Bink? "And I am getting sick and goddamn tired of being the only adult in the room at all times. You need to grow up.

(to Lena)

And so do you.

(to Bink and Lena)

I can't do all this by myself. Thirteen goddamn years I've been the one living with him, with his constant criticism and judgement, while you two just play and have a good time.

Peter picks up Christopher's iPod.

PETER

Yeah, it's all about having fun, being cool, buying Christopher the coolest presents so he can see how fucking cool you two are compared to his dad. Well I can't afford to be cool... you were right, Jess left because she couldn't stand to be in this house anymore, if you want to know the truth. You left, you left, she left, but I couldn't leave! Someone had to fucking stay and take care of him. Thirteen goddamn years!

Peter throws the iPod at the floor and it shatters.

PETER

Did you talk about anything? I think he was talking to mom the other day when I was there.

LENA

No... we don't really talk.

PETER

Have you heard from Bink?

LENA

Just a couple of texts. He says he's gone to see him but that dad's always asleep. Which I'm not buying, because you know he never sleeps more than five minutes at a time.

PETER

I'm starting to get really pissed at him.

LENA

It's not like him. I can't tell him this, but I think dad's just waiting to die, but he won't go until he sees Bink.

PETER

That's a very... dramatic theory. Is that how the story you're writing ends?

LENA

What, you don't think so? It makes total sense. And I'll bet THAT'S why Bink won't come to see him, because he thinks this way he's keeping him alive.

PETER

You definitely got all the imagination in the family.

Bink enters, sheepishly.

PETER

Speak of the devil.

BINK

It's too depressing.

PETER

What is?

BINK

Just seeing him, just like it's not him there anymore.

LENA

Well, it's better than him screaming at us and smoke coming out of his ears and nostrils.

GEORGE

You tell him I wanna see him.

PETER

Okay.

SCENE 6

INT -- PETER'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Lena writing an email on her laptop.  
Peter enters from the hospital.  
Loosen's his tie. He walks to table,  
picks up Christopher's iPod.

EMAIL

Hello, stranger.  
Can't thank you  
enough for your  
last message. I  
know this -- us --  
is all happening  
really fast. But I  
just need to tell  
you I'm falling in  
love with you. I  
know we said we'd  
just be "Fuck  
Buddies". But I  
also promised  
myself I was going  
to be 100% honest  
this time, and I  
can't deny what I  
feel.

PETER

I can't believe  
Christopher forgot  
his iPod. He must  
be going nuts  
without it. How  
was dad when you  
left?

Lena highlights "tell you I'm falling  
in love with you... what I feel"  
writing again:

EMAIL

Say it again:  
thank you, my  
fabulous Fuck  
Buddy. Gotta run,  
mo' later

LENA

The same.

-- L

Lena saves the email as a draft, then closes the laptop.

PETER

That's what we're eventually going to do. But first, we have to get you strong enough so that you don't need round-the-clock help.

GEORGE

Stop with that already. You think I don't know? Christ, this is no way to live, like a goddamn baby. I can't do this anymore. What should I do?

PETER

Your options appear to be somewhat limited. You could try holding your breath.

Peter goes to George's side and pats him on the arm. George latches onto Peter's hand and holds it tightly. He won't let go, almost unconsciously.

Peter isn't sure what to do next. Sensing his father's need, Peter strokes George's hair.

PETER (CONT'D)

Here, let's fix you up a little.

Peter takes off George's glasses and begins grooming his father: he cleans the corners of his eyes with a cotton swab, combs his hair, cleans his glasses, and puts them back on him. Peter then pulls the chair to his father's bedside.

GEORGE

Where's Bink? Why hasn't he been by to see me?

PETER

He hasn't?

GEORGE

No, I haven't seen him since... what's today?

PETER

Today is Thursday.

GEORGE

Christ, I don't know what day it was now. He hasn't been around in a while.

PETER

I'm sure he's come by you were probably just asleep.

BINK

Yeah, but you're still married to Stan. And he... he's a really good guy. You've been -- he's stuck with you through a lot. A really long time.

LENA

Yeah, I know that. You know, it should be that simple, but it's not.

BINK

Yes it is. I mean I know it's not easy, but it's simple.

LENA

What do you know?

BINK

I know you're doing just what mommy did. It got hard. It got unpleasant. And no one wants to talk. Everyone just leaves.

LENA

Just listen to yourself. You little hypocrite. Remind me again, when was the last time you went to see pops? You haven't! And you know what, you'd better soon, before it's too late.

BINK

Yeah, well you should take your own advice with Stan. I'm outta here.

Bink exits.

SCENE 5

INT -- NURSING HOME ROOM -- DAY

GEORGE

*(he is talking to his deceased  
wife Nancy, who we do not see)*

*That's the thing, Nanc, no one tells you how to be a father.  
You told me I was gonna be one, I was the happiest man alive.*

Peter enters. Sets things down.

PETER

What are you talking about?

GEORGE

*(to Peter)*

Petey, It's time to go home. You hear me? I want to go home.

LENA

(relaxed)

Hey there... no, I just had to take care of something, I'll explain later. Are you around tomorrow morning... Okay, we'll talk... Good-night.

BINK

Is that the guy?

LENA

Yes, that's the guy. His name is Jay. We met on the flight out here last month. Very hot. An architect from DC.

BINK

Ahhhhh, a little long distance romance?

LENA

I wouldn't quite call it that just yet. I just really like him. There is the matter of his girlfriend though. Who he lives with.

BOY

Why would you want to get involved with someone who's got a girlfriend?

LENA

I'm not getting involved. We just -- I don't know, just connected, much as I hate that word. I actually like him more for telling me about the girlfriend. It like we're starting out 100% honest from the get-go, you know?

BINK

Why wouldn't you be 100% honest?

LENA

God, you are so adorable. I mean, you always start out being honest, then things start getting complicated...

BOY

Is that what went wrong with Stan? You weren't honest?

LENA

I wouldn't say that, but things did get complicated. But I've decided I'm going to be 100% honest about everything with this guy, every detail, every minutae.

BINK

But you said he lives with his girlfriend -- doesn't that make this complicated already?

LENA

Honestly, he's a gorgeous distraction from what's going on here right now, and I really need that.

Sound "Beep".

Exasperated, Peter hangs up.

BINK

Yeah, you're fucked alright.

LENA

What am I gonna do? God that was pretty fucking stupid.

BINK

I think it's safe to say you just took stupid to a whole new level.

LENA

You know it's really all your fault.

BINK

My fault?

LENA

Yeah, your fault. If you hadn't been distracting me with all those questions. If you'd actually been at the hospital today.

BINK

I was there.

LENA

Horseshit. You were not.

BINK

Yes I was.

LENA

No you weren't.

BINK

Was too.

LENA

Look, I was also IMing Petey, alright. He's been there all day and he said you were never there.

BINK

Well, he must have been in the bathroom or run out to his car cos I was there, dad was asleep, so I left.

Lena's phone rings. She checks to see who the caller is before answering.

BINK  
What?!?

PETER  
(incredulous  
that he's  
just been cut  
off)  
Goddamnit!

George stirs at Peter's outburst.

LENA  
(in disbelief)  
Oh. My. God. I can't believe I just did that.

