*ACT 1*

Scene 1

Lights up. Our stage is bisected by a wall into the first floor living room and kitchen of an east coast, victorian home. in the kitchen, **sr,** there's A door **dsr** that leads to a garage. **us** of the door sits a stove. a refrigerator covered with assorted magnets and photos, and a wooden table with four wooden chairs. on the table sits A metal tool box, several glass jars full of assorted magic markers, #2 pencils and pens, a roll of masking tape and several envelopes containing assorted nuts, bolts and screws. **usc,** on the counter by a sink sits an old box radio that plays count basey big band type music. aside from a coffee maker, toaster, and other assorted kitchen bound items and decor, the room is characteristic of modest living. **sl** is the living room. It's drab and lived-in but quite welcoming and cozy. Equipped with a once elegant couch **dsc** with a newer tv on an old tv stand, an equally worn recliner chair **sl**, and a wooden table **usr** that's covered with misplaced electronic parts, wiring, several tools and four wooden chairs. there's a wooden hutch **dsr** with glass doors. Numerous ornamental elephants line the shelves. the rooms essence speaks for itself. it's a friday afternoon during the summer of 1995.

**DONALD GOODWIN**, 60, with unkept, graying hair and a walking cane propped by his side, wears a white T-shirt with blue pajama bottoms under a tattered brown robe and a pair of worn and tired looking bath slippers that seem to have become a part of him. He sits at the kitchen table peering through bifocals that rest uncertainly on the bridge of his nose, leafing through a small, journal like book. After stopping on one page, he looks to the stove, rises and crosses to it where he removes a small black porcelain elephant from behind. After a long stare, he crosses and places the elephant on a shelf above the sink and sits back at the table where he resumes leafing through the journal. After a few beats, he puts the journal in his robe pocket, grabs a screw driver from his tool box and proceeds to remove the screws and backing from a small hand held radio. His dexterity and movements are slow and impaired due to a stroke he suffered several years ago that almost took his life. Although his speech is not what it used to be, it isn't difficult to make out every word in Donald's well thought out yet restrained and deliberate delivery. He hums along to the music coming from the box radio as best he can.

**LUCILLE GOODWIN, aka LUCY,** 50, Donald's wife, enters with two paper shopping bags. A lifetime of fell-short dreams and frustration envelopes her entire being. She wears an oversized, straw beach hat with an insignia of a far off, exotic place she'd rather be, a conservative, one-piece grey swimsuit with ill matching white shorts, a pair of cheap, uncomfortable sandals and a pair of even cheaper sunglasses that don't fit quite right. A glob of suntan lotion sits behind each ear as remnant of a hot, gossip filled day at the beach. Lucy places the bags on the counter and turns the radio to a NEWS ONLY STATION. Donald shifts in his chair, drops a tired look in her direction and goes back to the radio. Out of the first bag, Lucy unloads groceries into the cabinets and refrigerator. At one point in passing, she places a half-dozen, fresh peeled shrimp and a jar of cocktail sauce on the table in front of Donald. Out of the second bag, she places a dozen empty Gerber Baby Food jars on the table. As she does, Donald takes and stacks them in a pyramid formation. Lucy watches his childish display for a beat then loudly folds the paper bags, shoving them in the space between the refrigerator and counter where other bags have found an indefinite home. She exits angrily to the garage. Donald places the screws from the radio into a jar, labels it with masking tape and a marker and closes the lid. Lucy enters with her sunglasses now on top of her head and with a can of Schlitz beer. She cracks the beer and places it on the table just out of Donald's reach. She goes to the sink, turns on the water, ties on an apron, grabs a glass and stands with a finger under the running water, waiting for it to cool.

Donald

Ey, Lou?

Lucy ignores him, fills her glass and drinks it in several, thirsty gulps.

DONALD

Thirsty, huh?

She slams the glass in the sink, grabs a pot and slams it on the stove.

DONALD

M'not deaf, you know.

Lucy marches to the table and begins gathering the envelopes and jars. They both grab a same envelope and wrestle with it until nuts scatter and dance to a stop on the table and floor. Pause. As Donald begins gathering nuts off the table, Lucy, wanting to scream, runs her fingers through her hair, ending up with her sunglasses in her hand. She goes to the RADIO, turn the volume up and proceeds to make a Manhattan.

Radio announcer (V.O.)

...enthusiasts not only show their true passion for the sport by spending a life time learning the ins and out of racing but then, by way of tradition, name their vessel, which they've come to know better than any woman, after a woman. If it were up to me, I'd want to name my boat after something like, say, oh I don't know...an adjective maybe?