BINK  
What?

LENA  
I was IMing Stan and Jay at the same time and I accidentally sent Jay's message to Stan.

Peter picks up his cell phone and dials.

BINK  
That's classsic! What'd you say?

Lena's cell phone rings.

Bink looks over Lena's shoulder to see her laptop screen -- which is now free of evidence. Lena closes the laptop.

Lena looks at her iPhone and ignores the incoming call.

BINK  
Who's that?

LENA  
It's just Petey. Basically Stan and I were discussing our divorce while I was engaging in a little cyber foreplay with the guy I guess I'm seeing.

Bink & Lena look at each other raise hand to mouth (in a "cover your burp" way)

LENA AND BINK  
(loudly in unison)  
OOPS!!!

LENA (O.S)  
*Hi, you've reached Lena at 917.722.3319. But you already knew that. Please leave a message, and I'll be in touch.*



LENA (IM, TO STAN)  
 (the message,  
 meant for  
 Jay, is  
 accidentally  
 sent to Stan)  
 I want to feel  
 you inside me.  
 Right now.

LENA  
 (utterly  
 distracted)  
 Oh. That's um,  
 interesting.

STAN (IM)  
 You what?

LENA  
 (realizing  
 her mistake)  
 Oh. Shit.

PETER (IM)  
 What did he say?

BINK  
 Uh, did you meet  
 him?

LENA (IM, TO STAN)  
 Sorry not thinking  
 straight. Gotta  
 go.

LENA  
 Did I meet who?

Lena quickly signs off from her IM  
 session with Stan.

BINK  
 The new roommate?

JAY (IM)  
 Still there, babe?

LENA  
 God, I am so  
 fucked right now.

LENA (IM TO JAY)  
 I gotta go. Call  
 you later.

Lena signs off from her IM session with  
 Jay.

PETER (IM)  
 Tell him that dad  
 broke the bed in  
 one of his  
 tirades!

LENA  
 (audibly, to  
 Peter's IM)  
 WHAT!?!

BINK  
 What happened?

LENA (IM, TO  
 PETER)  
 Gotta go.

Lena signs off from her IM session with  
 Peter.

Shit fuck damn!

LENA

PETER (IM)  
No, but just say  
that he was. I  
wanna hear what he  
says.

LENA (IM TO JAY)  
Sorry, I'm just  
also IMing my  
brother.

LENA  
So, what did you  
think of his new  
room?

STAN (IM)  
Well? Are you  
still there?

BINK  
Oh, um. It's  
alright.

LENA (IM, TO STAN)  
Yeah, sorry still  
here.

JAY (IM)  
That's hot. An  
incestuous  
threeway. Would  
that be an "eWay"?

LENA (IM, TO  
PETER)  
He thought the new  
room was alright.

STAN (IM)  
Did you even read  
my last message?

PETER (IM)  
What an asshole.  
Ask him what he  
thought of the new  
roommate.

LENA (IM TO JAY)  
Trust me, there  
will be no three  
way and there will  
be no incest. 1. I  
want you all to  
myself, and 2.  
ICKY.

LENA  
Did you meet his  
new roommate?

JAY (IM)  
Then all to  
yourself you shall  
have me. I want to  
touch you.

BINK  
I... didn't get to  
actually meet him.  
I guess he was  
getting his bath  
when I was there.  
No one really  
explained to me  
why he was moved.

STAN (IM)  
I'm not asking you  
to have a definite  
answer. Just  
wondering what I'm  
supposed to do  
here. We're  
scheduled to meet  
with the lawyers  
next week,  
remember?

LENA (IM TO JAY)  
Of course you're  
special. You're  
the only one who  
left me speechless  
afterward. Do you  
realize what an  
achievement THAT  
is? ;D

PETER (IM)  
Find out what the  
hell his problem  
is.

LENA (IM, TO STAN)  
Shit, that's  
right. Sorry. Can  
we do a conference  
call or something?

LENA (IM, TO  
PETER)  
He said he just  
came from there.

JAY (IM)  
And one of my  
proudest. And most  
frequently  
relived. If only  
we could... Say, how  
do you feel about  
train travel. has  
a nice  
Hitchcockian  
appeal, wouldn't  
you say?

PETER (IM)  
BULLSHIT. I  
haven't left the  
room since I got  
here. Ask him what  
he thinks of the  
new room dad was  
transferred to.

STAN (IM)  
We're supposed to  
go over papers,  
remember? I told  
you we could do  
this later if you  
wanted. But now  
we're kind of  
stuck with this  
date, unless we  
postpone til May.

LENA (IM TO PETER)  
He was  
transferred?

JAY (IM)  
Are you still  
there, or are your  
hands otherwise  
occupied due to  
the mere mention  
of train travel?

LENA  
Oh, just trying to  
talk to 4 people  
at once. Have you  
been to see dad  
lately?

JAY (IM)  
That stranger you  
seduced on a long  
flight recently.

STAN (IM)  
You can't stay  
indefinitely.

PETER (IM)  
Are you still  
there?

BINK  
Yeah, I was just  
there before  
coming here. He's  
the same. Slept a  
lot today.

LENA (IM TO PETER)  
I'm still here,  
cool your jets - I  
have 3 other  
conversations  
going.

LENA (IM TO JAY)  
Which one?

LENA (IM, TO  
STAN)  
Yeah I know that  
but I also can't  
exactly think  
straight right  
now, so please  
forgive me if I  
don't have a  
definite answer  
for you.

PETER (IM)  
Who's there?

LENA  
Oh did he? Like he  
slept for a long  
period, or nodded  
off a lot?

JAY (IM)  
Ouch. And I  
thought I was  
special :(

PETER (IM)  
Who are you  
talking to?

BINK  
No, he actually  
like slept slept.  
He looked really  
tired.

LENA (IM, TO  
PETER)  
Did I mention I  
HAVE 3 OTHER  
CONVERSATIONS  
GOING ON HERE???  
PLUS BINK'S HERE  
TALKING TO ME.

An IM pops up from Lena's estranged husband, Stan.

BINK enters the room.

STAN (IM)  
How goes it there?

BINK  
What's up?

LENA (IM, TO STAN)  
No change really.  
Just waiting. He  
wants to die.

LENA  
(looking up  
from laptop  
for a  
nanosecond)  
Oh, not much. I  
was just about to  
make some dinner  
here. You hungry?

LENA (IM, TO PETER)  
Speak of the devil, he just walked in. I'll have a word.

BINK  
No not really.  
What are you  
making?

STAN (IM)  
How much longer  
you think you'll  
be there?

PETER (IM)  
So what'd he say?

LENA  
I don't know. I  
have to check and  
see what there is.

LENA (IM, TO STAN)  
Don't know. Til he  
dies. Could be  
tomorrow, could be  
a month from now.  
Maybe longer.

LENA (IM, TO  
PETER)  
Haven't asked yet.  
Give me a sec.

An IM pops up from Jay, Lena's new lover.

JAY (IM)  
Hey.

PETER (IM)  
Well???

LENA (IM TO JAY)  
Who is this?

BINK  
Yeah, maybe I'll  
stick around. So,  
what are you  
doing?