Lucy TURNS OFF the RADIO, puts the Manhattan and a plate on the table and ties a bib around Donald's neck.

DONALD

S'how was the water? Red tide's in again.

She fills the pot with water and sets it back on the stove.

DONALD

Say it's the bad, Lou. Worse they ever seen.

Donald dunks a shrimp in the cocktail sauce and pops it in his mouth. Lucy drops a straw in his Manhattan and slides the beer within his reach.

DONALD

No ice?

Lucy storms to the fridge and grabs an ice cube tray. One pops out. Donald watches it dance to a stop on the floor as Lucy slams ice into Donald's Manhattan and returns the tray to the freezer. Donald swirls the ice cubes with the straw and takes a sip.

DONALD

Ahhhh...

Lucy grabs a dog food bowl off the floor and slams it on the counter.

DONALD

(Referring to a Gerber jar)

Where'd you find so many?

She grabs a can of food and can opener.

DONALD

They're perfect.

She opens the can, plops the food in the bowl, slams the opener in the sink and drops the bowl on the floor.

DONALD

(Calling out for him)

Jax?

Lucy crams the dog food can into an overflowing trash can under the sink then exits to the garage with the bag.

DONALD

(Attempting to WHISTLE)

Here, Jax. Here, boy.

Donald resumes filling jars with assorted nuts and bolts. Lucy enters with the mail. She places a TV Guide on the table in front of Donald, puts a liner in the trash can and exits to the living room. Donald puts the jars aside and flips through the TV Guide.

DONALD

Mmm...Matlock.

Lucy storms in and stops, eyeing Donald. He feels her eyes upon him and sets the TV Guide aside, face down, still open to the days programming. He reaches for his Manhattan, struggles with the straw and takes a sip.

LUCILLE

I want a divorce.

Donald sets his drink aside.

LUCILLE

DID YOU HEAR ME?!

Donald takes a big sip from his beer.

LUCILLE

I can't...do this anymore, Donald.

DONALD

Lou...

LUCILLE

(Moving to the fridge)

Don't! All right? Just...

Lucy grabs a Chicken a la' King from the freezer. Slamming the door shut;

LUCILLE

-DON'T!

She drops it in the pot on the stove and puts bread in the toaster

DONALD

Okay.

LUCILLE

No, Donald! It's not! It's not okay.

She starts going through the mail.

DONALD

(Aside)

Okay.

Donald removes the straw from his drink, sips it and gets an ice cube lodged in his mouth, crunching it.

LUCILLE

(Eventually looking to him)

I need, I need...to fee...to be...I'm a woman, Donald and I...for crying out...

She grabs a rag and goes to him.

LUCILLE

Straw! Straw Donald! Where is your god damn straw?

Donald picks up the straw.

LUCILLE

Jesus-and chew with your God damn mouth closed!

DONALD

Chewing.

LUCILLE

Please!

DONALD

With my mouth closed.

LUCILLE

How many times do I have to tell you? No straw, no drink.

Lucy begins grabbing at things on the table and slamming them back down.

LUCILLE

And what in God's-What have I-Look at this! Look at it!

Lucy reels to the sink, holds the counter and stares at the floor.

DONALD

You're a woman, Lou.

LUCILLE

Yes.

Pause.

LUCILLE

You know what, Donald?

DONALD

I know what you need.

Lucy regains composure and wets a rag.

DONALD

Lou? What day is it?

LUCILLE

Friday.

DONALD

Lee's coming today.

LUCILLE

I know. She's on her way from the airport right now.

Lucy crosses and wipes the table down.

LUCILLE

She's taking the train, if you can believe it.

DONALD

I believe it.

LUCILLE

All the way from the city.

DONALD

That's good.

LUCILLE

She's going to be in a God damn tizzy when she gets here. You know how she feels about trains.

DONALD

That's not good.

LUCILLE

Well, she's the girl who "hates to travel".

DONALD

Not so good at all.

LUCILLE

But that's no excuse for not visiting your parents. I can't believe it's been this long. I don't...I'm not sure I...like it was only yesterday when she packed up and...

Lucy breaks a bit but rebounds fast.

DONALD

Is Jim coming too?

LUCILLE

I told her to call and I'd come get her but she insisted.

DONALD

I like, Jim.

LUCILLE

And you know she's going to hold it over me the entire time she's here.

DONALD

I'll bet Jim likes trains.

LUCILLE

Not Jim, it was John. And he isn't coming, Donald.

DONALD

No John? How come?

LUCILLE

The last postcard we got from Lee, when she was living on that Green Peace boat chasing whales and what not, she said she was leaving him and that was well over two years ago.

DONALD

That's not so good either.

A KNOCK at the door.

LUCILLE

It's open.

**JOHN** **LAYHEE** aka **HATCH,** 54, enters wearing a tool belt, an untucked light blue button down shirt, beige Kakis with a cloth belt, Dock Sider's with no socks and a saw dust covered, insignia-free, light blue sailing cap with dark blue trim tilted to one side. Behind one ear sits a carpenters pencil. Behind the other, suntan lotion. Hatch's priorities, as only the freest of souls dares, consists of champagne, women and sailing. An unforced, relaxed air clouds his every move.

Hatch

Oh boy, you'll never guess who I ran into!

LUCILLE

Hi, Hatch.

DONALD

John.

HATCH

Dick Flynt!

LUCILLE

Really?

Lucy mechanically fixes Hatch a scotch.

HATCH

Can you believe it?!

DONALD

Dick who?

LUCILLE

Haven't seen Dick in ages, how is he?

HATCH

Good, but what a show boat.

LUCILLE

Was Chooch with him?

HATCH

She's on the Cape, a class reunion or something. Dick was out breaking in his "new boat".

LUCILLE

I didn't know they bought a boat.

HATCH

Sure. Nice one. 41 footer, if you can believe it.

LUCILLE

Does Dick even know how to sail?

HATCH

That's what I said. Better off with a Whaler or Hobbie Craft.

DONALD

Hobie.

LUCILLE

(Handing him his drink)

How is he going to learn to sail with such a big boat?

HATCH

Think that'll stop him? Dick's been out once on Frank Smiths 19 footer for a troll around Misery Island and was sold hook, line and sinker.

DONALD

(Aside)

Wheel, mast and rudder.

Lucille and Hatch look to Donald.

LUCILLE

What about a mooring, he has to have a mooring?

HATCH

You'd think so right.

LUCILLE

The Pomeroy's waited three years for theirs.

HATCH

Even better, he bought a slip over at The Yacht Club.

LUCILLE

He what?!

HATCH

Paid in cash, too.

LUCILLE

A slip at The Yacht Club costs what-

HATCH

-I know.

LUCILLE

So where did he-

HATCH

-Inheritance. His mother passed away about a month ago.

DONALD

Poor thing.

LUCILLE

Well, the next time you see ol' tricky Dick, remind him for me that red in the morning is a good thing.

DONALD

(Aside)

Sailors take warning.

Lucy and Hatch look to Donald.

HATCH

So which door is it?

LUCILLE

Lee's again.

HATCH

Steam from the shower, I'll bet.

DONALD

(Aside)

It's the humidity.

HATCH

(Patting him on the shoulder)

Gotta' remember to use that intake fan, Donald.

LUCILLE

She's on her way from the airport right now.

HATCH

Who, Lee?

LUCILLE

She's taking the train, if you can believe it.

HATCH

You're kidding? Wow. Haven't seen Lee in what?

LUCILLE

She's going to want to shower when she gets in.

HATCH

Right. A shower. Well...here's to the wind up your sail.

Hatch down his drink and pats Donald on the shoulder in passing.

HATCH

Forgot to use that intake fan again, ay Donald?

DONALD

(Aside)

Wouldn't know.

HATCH

(Exiting)

Gotta' remember to use that fan.

DONALD

I only take baths.

HATCH (O.S.)

Steam! It's a killer!

LUCILLE

(Gathering 2 glasses, scotch)

Look, Donald. When she gets here, it's not our job to judge her. The best thing we can do is to just put up with whatever opposing views she might have, be polite and hope to God she doesn't have another one of her...episodes. God forbid she goes off the deep end again. Who knows how long it will be before we see her again. Who knows where she'll end up. Maybe she'll go back to teaching retarded kids how to swim.

Lucy heads for the living room door.

DONALD

Ey, Lou?

Lucy stops but doesn't turn.

LUCILLE

I got the God damn stink a' the beach all over me.

DONALD

I love that smell.

LUCILLE

Gonna go have a shower.

DONALD

Thanks...for the jars.

LUCILLE

You're welcome, Donald.

Lucy exits. LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on the Living room. It's the latter part of the Summer, 1980. **LEE**, 16, in pseudo-hippie garb, sits cross-legged on the floor with eyes closed in a yoga induced trance, CHANTING Ohm! A fast-food restaurant uniform and hat sits in a folded pile on the floor next to her. **DANNY,** 17, is sprawled on the couch watching TV in dirty jeans, T-shirt and work boots. He pulls out a cigarette and a Zippo that won't light.

Lee

What do you think you're doing?

Danny

Watching tv.