LENA

She's fine. Her parents died in a car crash last year. But she married the quarterback and has 4 kids. Seriously. I'm not sure I even want to go to be honest. Why is it everyone who stays here has so many kids? Back home none of my friends have kids.

GEORGE

This is your home.

LENA

You know what I mean.

GEORGE

I wanna go with you.

LENA

Then... just close your eyes, and float out the door with me. You ready?

George closes his eyes.

LENA

Here we go...

Lena backs out of room. George smiles serenely. Oce outside the door, Lena sees Smitty rolling past in his chair. He is now in the final stages of Alzheimer's.

LENA

(waving cheerfully)

Hi ya, Smitty! How's it going?

Smitty just passes, Lena follows with her eyes.

LENA

It's me, Lena. You okay, Smitty?

SCENE 4

INT -- PETER'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Lena is at the kitchen table, IMing her brother Peter, who is with their father at the hospital.

SIMULTANEOUSLY, we can see in minimal light PETER at his father's bedside in the hospital, as he IMs Lena.

LENA (IM)

Hey -- you still at the hospital?

PETER (IM)

Still here. Bink was a no show again.

LENA

I don't know, maybe you have a good memory or two of me.

GEORGE

I got good memories of you.

LENA

(off-guard from his last  
statement)

Then just... try and think of that stuff. Try to... go  
someplace and stay there as long as you can.

LENA

Listen, you'll be happy to know that through all of this, the  
three of us are actually getting along. Well, better anyhow.  
We're... we're kinda friends, I guess. Maybe friends is the  
wrong word. Family. We're acting like family.

GEORGE

Lena, you tell me that, you make me the happiest man on  
earth.

LENA

Then you're the happiest man on earth, because I'm telling  
you that.

George barely musters up the strength  
to raise his arms to hug her. Lena goes  
to him and they share a long embrace.

LENA (CONT'D)

Great, now you made me lose it.

GEORGE

You made me lose it, girl. You wanna know what your mother  
told me about you?

LENA

Sure, what the hell?

GEORGE

She thinks you need to stop running away. No she didn't say  
running away. Just running. Be more still. Slow down. Smell  
the roses, that kinda of thing, I think that's what she was  
getting at.

LENA

Oh she said all that, did she? I'll sleep on it. Tell her I  
said hey. And I miss her. I tell her all the time but I can't  
tell if she's listening. Maybe you can get through. I need to  
get going, I'm having dinner with Lori Little, remember her?

GEORGE

Ah yeah, that tramp. How's she doin' now?

GEORGE

Yeah, helps kill the time. I shoulda done this years ago. She might not have left me.

LENA

I talk to her sometimes too. You know, you could talk to us.

GEORGE

Okay. Whaddya wanna talk about?

LENA

Off the top of my head... I'm not sure. Let me sleep on it.

GEORGE

Lena, what am I gonna do? This is no way to live, I don't want to be here. All these nurses, "Mr. George this, Mr. George that...", then when you need them they're never around, they never come when you call. Just the same old "Oh, Mr. George.." Christ, I just want this to end. And where's Bink? How come he ain't been around?

Lena pulls out her phone and begins writing a text message.

GEORGE

Whaddya doin' there?

LENA

Oh, I'm just... turning my ringer off.

GEORGE

You talk to him,  
tell him I need to  
see him, wouldcha  
do that?

TEXT MESSAGE

(from Lena)  
Where are you?  
He's still asking  
about you. Please  
come see him.

LENA

Of course I will. Look... as far as you being here and the staff... well, it is what it is. They're just doing their job. No one blames you for not wanting to be here. But, you gotta make the best of it. I don't know. I mean, you have two choices: You can either dwell on how lousy it is to be here and how much the staff annoys you, and how you can't just get up and walk out of here. Or, you can close your eyes and think of something that makes you happy. Think of Christopher -- he's coming to see you tomorrow, remember? Or... you used to talk about your travels in Europe after the war, how much you loved Barcelona.

GEORGE

(closing his eyes, dreamily)

*Barthelona...*



BINK

But at least you have your brother and sister. You need to be strong for each other and take care of each other.

SCENE 2

INT -- NURSING HOME ROOM -- DAY

GEORGE

*(in a pleasant, vulnerable tone  
of voice)*

You know, the past week killed me, Nance.

LENA

*(not looking up from her  
cellphone)*

Huh?

GEORGE

*I was exhausted just being lifted out of that bed. Imagine how the poor bastard lifting me felt.*

Lena looks around, realizes her father is not talking to her, yet there's no one else in the room. She begins texting a message as George speaks.

TEXT MESSAGE

*(from Lena)  
He's talking to  
himself AND being  
nice. Don't know  
which is scarier.*

GEORGE

*I can't fight any  
more. I'm tired of  
fighting. I'm  
tired.*

LENA

Who are you talking to?

GEORGE

*(to Lena)*

Your mother.

LENA

Do you actually see her?

GEORGE

No I don't see her! I'm not delusional.

LENA

But you talk to her?

I guess they don't have a proper medical staff at the place where he's been staying.

PETER

I'm bringing him back to the nursing home today. But, um, after that, it's just been a long week and I was thinking if you don't have plans tomorrow night we could...

BINK

(to a latchkey kids he supervises at a non-profit afterschool center)

No, it's not your fault. He... your dad is just... sick right now. And he's probably scared. And sometimes it's hard for people to face people they love when they're scared, you know? Because they're afraid then the other person will get scared.

LENA

I haven't spoken to him myself, I guess he's really weak. But I talked to Petey -- yeah, he's the older one -- and according to him, it just sounds like my dad's defeated. Resolve, acceptance, whatever the fucking last phase is.

PETER

Uh, no. No, he didn't mention it. Wait, Christopher's met him? Just how long have you been seeing this guy?

BINK

But he's thinking of you, every second. I promise you that. And he's missing you and as soon as he's ready and strong again, he'll come see you. He's just scared, that's all.

LENA

Look, I gotta go get ready, I'll call you when I get there. Yeah... yeah. Thanks. Me too. Bye.

Lena turns the phone off and sets it down. Then she holds it up and talks to no one.

LENA

I just... I mean I knew it was gonna happen, but... suddenly it's all happening so fast. I just wish I would have *felt* more sooner. You know? I never thought I could feel... I used to be so scared of him all the time. All the time. There were times I hated him. Now... God, you know, you realize people are people, just doing the best with what they got. Even your parents. You included. I wish I would have gotten that a lot sooner. I'm such an idiot sometimes. I miss you so much.

PETER

Yeah I know what we agreed yeah it's fine. I just don't think Christopher needs to see every little...

LENA

I don't know. We're clearly not getting back together. I mean I guess -- we haven't talked about it much. It feels like death, divorce. Which sort of makes this the perfect time I guess. 'Tis the season! No one wants to talk about it. Hell, no one wants to talk about anything.

A car horn is heard. Lena grabs her suitcase.

LENA

That's my cab. Call me if there's any change.

Lena exits.

Peter sits in darkness.

*George takes his usual spot, where he address his ex-wife Nancy when he speaks to her. After several seconds of consideration, he realizes he has nothing left to say; there's no use. Not now. He exits.*

INTERMISSION

ACT II

SCENE 1

Same as opening of ACT I:

PETER speaks on his Blackberry (using a bluetooth device), standing off to the side of the kitchen set.

LENA sits lifelessly in a plush chair, very downtown boho-chic casual. She speaks on her iPhone, on the neutral "mezzanine" between the two sets.

BINK talks on a dated flip-phone. He sits on the lip of the hospital room set.

GEORGE, still in a hospital bed and dressed in a hospital gown & glasses, thumbing through a newspaper. He speaks to his long-deceased wife, the mother of his children (Peter, Lena, and Bink).

PETER

(to his ex-wife, Jess)

Hey, it's me. Look, he's pretty bad. They tried to put his catheter back in, like last time. Only his prostate is enlarged and infected now, so they couldn't get it back in, so they had to transfer him to the hospital and treat it for the past week...

LENA

(on phone, to new love-interest, Jay)

LENA

Peter, I've been here two weeks. I *have* to go back. If something happens I'll be on the next flight back. But the doctors said 6-12 months, and I can't hang around that long like every day might be his last. He's been playing the "something could happen" card for 20 years.

PETER

It must be nice to live in a world where you don't have to go to bat for anyone but yourself; no one to take care of, no one to put ahead of yourself. Fine. If anything happens while you're gone, you'll have to live with that.

LENA

Alright, that's enough. You know, you chose to live with him, because he always said "something might happen". And for the past 20 years he's been perfectly self-sufficient; until now. So don't blame me if you feel like you wasted the past 20 years of your life, because *nothing happened*. That was your choice. Just like it was Jess's choice to leave you and NOT to live with it -- or him -- anymore either. Maybe if you tried putting *her* ahead of your fear of dad first...

PETER

You know what, just go then. Go run, hide, drink, go write about it, do whatever it is you do. I guess you married the perfect guy, Stan doesn't seem to mind sitting home waiting for you while you're off playing the rockstar.

Lena turns her back to Peter and dials her phone.

LENA

(into phone)

Hi, I called for a cab at 4643 Michillinda Lane about a half hour ago and it's still not here...

(back to Peter)

Alright, you wanna know the truth? Stan and I are separated. Yeah. A year now. So you can drop the "Isn't your life so fabulous" crap. You're not the only one dealing with stuff, Petey. It's called life.

PETER

I... I didn't know. You never said anything. Why didn't you say anything?

LENA

Since when do we talk? Don't tell Bink. Fuck it, tell Bink. I'll tell Bink.

PETER

Are you getting a divorce?

*So we just pretended the whole thing never happened and stayed together another... what, ten years? And then the injury and I had to retired early. No money coming in, but you're still spending, running around with those high society friends - drunks. Anything to be away from me. Petey and Lena getting older, they're always away from the house. It's just me there. You'd come in and we'd fight most nights, sometimes all night. Poor Bink, he was about twelve, he says to you one day, he says "why don't the 2 of you divorce? It'd be better than all this fighting." Three months later you divorced me. One month later, you drop dead. Didn't get to say goodbye. I still loved you. You were the mother of my children. I never even got to touch you the last 8 years of our marriage. I miss touching you so much. Come to think of it, I haven't touched another person in... Christ, a long time. Except Christopher. He gives me a hug now and then. He's a good kid. I'll be home soon, and I'll get a hug from my grandson. That's all I want. Six months, twelve months; it don't matter. I just want to be at home. Not in this place, with strangers. I wanna be home with my family.*

## SCENE 8

INT -- PETER'S KITCHEN -- DAY

LENA enters, suitcase in hand, ready to leave, digging through her laptop case. Peter enters, dressed and ready to leave for work.

PETER

Where are you going?

LENA

Home, remember? I told you I was leaving today. If my cab ever gets here.

PETER

You can't leave now. The facility called, his catheter came out. Something could happen.

LENA

His catheter came out last week, it's no big deal, right? They'll put it back in.

PETER

You're not taking this very seriously.

LENA

It's seriously not that a big deal, is it? Please don't make it one.

PETER

How can you just leave? This is not a good time.

BINK

(laughing)

Can you believe, he actually managed to dial off 9-1-1 when he said he was calling the police? God, do you think the operator heard him screaming? "You're all male prostitutes!"

PETER

I'm going back to bed. I need to phone the VA Administrator at 8 to make sure all the paperwork's done to pay for the facility.

LENA

I'll take care of it. You can spend some time with Christopher before school.

PETER

No, I got it. Get some sleep.

LENA

You're the boss. I'm gonna check out the hammock for myself. I haven't been in a hammock since... I don't think I've ever been in a hammock, come to think of it.

Lena waves behind her as she exits.

GEORGE

*I hate being alone. It's too quiet.*

BINK

Wow. So, like you really don't remember that hockey stick thing?

PETER

Well, apparently neither do you.

Peter exits.

GEORGE

*When I was a kid there were six of us, me and Johnny and the sisters. Then you and me, we had the three. Now... it's just too quiet.*

Bink exits.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

*I was thinkin' of that day we sat the kids down to tell them we were divorcing. I never wanted it. Sure we fought, but you don't walk away. But you couldn't take it -- take me -- anymore. So we sat the three of them -- no, it was just Petey and Lena, Bink was just a baby -- we sat the two of them down and told them. And they start crying. Even Petey, who I never seen cry. I didn't know what to do, the both of them crying like that.*

PETER

(to Lena)

Yeah, what are you talking about?

LENA

(to Peter)

You gotta be shittin' me. You seriously don't remember this? Okay, this is surreal. It was after one of your hockey games, and he was screaming at you in the car because I guess you didn't score enough hat tricks that day.

PETER

He never screamed at me.

LENA

I was out back in the pool, teaching Bink to dive...

(to Bink)

Tell me you don't remember *that*...

(back to Peter)

And I could hear him yelling at you from down the block. And it continues in the garage, and in the car, and into the house. And I don't know what you said to him but he went ballistic and took it out on your hockey sticks.

PETER

You're sure? I don't remember any of this.

LENA

Yes I'm sure! I'm a girl! I kept a diary, I remember everything. I have it all written down. How could you forget that?

BINK

Whoa, That's... I coulda... This is a trip...

LENA

Don't feel bad kiddo. I'm sure he did something shitty to you too. Though I can't imagine him ever getting mad at you.

There is a long silence as everyone tries to remember through their exhaustion.

LENA (CONT'D)

I'm just glad you spoke to the administrator. God, heaven has a VIP lounge for anyone who works in one of those places, if they have to go through that everytime a new patient checks in. I guess that's the anger or denial phase..

PETER

Dennis said Aunt Mary did the same thing before she died. And you remember Mary, she was the sweetest person on the planet.

Lena returns to her emailing, as the three of them continue speaking.

EMAIL  
The house stirs,  
gotta go -- mo'  
later.

PETER  
I thought I heard  
someone.

The email message is sent. Lena closes the laptop.

LENA

BINK  
I don't know about you guys, but I'm still a little freaked out about the other morning. Man, I don't think I've ever seen him *that* ...

PETER  
Yeah, you're right about that. I'd forgotten about his temper.

(to Lena)  
You sure knew how to set him off.

LENA  
What do you mean I set him off? *Life* set him off. He'd get mad at you all the time, and you were perfect.

PETER  
He never got mad at me! You're the one who always had to have the last word.