LEE

You better put that out, Danny.

DANNY

Don't worry about it.

LEE

I don't worry about that which I have no control over.

DANNY

Good for you.

LEE

I merely offer harmonious suggestion.

DANNY

Like I said.

LEE

That's one of the first things yoga taught me.

Danny opens and flicks his Zippo. Lee ignores him CHANTING, Ohm. It's a duet.

LEE

Least you could do is take your filthy boots off Mom's couch.

DANNY

(Sliding his feet off the edge)

There not on the couch.

LEE

Maybe not, but the rest of you is.

DANNY

What...is your problem?

LEE

I don't have a problem.

DANNY

Let me guess, "Yoda" taught you that, right?

LEE

It's Yoga.

DANNY

Sh'whatever.

The Zippo fires. Danny lights up.

LEE

I've simply learned that the problems surrounding me are-

DANNY

-You know, you don't fool me with your transcendental, hippie meditation bullshit.

LEE

I'm not meditating.

DANNY

No? Then why are your eyes closed?

LEE

It's called Yoga.

DANNY

Same difference.

LEE

There's a big difference Danny, but you wouldn't know about that considering all the time you waste watching tv.

DANNY

You're rich, you know that?

LEE

I just call it like I see it.

DANNY

How can you with your God damn eyes closed all the time?

Lee opens here eyes and glares at him. Danny takes a drag and smiles.

DaNNY

I just call it like I see it.

Lee storms off toward the Kitchen.

LEE

You're a real asshole, you know that?

DANNY

(Moving his boots back on the couch)

Someone's gotta' be.

WHISTLING OS. Danny puts out his smoke. Donald enters from the Kitchen in a shirt and tie carrying a briefcase.

DONALD

Hey, Danny. What's wrong with Lee?

DANNY

What isn't?

DONALD

So...how was work today?

DANNY

Same as it was yesterday when you asked.

Donald sees his boots on the couch and looks to the tv.

DONALD

What cha' watchin'?

DANNY

TV.

DONALD

Is that the news?

It is. Danny glances up at him. Donald pretends his question never happened.

DONALD

So did they say anything new about the hostages?

DANNY

Like?

DONALD

Like anything new?

DANNY

It IS the news.

DONALD

I meant, do they have any updates.

DANNY

Besides the fact they're hostages for another day, no.

DONALD

Huh. So how long has it been?

DANNY

Who knows.

DONALD

Must be getting close to what, couple hundred days?

DANNY

Must be.

DONALD

That's a long time, huh?

DANNY

Wouldn't know.

DONALD

To be held against your will, I mean.

DANNY

What other way is there?

Danny sits up. They stare at the TV.

DONALD

There's a special on later tonight. National Geographic's Wild Kingdom.

DANNY

Really.

DONALD

Elephants of the Serengeti. Should be pretty...far out.

DANNY

Way. So what's so special about a bunch of dumb elephants?

DONALD

On the contrary. They're not dumb at all.

DANNY

Could have fooled me.

DONALD

They're quite intelligent. They've got incredible memories.

DANNY

What have they got to remember that's so important?

DONALD

Well for one, they have memories passed down from generations about the exact location of secret elephant burial grounds that they've never been to before but know exactly how to get to when they're about to die. It's...fascinating.

DANNY

Great. So when are we getting the hoop set up?

DONALD

The what set up?

DANNY

The basketball hoop? In the driveway?

DONALD

The driveway.

DANNY

You said we could put a hoop up in the driveway.

DONALD

Oh right, the driveway, right, right, right.

DANNY

So when?

DONALD

Well, I'll have to check with your mother first but...

DANNY

You mean, you haven't told her yet?

DONALD

I didn't plan on "telling" her anything.

DANNY

Then how is she supposed to know?

DONALD

Well we're going to discuss it, of course.

DANNY

Of course.

Danny exits to the Kitchen. Donald feigns interest for a beat then turns off the TV. He sees the cigarette, gives it a sniff and sets it back before exiting UPSTAIRS. LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on the Kitchen. It's the present later that night. Lucy, in a robe w/ her hair in curlers, does dishes. She takes a last sip from a scotch and dumps the ice in the sink as Lee enters with suitcase and a paper bag. She closes the door. Lucy turns.

LUCILLE

Lee-lee!

LEE

Hey.

Lucy goes to her. They hug.

LUCILLE

My god, look at you.

LEE

Yeah. Look at me.

LUCILLE

You're so...thin.

LEE

Thanks.

LUCILLE

I meant, too thin.

LEE

You too, Mom.

LUCILLE

Really?

LEE

And your hair, I love it.

LUCILLE

Stop. So, how was your flight?

LEE

I took a train.

LUCILLE

I know, from the city, but your flight, how was it?

LEE

There was no flight. I took an AmTrack.

LUCILLE

A what?

LEE

It's a train, Mom.

LUCILLE

But what about your flight from California?

LEE

I don't fly.

LUCILLE

Oh?

LEE

I never told you that?

LUCILLE

Well...

LEE

Maybe I did but anyway, I took an Amtrack. And here I am.

LUCILLE

And here you are. Well, I could have sworn you said that you were flying.

LEE

I never said that.

LUCILLE

Well...

LEE

If I said I was flying, which I wouldn't have because I don't, then I would have flown.

LUCILLE

Right. You don't fly. So how was the uh, your uh...

LEE

My trip was fine, Mom.

Lee removes a CHEW TOY from the bag giving it a SQUEEZE, handing it to her.

LEE

For Jax.

LUCILLE

Oh, how nice, he'll just love it.

Lucy SQUEEZES it and sets it aside. Lee takes a BLACK PORCELAIN ELEPHANT from a bag and hands it to her.

LEE

And this, this is for you and Dad.

Lucy stares at it then almost drops it.

LEE

(Making sure she doesn't)

-careful, Mom.

LUCILLE

For me?

LEE

Yes, for you.

LUCILLE

How nice. Thank you.

LEE

You're welcome. Okay, so where is it?

LUCILLE

Where is what?

LEE

My gift.

LUCILLE

I...

LEE

I'm only teasing, Mom.

LUCILLE

(Picking up the elephant)

Of course.

Lucy sets the elephant down.

LUCILLE

It's lovely. Thank you.

LEE

You're welcome.

Lucy goes back to doing the dishes.

So you took a train?

LEE

I did.

LUCILLE

All the way from California.

LEE

It wasn't that bad, really.

LUCILLE

Oh no? I thought you hated trains?

LEE

Not at all.

Pause.

LEE

Mom?

LUCILLE

Yes, dear?

LEE

Could you come and sit with me? Please?

LUCILLE

(Going to the table, sitting)

I was just trying to, to catch up on a little...

LEE

It can wait.

LUCILLE

I suppose. Sure. Why not?

LEE

Thank you.

LUCILLE

So. Tell me, tell me about your trip.

LEE

It was great. The train had a dinner car, a bar car, a sleeping car and everything.

LUCILLE

So you did, you got to sleep on the train?

LEE

It's a four day trip, Mom.

LUCILLE

So you slept?

LEE

Of course I did, sleeping car or not.

LUCILLE

I should hope so.

LEE

Mom, please, it was a nice trip. I ate, slept, smoked cigarettes and stared out the window for four days. What more could you ask for?

LUCILLE

A place to shower maybe.

LEE

Mom, stop.

Lee points the elephant at the door.

LEE

You're supposed to set the elephant so it faces the front door. A lot of people don't know that.

LUCILLE

Facing the front door?

LEE

It's supposed to bring good luck.

LUCILLE

I've never heard of such a thing.

LEE

Good luck or pointing elephants at your door?

LUCILLE

Pointing elephants for luck, I suppose.

LEE

Well it can't hurt so...

Lucy catches herself staring at the elephant and rises going to the fridge.

LUCILLE

I'll bet you could use something cold to drink.

Iced tea, lemonade, orange juice, milk?

LEE

How about some water.

LUCILLE

Would you care for some ice?

LEE

Is it filtered?

LUCILLE

The water? I think they take care of that at a plant somewhere or something dear, before it gets here.

LEE

They take care of it all right. Do you know what high amounts of lead or mercury or fluoride can do to you?

LUCILLe

Well, high amounts of anything will make you sick, dear.

LEE

Look, I didn't meant to barge in here and-

LUCILLE

-Oh, no-

LEE

-upset you.

LUCILLE

I'm not upset.

LEE

It's been a long trip and...

LUCILLE

Don't be silly.

LEE

I guess I'm just a little rattled.

LUCILLE

I'm fine. Really.

LEE

Are you sure?

LUCILLE

Of course.

LEE

Good.

LUCILLE

Good. So...

LEE

So how about a real drink?

Lucy is staring at the elephant again.

Lee

Alcohol? Maybe a beer or something?

LUCILLE

(Snapping out of it)

Beer, yes beer, we do, we have beer, yes, of course!

LEE

Great.

LUCILLE

But it's out, it's out in the garage. So I will, I'll just run right out there and get you one.

LEE

Mom?

LUCILLE

Yes?

LEE

Is it cold?

LUCILLE

Is what cold, dear?