BINK  
Dude, when I was little, I used to think he turned into a monster when he got mad. Seriously, like when his face would get all distorted, he was like the Incredible Hulk, only not green. Remember that time he smashed my skateboards against the wall outside my bedroom window? I don't know what he was so mad about -- I was afraid he was going to hit the dogs with one, cos you know he hated those dogs.

LENA  
What are you talking about?

BINK  
The time he smashed my skateboards on the fence in the backyard.

LENA  
That wasn't you. That was Peter and his hockey sticks. You were four years old.

BINK  
Dude, what are you talking about?



EMAIL

(this appears  
as text,  
projected  
abovehead)

Thank you for the  
ecard, you naughty  
man. I needed  
that. I've been  
remembering so  
much childhood  
stuff... I'd  
forgotten that I  
used to get so  
anxious dealing  
with my father  
that I had little  
seizures. I only  
remembered because  
it happened for  
the first time in  
years the other  
day. I was  
actually on  
Dilantin - my  
first foray into  
Better Living  
Through  
Pharmaceuticals.

LENA

Hey kiddo, what  
are you still  
doing here?

Lena reads what she's written.  
Uncomfortable with revealing the effect  
her father had on her, she goes back  
and edits the email: highlights "had  
little seizures... Better Living  
Through Pharmaceuticals" and types  
over it "couldn't wait to grow up and  
move out."

BINK

I was too wiped to make it home. I crashed in the hammock.

LENA

I'm glad to know someone uses it. I'm afraid to touch  
anything out there. That backyard looks like a page in a  
Pottery Barn catalogue.

Peter enters in pajamas.

PETER

Oh really, what for this time?

BINK

God, you know, you can be such a dick.

Bink downs his shot and leaves. Peter paces, opens attache case, pulls out the arm strengthening ball and hurls it hard offstage. Lights out.

SCENE 7

INT -- PETER & GEORGE'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT

That same night, hours later. Lena (in pajamas) sits in the dark, face lit by the light of her laptop screen. LENA is writing an email.

Bink enters, still in same clothes.

PETER

Well, if and when you ever have kids, maybe you can teach me a thing or two. But my job is to protect him from all the ugliness in this world.

BINK

Dude, when I took him to the park the other day; seriously, you'd be surprise how aware he is...

LENA

(interrupting)

His grandfather -- who he has lived with all his life in this house -- is DYING. You gonna protect him from that? I mean this is ridiculous! I have to keep my bottle of vodka in my suitcase in my room so Christopher doesn't see? Every time I want a drink -- and under the circumstances, I think wanting a drink is not unreasonable -- I have to sneak it like a fucking junkie with a dirty little secret.

BINK

Look, you guys, can we just like chill?

PETER

Don't you ever get tired of "chillin' "?

BINK

Dude, what's your problem?

PETER

My problem is I'm the one who has to do everything! While you two sit there getting drunk, I'm the one who has to deal with the goddamn reality of all this!

LENA

Look, we're having A Drink. Not getting drunk, just having A Drink. That's what we do sometimes in *my* adultland. And we're *all* dealing with it, okay? The only reason you're the one "dealing" with all the administrative stuff is because you swoop in and take control of every detail before anyone else can have a say in anything. If you need help with anything, ask us! Otherwise, back off!

Lena downs her shot, grabs the bottle, and exits.

PETER

Nothing ever changes. Speaking of which, thinking about getting a job? Might be a good time, you're almost 30 now.

BOY

Dude, I'm 25, I've been running an afterschool center for latchkey kids for the past 4 years -- but since I volunteer and there's no pay I guess that doesn't count to you. Besides, I'm going back to school in the Fall.

PETER

(talking into bluetooth)

Peter Demas... Yes... Again, I apologize. I'm sure it won't happen again now that you've increased his meds. Okay. Thank you so much.

Peter eyeballs the vodka bottle.

BINK

Oh, I do have one bit of good news. The afterschool program I've been trying to get funding for, the daycamp...

PETER

(interrupting)

God, the past forty-eight hours feel like a vacation compared to the past week. So, how's the party here?

LENA

Have a drink with us, Peter. I bet you'd like it.

PETER

No I don't want a drink. I have to make dinner for Christopher.

BINK,

Hey, guys, let's not fight, alright? Everyone's tired.

PETER

Well, it's a good thing you don't actually have to go to work everyday on top of it all. Where would you find the time to party?

BINK

Dude, if you ever bothered listening, you'd know...

LENA

(to Peter, interrupting Bink)

Could you please stop playing the martyr? You know... you've got your life, we've got ours. Enough with the judgement already.

PETER

(erupting)

Look, Christopher will be here in half an hour. I don't need him coming home to a house full of drunks. This is adultland. We don't drink seven nights a week. We have responsibilities. We make sure our children have a happy and innocent childhood, as it should be.

LENA

What fucking planet did you grow up on? And what is it with you and *adultland*?

EMAIL  
 (this appears  
 as text  
 abovehead as  
 she writes)  
 Good Morning,  
 Last week has been  
 the longest year  
 of my life. I'll  
 tell you about it  
 later. Sooo...I'm  
 coming home the  
 end of this week  
 and then I'll come  
 back here next  
 month. Maybe we  
 can get away for a  
 little while when  
 all of this is  
 over. I've always  
 wanted to visit  
 DC...

BINK  
 You writing to  
 Stan?

LENA sends the message and closes the  
 laptop.

LENA  
 I need a cocktail. Anyone?

BINK  
 Sure. Do you have any more of that...

LENA  
 In my suitcase, outer pocket. Just bring the bottle in here.

Bink gives her an inquisitive look.

BINK  
 Why are you keeping it...

LENA  
 Don't ask.

Bink fetches a bottle of Grey Goose  
 Pear, takes 2 kiddie cups out of a  
 cabinet, and pours a shot into each. He  
 hands one to Lena. Peter's cellphone  
 rings.

PETER

Making friends?

LENA

He's sweet. I think I'm the first woman he's seen in a long time that's not a nurse or in a wheelchair.

Bink joins them in the hall.

PETER

I spoke to the administrator right before I came in. She said this is perfectly normal, how he's acting right now. And that the best thing for us to do is leave him alone for a couple of days and let the reality of the situation settle in, which... it is what it is. He can either be nasty and be alone, or he can be nice -- as nice as he's capable of -- and we'll be with him. They're also going to increase his sleep medication.

LENA

Let's get out of here.

Lena and Peter exit.

Bink lingers for a moment looking at his dozing father.

PETER

(to Peter and Lena)

Hey, wait up.

Bink exits.

GEORGE

*The only thing I wish is that the kids were closer. I don't expect them to be friends. Hell, I don't even expect them to like each other. Me and my sisters never got along. Except Mary. One out of six. But that's family. You don't have to like each other. But at least someone's always there. Not close, just close by. They're so scattered. Lena's in New York. Bink and Peter are both here, but if it weren't for me -- and Christopher -- they'd never be in the same room. I want them to be together more. Be a family.*

SCENE 6

INT -- PETER & GEORGE'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Zombie-like, Lena is emailing on her laptop. Bink is preparing a sandwich, and Peter is cleaning.

GEORGE  
 (to Peter)  
 You, empty your  
 pockets. I SAID  
 EMPTY YOUR GODDAMN  
 POCKETS! You're  
 the worst of all.  
 My first born. The  
 one I trusted... You  
 got all my money,  
 everything's in  
 your name. You  
 happy now?! I want  
 you to get me a  
 car, get me a  
 goddamn plane, and  
 get me the hell  
 outta here. You  
 hear me? I'm your  
 father, and you do  
 as I say, you  
 worthless good for  
 nothing. My son.  
 That's a laugh.  
 You think you're  
 the man, you're  
 nothing but a  
 coward, always  
 trying to play the  
 big boss.

TEXT MESSAGE  
 (from Lena)  
 Time 4 me 2 fly...

Lena grabs the bag of prescriptions and  
 crawls stealthily to the door so her  
 father can't see, then stands.  
 Realizing she left her shoes behind,  
 she motions to get Peter's attention,  
 and indicates for him to toss her shoes  
 to her. Peter gathers the shoes and  
 brings them to Lena, just outside the  
 room. She puts shoes on.

LENA

I don't know where he's getting the energy, but he's like a  
 little kid on a sugar rush -- he's just getting more and more  
 wound.

An old man. SMITTY (whom we never  
 actually see) in a wheelchair rolls by.  
 Lena waves to him as he passes.

LENA (CONT'D)

Good morning Smitty!

TEXT MESSAGE

(from Bink)

Fred Garvin, Male Prostitute

Bink and Lena suppress laughter.

PETER

(whispering)

Who?

TEXT MESSAGE

(from Lena)

Old SNL sketch, Dan Ackroyd, Margot Kidder

TEXT MESSAGE

(from Peter)

How do you know that?

TEXT MESSAGE

(from Bink)

Comedy Central. I  
watch a lot of TV

TEXT MESSAGE

(from Lena)

Wow! I've been  
called a lot of  
things, but that's  
a 1st.

Unable to get the phone up to his ear,  
George slams it down onto the bed,  
shakes his head in disgust and closes  
his eyes



## TEXT MESSAGE

(from Lena)

Can't wait 2 hear what he has 4 Petey.

PETER enters the room, new clothes. He carries attache case & squeezey arm-strengthening ball. Bink moves from the chair opposite the bed to the recliner. Peter takes the vacant seat.

PETER

(to Lena)

Did you get any sleep?

Bink makes "shhhh" gesture, then begins texting. Peter's phone now makes its unique "message received" sound. Which he silences.

## TEXT MESSAGE

(from Bink)

He cant see her,  
he thinks shes not  
here - its the  
only way he wont  
yell at her

GEORGE

(opening his  
eyes,  
thinking  
Peter is  
talking to  
him)

No, I didn't get  
any goddamn sleep.

## TEXT MESSAGE

(from Lena)

Way to go, Peter.

GEORGE

I'm gonna call the  
police, I'm gonna  
press charges that  
my three good-for-  
nothing kids are  
holding me against  
my will.

George fumbles for his cell phone,  
struggles dialing.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I got three traitors, that's what I got. What a lousy lot you turned out to be. You're all male prostitutes, the three of yous.

Peter, Lena, and Bink are all stunned out of their exhaustion with the last statement. Bink begins texting. Lena and Peter reach for their phones and read message.

George opens his eyes. His anger is wide awake.

GEORGE

(to Bink)

You, empty your pockets. EMPTY YOUR POCKETS! Give me your keys, give me your money, Get me out of here. You, you're the worst of all. Do you know how much money you cost me? You bum.

BINK

Um, you should try and calm down, the doctor said your blood pressure...

GEORGE

Don't you talk back to me, you just shut up, ya hear? All these years, "I need money for this, I need money for that". All these years, I been giving you money. Paying for your groceries. At your age. Never once being a man. Was I ever a fool.

BINK

I'm going back to school, and you asked me to be around to drive you...

GEORGE

Oh, you think you were doing me a favor, huh? You cost me good. Lending you money. Ha, lending. You've never paid me back a dime. Not one dime.

George shakes his head in disgust and closes his eyes. Bink and Lena begin an exchange of text messages, which appear over their respective heads as they write and react. After Boy's phone makes its unique "message received" sound, he silences it.

TEXT MESSAGE

(from Lena)

He's been like this since 11pm. And getting worse.

TEXT MESSAGE

(from Bink)

Yes u had 1 helluva night

TEXT MESSAGE

(from Lena)

Please smother me with a pillow if I EVER sound like him.

TEXT MESSAGE

(from Bink)

A nightmare of epic drama

More texting.

TEXT MESSAGE

No, it's 4 me.

Lena closes her eyes. George sits up and gets out of bed, as casually and easily as before.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

*Christ, why can't I ever say anything nice to the kids? I don't want to be like this. I don't want them to remember me like this. But... I've never been able to control my temper. God, they musta hated me. That time, after Petey's hockey game. He was this close to getting a hat trick, this close. He was the best one out there. Always, he was the best player they had. And I just yelled at him the whole way home, like a jerk. Kid played his heart out, every game. All I ever did was criticize him. We get in the house, and it's the only time Petey ever raised his voice, I guess he'd just had it. Remember what he said? He said "Leave me alone, you big fuck!" I never heard him swear before, and that's what he says. Was I ever... I went after him. And he's running away from me, then you start screaming and chasing after me. And he locks himself in his room. I nearly knocked that door down. What did I do? I went and got all his hockey sticks, went outside and smashed them all, right outside his window so he'd see. Christ. I never been so ashamed of myself as that day. And I never apologized. We just never talked about it. Why couldn't I say I was sorry, or just say "good game"?*

SCENE 5

INT -- NURSING HOME ROOM -- DAY

It is the next morning. George sleeps in his bed, Lena begins to sit up on the floor, peeking around the chair to see her father. BINK enters, carrying his skateboard.

BINK tosses LENA a small brown paper bag. She dumps out several prescription bottles and inspects. Boy sits in the chair opposite the bed.

BINK

(to Lena)

So how long...

LENA

(whispering softly)

Shhhhh... If you wake him up I'll fucking kill you. Don't tell him I'm here, or he'll start screaming at me.

GEORGE  
 (struggling  
 with cell  
 phone)  
 Listen you, you  
 call Petey right  
 now, tell him I  
 want him to get  
 over here, and get  
 me the hell out of  
 here, you hear me?  
 I'm your father  
 and you'll do as I  
 say. This game has  
 gone on long  
 enough. I'm  
 through with you  
 people. You get  
 him over here, and  
 get me the hell  
 out of this place.  
 I want to go home,  
 you hear me! Get  
 Petey now!

TEXT MESSAGE  
 HELP! When U come  
 2morrow, under  
 table next 2 his  
 chair does he  
 still keep his  
 tupperware of  
 meds?

George picks up cellphone, but can't control his hands and is unable to dial. He violently slams the phone onto the bed in frustration. Lena's phone makes a unique "message received" sound. She silences it and silently reads the incoming text, moving from the chair to lie down next to it, where she did the previous night. She removes her shoes and writes a new message.

TEXT MESSAGE  
 PLEASE stop by  
 house and bring  
 everything ending  
 in P-A-M:  
 Diazepam,  
 Lorazepam,  
 Temazepam.  
 EVERYTHING.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
 Lena, you still  
 here girl?