LEE

The beer.

Lucy looks to the elephant and freezes.

LEE

Mom?

Lucy doesn't answer. Lee goes to her.

LEE

Are you okay?

LUCILLE

Sure, baby.

LEE

Here. You sit and I'll go. Okay?

LUCILLE

Okay.

LEE

I'll be right back.

LUCILLE

Okay.

Lee exits. Lucy picks up the elephant and stares at it. Lee pops her head in.

LEE

Mom?

LUCILLE

There's a case of Schlitz on the floor behind the trash cans.

Lee exits. Lucy sets the elephant facing the door. LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on The Kitchen. We're back in the past the following day. Lucy is at the table cutting coupons. Lee enters in her fast food uniform.

LUCILLE

There's my Lee-lee. How was work, baby?

LEE

I quit.

LUCILLE

What? Why?

LEE

(Tossing her paper hat)

I hate it!

LUCILLE

But I thought you loved working there?

LEE

I did.

LUCILLE

What happened?

LEE

It's Jenny, Mom.

LUCILLE

Jenny?

LEE

I hate her! She's such a little slut.

LUCILLE

Lee!

LEE

Well she is.

LUCILLE

Now I didn't raise any daughter of mine to talk like that.

LEE

Like what?

LUCILLE

(Getting a glass of water)

You know darn well what I mean, young lady.

LEE

All right, jeez, take it easy, I'm sorry.

LUCILLE

My goodness. I thought you and Jenny were good friends.

LEE

We were.

LUCILLE

And good friends don't talk about eachother like that.

LEE

I said, "were". As in not anymore.

Pause.

LUCILLE

This is about a boy, isn't it?

LEE

God, no!

LUCILLE

It's all right if it is, Lee.

LEE

I don't want to talk about it.

LUCILLE

Well if it makes any difference, it happened to me when I was your age. Having a best friend steal a boy.

LEE

That's not what happened, Mom.

LUCILLE

Friendship, especially best friends Lee, can be a tricky thing.

LEE

She's no friend of mine.

LUCILLE

Lee?

LEE

What?

LUCILLE

I do know how you feel.

LEE

You don't know how I feel, Mom.

Lee begins making a PBJ.

LUCILLe

Dear diary, there was a new boy in school today. His name is Bobby Sones.

LEE

Mom?

LUCILLE

He moved to town last week from somewhere in New York.

LEE

What are you doing?

LUCILLE

His smile, his deep blue eyes and the way he brushes his hair back from his eyes...

LEE

Mom?!

LUCILLE

I feel sick to my stomach when someone mentions his name.

LEE

You can say that again.

LUCILLE

And my best friend Lisa Canally stole him away from me.

LEE

Earth to Mom, earth to Mom, come in Mom.

LUCILLE

That Lee, was something I wrote in my diary thirty years ago.

LEE

All right, my god, so you kept a diary, so what?

LUCILLE

So I thought maybe, you know, I could...

LEE

What? Make me puke?

LUCILLE

Lee.

LEE

Well, it's queer.

LUCILLE

It's not queer. At least it wasn't back then.

LEE

Well it would be now.

LUCILLE

You know, if kids today made a half-hearted attempt to keep in touch with their feeling like we did when I was young...

LEE

Yeah?

LUCILLE

Then...

LEE

Then?

LUCILLE

Then maybe things would be different.

LEE

It's no big deal Mom, really. I'll get over it.

LUCILLE

But that's just it, Lee. Without someone listening...

LEE

But you're listening right now.

LUCILLE

I am. But later, when you have time to be alone, by yourself...I just think it might help, that's all.

LEE

So let's say I did start a diary. I write a bunch of stupid stuff on a bunch of stupid, blank pages and then what? Who's going to be listening then?

LUCILLE

You listen to yourself, sweetheart. You stop and you listen to yourself.

Lucy kisses Lee on the head and exits. LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on the living room. It's the present the following morning, Saturday. Donald is moving the TV off its stand as Lee enters from upstairs.

LEE

(Rushing to him)

Whoa, Dad, wait! What-what-what are you doing?

DONALD

(Releasing the tv)

Nothing.

LEE

(Setting the TV on the stand)

Nothing? It looks like you're trying to steal a TV.

Donald heads for his chair.

LEE

(Moving and helping him)

Here.

DONALD

(Pulling away)

I think I know how to sit down by myself by now.

LEE

Alright.

DONALD

Okay?

LEE

Okay.

DONALD

Okay, then.

Donald sits.

LEE

I wasn't, I didn't...I was only trying to...

DONALD

Trying to what?

LEE

Nothing.