LENA  
 (too  
 exhausted to  
 fight)  
 Yeah, I'm still  
 here.

GEORGE  
 The three of yous  
 are gonna regret  
 this.

LENA

Grey Goose pear.

PETER

Pear *vodka*?

LENA

Wow, you really don't get out much.

Lena downs her drink and sets the mug down.

LENA (CONT'D)

You know what was weird? Seeing him without his hat. I can't even remember the last time I saw him without that hat on. Oh well, I'm outta here. Wish me luck, gentlemen...

PETER

You're gonna drive now? After you've been drinking?

LENA

One drink. I don't think it's a problem. Tell Christopher I'll see him in the morning.

Lena exits.

BINK

So I don't remember if I told you last week, with everything happening with Daddy, but I got this grant for the afterschool program I proposed, which is hella cool, cos now we can...

PETER

Yeah, I need to run out to the car and get my dry cleaning. I think the Rangers are playing, should be just starting, if you wanna put that on.

Peter exits.

SCENE 4

INT. -- NURSING HOME -- NIGHT

It's worse than the night before. Lena is sitting in the reclining chair, writing a text message.

PETER

This is adultland, we speak differently around children.

Lena looks about for children.

PETER (CONT'D)

(Back into phone)

No we're good. See you soon. Love you too, little man.

BINK rolls in on a skateboard, carrying a BIG GULP cup. He flips it the skateboard up, sits on kitchen counter.

LENA

(gingerly)

For chrissake Peter, he's 11. He knows what wine is. It is legal.

(beat)

Does he like the iPod I got him for his birthday?

PETER

Yeah, yeah, he's never without it. He'd shower with it if he could. You spoil him.

BINK

Whassup?

LENA

Oh, just preparing for my shift at the funny farm. I could use a drink first. Want one?

BINK

Sure.

Lena grabs a small cartoon-covered plastic child's mug and boy's Big Gulp and exits. She returns a moment later, her mug full, and hands Bink his Big Gulp.

There is a long silence as everyone settles into their exhaustion.

BINK (CONT'D)

He looks pretty bad.

PETER

He's not going to make 12 months.

Bink takes a sip from his straw.

BINK

Whoa, this is pretty good! What is it?

## SCENE 3

INT -- PETER &amp; GEORGE'S KITCHEN -- EARLY EVENING

Peter sits at kitchen counter,  
exhausted, squeezing a forearm  
strengthening ball.

Lena enters, sets her laptop down, and  
leans against a wall in exhaustion.

PETER

Hope you had a nice relaxing day. I've been with the center  
administrator and bankers all afternoon straightening out his  
affairs.

LENA

Look, Petey since I'm here...

PETER

Peter. My name is Peter.

LENA

Fine. *Peter*. Look, I'm *here*. What do you need me to do?  
Christ, give me something to do. I need something to do.

PETER

Don't worry about it, everything's being taken care of.

Peter's bluetooth rings, he answers.

PETER (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Where are you two?... I'm here with Lena. Bink's probably off  
playing with skateboarders somewhere. Put Christopher on...  
Hey big guy! How's my buddy?

(pause, then to Lena)

Jess is bringing Christopher over now, do you want them to  
get anything from the store?

LENA

Tell 'em to pick up some wine.

Peter quickly covers the mouthpiece of  
the phone

PETER

(to Lena)

You don't know how to talk to children!

LENA

I was talking to you...

GEORGE

(in a kind tone of voice)

Heya Lena, you still here?

Lena puts down the laptop, then crawls to the floor, behind his bed where audience can't see.

George begins drifting off to sleep. Lena peeks her head out to see if he's asleep. A few peaceful moments pass.

LENA

(relieved to hear calm in his voice)

Yeah, I'm still here.

GEORGE

(the anger back in his voice, in full force)

You think this is a game? You having fun? You got what you want now. You got all my money. You people... you got what you wanted. Get Petey here now.

LENA

I left a message, his phone's turned off. He's probably sleeping. You should try to sleep. He'll be here in the morning.

A few silent moments pass. Lena stealthily sits up, closes laptop, and lies back down.

GEORGE

(again in a kind voice)

Lena... you still here? You here girl?

Lena's eyes are wide open. But she doesn't answer this time. She covers her eyes with her hands and disappears behind the bed. Non-eventfully, George lowers the covers and sit up on the side of the bed, then simply stands, as if it's any other day. He is free of pain and paralysis.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

*I know, I know I said some things I probably shouldn't have said to her. She was the quiet one when she was little, yeah. Always wanted to do everything for herself. That time you were giving her a bath and your sister called. So you took the phone and I went to wash Lena's hair. Three years old, she wouldn't have it. "Don't touch me! I can do it myself!" She never wanted me to touch her. The boys too, never wanted to hug me when they were little...*



GEORGE (CONT'D)

Lemme tell you somethin'... You people must think I'm a real idiot. And you, still living like you're a kid, running around, fancy friends. Everything you try to do. What have you done? Huh? What have you ever done? Where are you now? You haven't gotten nowhere. You call yourself a writer? What have you ever written, huh? How come I never seen anything you written? Who reads you? It doesn't matter, what you write, no one cares. Where's Petey?

LENA

He'll be here tomorrow.

GEORGE

Get him here. You tell him to get over here. Call him and tell him to get over here and take me home right now, you hear me! Petey will do the right thing.

LENA

Look, he needs some sleep. I'm here, there are nurses out there if you need anything.

GEORGE

Don't you talk back to me. Get him on the goddamn phone, you hear me!?

Lena dials. As she waits, she moves to the reclining chair off to the side of George's bed, where he can't see her. She pulls out her laptop and opens it.

LENA

(into phone)

Hey it's me, um, call me as soon as you get this. Thanks.

(to George)

He's not answering...

George shakes his head in disgust. Lena begins writing an email on her laptop.

GEORGE

Well I don't care what you gotta do, you get me the hell outta here, you hear me? Call Petey again.

EMAIL

(the text is projected  
overhead)

Hey you,

Well, I made it here. Too wiped to write much now. But he's bad. Wish you were here right now -- no, wish I were wherever you are right now. Anywhere but here. - L

BINK

Just... relax, she's coming.

They both turn their attention to the television.

Lena enters, carrying 2 large bags filled with takeout food. She sets the food on the counter and begins to sort through it.

LENA

Hi! Hope you're hungry, I stopped at The Bootlegger. When was the last time you ate there? Do you want some veal parmigiana?

GEORGE

What I want is for you to sit down and shut up. I wanna tell you something, I don't know what kinda game you're playing, but it's gonna end. You hear me? I'm putting an end to it right now.

LENA

(taken completely off-guard)

I just got here, I don't know what...

GEORGE

Christ. You. Named after my mother. You disgrace her name. After all I done for you. You must think I'm the biggest fool in the world.

BINK

(to Lena, picking up his skateboard)

Hey, I gotta run, I gotta be up stupid early in the morning. I'll come by after, though. Sometime in the afternoon.

(to George)

See you tomorrow.

Bink exits.

LENA

(to Bink)

Good to see you too!

(to George)

Do you want me to fix you a plate?

GEORGE

You shut up and listen, you hear me? I'm not done. Sit down!