DONALD

Nothing is right.

LEE

I'm sorry.

DONALD

What do you have to be sorry for?

LEE

Right.

DONALD

Right I am.

Pause. Lee sits on the couch.

LEE

My god. I missed this couch.

DONALD

(Aside)

Piece a' junk.

LEE

How can you say that, I love this couch!

DONALD

What's to love?

LEE

I don't know. It just makes me feel so...

DONALD

Old?

LEE

Young again.

Donald turns on the TV via remote.

LEE

So is that the new TV?

DONALD

Brand.

LEE

Wow.

DONALD

Brand spankin'.

LEE

Big.

DONALD

27".

LEE

And it works okay?

DONALD

Of course it works okay, it's brand new.

LEE

Well when I came down you were fiddling with it, so...

DONALD

So it's my TV and I'll do what I like.

LEE

Sure, Dad. I just thought, you know, when I came down and saw you, that you might, that maybe, you needed some help is all.

DONALD

If I need help, then I'll ask for it.

LEE

Right.

DONALD

Right I am.

Pause. Lee heads for the kitchen.

DONALD

Ay, Lee?

Lee stops but doesn't turn.

DONALD

Fetch me my TV Guide, will ya'?

LEE

Sure, Dad.

Lee exits.

DONALD

That's my girl.

LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on the kitchen. Lucy is at the table cutting coupons. Lee enters.

LUCILLE

She's at it again. The coupon queen never rests.

LEE

(Leafing through the pile)

Looks like the Queen is on something.

LUCILLE

(Sipping her coffee)

Hmm?

LEE

(Picking up a coffee coupon)

Better double down on the decaf one here.

Lee fixes herself a cup and sits.

LEE

Have you seen Dad's TV Guide?

LUCILLE

(Finding it, handing it to her)

You mean his bible.

LEE

Can I ask you something?

LUCILLE

Sure.

LEE

What's...wrong with Dad?

LUCILLE

(Rising, spilling her coffee)

What-is everything all-

LEE

-Whoa-

LUCILLE

-Donald!-

LEE

-Mom, wait!-

LUCILLE

-Lee?!-

LEE

-Mom, he's fine, he's watching TV.

LUCILLE

TV.

LEE

Yes.

Lucy grabs a rag from the sink.

LEE

Mom?-

LUCILLE

-Yes

LEE

But you haven't even heard what I-

LUCILLE

-I know.

LEE

I just-

LUCILLE

-I know-

LEE

-came in-

LUCILLE

-yes-

LEE

-and asked you a question.

LUCILLE

It's all right. Everything's all right.

LEE

Is it?

LUCILLE

It is. You know, I just...well, your father...

LEE

Should I leave and come back so we can start over?

LUCILLE

Now wouldn't that really be something else.

Pause.

LEE

You know, maybe coming back here wasn't the best-

LUCILLE

-Don't be silly.

Pause.

LEE

It's just, I want to get past the awkward pauses.

LUCILLE

You will.

LEE

For both of us, all of us, Dad included, I mean...

LUCILLE

Well it's been a long time since you've been back so you, we might have to let things just iron out themselves.

LEE

I know but it's just, when I came downstairs, Dad was trying to move the tv and when I went to help, he flipped out, so-

LUCILLE

-Lee-

LEE

-I came in here to get his TV Guide because he asked me to and I thought hey, whatever it takes to calm him down-

LUCILLE

-Lee-

LEE

-And I find you in here even more on edge-

LUCILLE

-Lee?-

LEE

-waving around sharp scissors and spilling hot coffee-

LUCILLE

-Lee?-

LEE

-And I'm like, where's the fire?!

LUCILLE

Dear?

LEE

What?!

LUCILLE

What do you mean, he was trying to move the tv?

LEE

Like picking it up to carry it off somewhere.

LUCILLE

Maybe he was just shifting it you know, for a better picture.

LEE

You have cable, Mom.

LUCILLE

Then maybe he was just tilting it to one side a bit.

LEE

Right off the stand?

LUCILLE

Well...

LEE

Well what?

LUCILLE

I think it's just one of your fathers...habits.

LEE

Really? And what about you?

LUCILLE

Well, I think we're both a little...(breaking down a bit) after having you...here...home again, after so long.

LEE

It's me, Mom.

LUCILLE

I know. And it's good to see you, dear.

LEE

So what other crazy habits does Dad have?

LUCILLE

Not crazy, dear. Nervous maybe, but not crazy.

LEE

Chain smoking cigarettes and biting your nails is nervous.

LUCILLE

All right, a bit bizarre maybe, but certainly not crazy.