Lena obediently sits in the chair opposite the bed.

We're telling him it's just til he gets his strength back, then he can come home... That's all he keeps saying, "I wanna go home, When can I go home?" But, he's not coming home.

GEORGE

*Lena took a picture of me last time she was here and showed me, they got these new instant digital cameras now you can see the picture right away. "Christ" I said. "Look how old I am". She asked me "when did you first realize you'd gotten old?" I told her, "Let me tell ya. I watch these guys on TV, these college ballplayers fumble & whatnot, and I wanna get up and show 'em how it's done. And I try to stand and I can't get outta my chair. You never feel old in your head. You're just old. People treat you like you're old. You look in the mirror, you see an old person. You think "Christ, is that what I look like?" You're lucky you never had to watch yourself grow old. You have no idea.*

SCENE 2

INT -- NURSING HOME ROOM -- NIGHT

Bink sits in a reclining chair off to the side of the bed, playing a game on his cellphone with disinterest. His father George is propped in the hospital bed (and leaning slightly to his left) watching TV also with disinterest. His hat (old but perfect condition) sits atop a bedpost. There is an empty chair opposite and facing the bed.

GEORGE

Where in the goddamn hell is she?

With only the use of his forearms, George struggles to pick up his cell phone, lying near his hand, dials it, then holds it to his ear with great difficulty. After a few moments, he drops it back down.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

She's still not answering.

BINK

You know she's on her way, you already left 3 messages. Just relax, she's probably stuck in traffic. There's a lot of construction on the freeway plus it's rush hour.

GEORGE

Goddamnit I don't like this. I got something to say to her.

LENA

Look, I'll be there tomorrow. I'll pull the graveyard shift and stay with him overnight so he won't call you guys at all hours and you can get some sleep.

BINK

I have to warn you, he's... he's not really himself. He's saying all sorts of stuff. Yeah like "cruel truthfulness", I don't know what else to call it.

PETER

(to doctor)

No, no. What you're saying makes sense now. It, it just didn't occur to me. I should've seen it. I just thought it was him getting older, the MS getting worse.

LENA

I'll bring my laptop, get some writing done. Just um... yeah.

PETER

But when he started forgetting... I should've known something was wrong. Is it operable?

LENA

Excellent! Slumber party at the funny farm! I'm sure it'll be fine.

GEORGE

*All this time, I think the MS is gonna be the end of me, hell, they told me it would be the end of me in 8 years and that was 50 years ago. They said they could operate, try and remove it, then I gotta undergo chemo... Christ. I can't live like that. Not now. I was thinkin'... At my age, my body with the MS. What am I gonna do? Chemo. What kinda miserable goddamn ending is that? The doctors say 6 - 12 months. What am I gonna do?*

BINK

Of course him being him, he's more mad than anything else. I know this is gonna sound bad, but it's like sort of cool. He was always so mad all the time when we were kids and it reminds me of him then. Yeah, it's like he's his old self.

LENA

When we were little, before you were even born, he was a lot more protective of me, being a girl. Which pissed me off, cos Petey had so much more freedom just because he was a boy. Even though I was smarter.

PETER

I'm having him transferred to a long-term care facility on Wednesday.

LENA

Did you get the results of the catscan?

BINK

They found these masses in his brain...

PETER

If you think you can leave your glamorous life for a while, it might be a good idea for you to be here.

BINK

They're gonna run another test.

LENA

What kind of masses?

PETER

...an MRI, which confirmed the diagnosis, so he's been in the hospital all week.

GEORGE

*Cancer. Can you believe that?*

PETER

Bink's been staying with him during the day since he doesn't actually work for a living. I'm with him at night as much as I can, until Jess drops off Christopher.

LENA

No, it'll be just me. Stan can't get away.

PETER

But then dad just calls me all night, asking "when ya gonna be here?..."

BINK

"...when ya comin' back?..". Yeah, I think he's scared. Ya know he never turns the light out.

PETER

So... oh, hold on a second, there's another call coming in  
 (Peter uses call waiting )  
 (device on his Blackberry)  
 This is Peter Demas, ... oh yeah, thanks for returning my call... Other symptoms?...

BINK

It'll be good to see you. It's a little crazy here. I haven't slept. I know Petey hasn't slept.

PETER

(to doctor)

He has been kind of forgetful lately, which he never was. His mind's always been razor-sharp.

ANONYMOUS FEMALE (O.S.)

*At the tone, please record your message. When you have finished recording, you may hang up, or press one for more options. To leave a callback number, press five.*

Sound "Beep".

Sound of The Clash "Spanish Guns" as if heard thru a cell phone.

BINK (O.S.)

(pre-recorded voice, mocking  
AOL's "you've got mail!"  
prerecorded voice)

*You've got Bink!*

Sound "Beep".

PETER

Hey it's me, it's your brother. Listen, give me a call when you get this.

LENA

Hi doll. Listen, Petey called me this morning, which was odd enough, but then he left a message, which is borderline surreal.

BINK

Yeah, it's about daddy. Um, well it started...

PETER

The last time he drove himself, he fell in the driveway when he was getting out of the car.

LENA

The past few months?

PETER

He called me and I called 911 and got an ambulance over there.

LENA

I talk to pops every week, he hasn't said anything!

BINK

So Petey'd come home from work and find him like that, completely slumped over.

PETER

He's been leaning more and more to his side, and he's too weak to straighten himself out.

BINK

Do you know what they're testing for?

Writer's note: there is much use of text messaging, IMing, & emailing used here to convey several simultaneous communications. The action onstage does not stop if/when the text is being written/projected/etc. The only exception to this is when Lena edits her emails (sometimes deleting, sometimes rewriting items). At these moments, we want the audience's focus to be on her shaping the "truth" she is presenting. EMAILS, TEXT MESSAGE, and IM dialogues will be projected on a backscreen during the action onstage and above the respective sender's head (like a thought bubble). Texts appear and disappear as the follow-up message replaces it. Entire threads of IMs remain visible for the entirety of the conversation.

The set is multi-level consisting of three locations: the hospital room (where George remain permanently onstage and in bed -- except when speaking to his deceased wife, Nancy); the kitchen; and a neutral space to allow actors to flow in and out of locations. Each actor additionally has their own "spot" during the telephone moments.

## ACT I

### SCENE 1

PETER, 38, very straight corporate type, paces about. He speaks on his Blackberry (using a bluetooth device), standing off to the side of the kitchen set.

LENA, 37, spins about casually in a plush chair, very downtown boho-chic casual. She speaks on her iPhone, on the neutral "mezzanine" between the two sets.

BINK, 25, looking like a 15 year old skaterboy, talks on a dated flip-phone. He sits on the lip of the hospital room set.

GEORGE, 72, dressed in a hospital gown & glasses, thumbing through a newspaper. He speaks to his long-deceased wife, the mother of his children (Peter, Lena, and Bink).

LENA (O.S.)

(pre-recorded voice)

*Hi, you've reached Lena at 917.722.3319. But you already knew that. Please leave a message, and I'll be in touch.*

Sound "Beep".

ANONYMOUS FEMALE (O.S.)

*You have reached the voice mailbox of...*

PETER (O.S.)

(pre-recorded voice)

*Peter Demas.*