LEE

Good. So tell me about bizarre.

LUCILLE

Lee.

LEE

Oh, come on, Mom. I'm gonna see him in all his whacked out splendor, sooner or later.

LUCILLE

Lee!

LEE

What?!

LUCILLE

Please. Listen. And try, for everyone's sake, to understand.

LEE

I'm all ears.

LUCILLE

Well...after your fathers stroke and after they stuck him behind a desk with nothing more than a paper weight and a number 2 pencil, he's become a little...antsy.

LEE

Explain.

LUCILLE

Well...sometimes, when he gets home...

LEE

Yeah?

LUCILLE

You know, after dinner.

LEE

Go on.

LUCILLE

Long after I've gone up to bed.

LEE

Mom!

LUCILLE

He...dis...mantles things.

LEE

Dismantles?

LUCILLE

He...takes things apart.

LEE

I know what it means, Mom. So he takes things apart.

LUCILLE

He does.

LEE

Like what kinds of things.

LUCILLE

Anything with...parts to it. Since his stroke, he's grown quite fond of going around the house at all hours of the night and...tinkering with things.

LEE

You mean dismantling?

LUCILLE

Well, for lack of a better word.

LEE

Is that what he was doing with the TV?

LUCILLE

We've had it a week. Surprised he hasn't gotten to it yet.

LEE

Well, it's kind of weird, don't you think?

LUCILLE

Not weird, dear. A bit bizarre maybe but certainly not weird.

LEE

Nervous, bizarre, whacked out or whatever, but it is definitely weird.

LUCILLE

His doctor says it's nothing to worry about and anything he does take apart, he'll probably put back together again.

LEE

Probably?

LUCILLE

Eventually.

LEE

Eventually. Well that's better than never. Like some new, radical form of occupational therapy.

LUCILLE

Whatever works, dear.

LEE

Speaking of dismantling, what happened to my door?

LUCILLE

It swelled shut again so I had Hatch come and shave it down.

Lee begins sifting through the coupons.

LEE

So how is ol' Hatch?

LUCILLE

Oh, you know, fine, the same. We told him you were coming.

LEE

Still unattached and adrift on the wide open seas, I'll bet.

LUCILLE

From Memorial through Labor Day.

Lee picks up a coupon and reads it.

LEE

Hardy's Hatchery. Twenty-five cents off a dozen eggs.

LUCILLE

Not so bad, huh?

LEE

Organic eggs, I hope.

LUCILLE

They're only eggs, Lee.

LEE

And that's how they should stay.

LUCILLE

(Taking the coupon from her)

There's nothing wrong with Hardy's eggs.

LEE

(Reading another coupon)

Fifty-cents off a pound of bologna. Yummy.

LUCILLE

(Snatching the coupon from her)

And fifty cents saved if fifty cents earned.

LEE

Sure but who eats bologna anymore.

LUCILLE

Everyone eats bologna, dear.

LEE

I don't.

LUCILLE

No?

LEE

Never. It's as toxic as a hotdog.

LUCILLE

I thought you loved hotdogs.

LEE

Maybe when I was nine and didn't know any better.

LUCILLE

Then have ham, dear.

LEE

And what about you? I've never seen you eat bologna.

LUCILLE

That's because it doesn't agree with me.

LEE

Oh no?

LUCILLE

(Gathering up her coupons)

I'm more of an egg salad woman, myself.

LEE

So who's the bologna for?

LUCILLE

It's fifty cents, Lee.

LEE

I know Dad's not allowed to eat it.

LUCILLE

(Moving to the sink)

That's a whole half dollar.

LEE

He's back in town, isn't he?

Lucy grabs a glass, turns on the water and holds a finger under it waiting for it to cool.

LEE

Isn't he?

Lucy fills her glass.

LEE

Why won't you answer me?

Lucy smells the water, dumps it, sets the glass down and turns off the water.

LUCILLE

I don't think he ever really left. Do you?

Lucy grabs the TV Guide and exits to the living room. LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP LOW on the living room. Lucy puts the TV Guide on Donald's sleeping lap, covers him with a blanket and exits upstairs. LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on the kitchen. We're in the past the following day. Hatch works under the sink. His underwear is in clear view. Lee enters from the garage with a shopping bag. She sees Hatch, underwear and all, lets out a shriek and freezes.

HATCH

Lucille?

Lee panics and buries her head in the shopping bag at the table. Hatch rises.

HATCH

Hey.

LEE

Oh, hello.

HATCH

How's it going?

LEE

Oh good, good, good.

HATCH

So summer's winding down, huh?

LEE

Unfortunately, yeah.

HATCH

You guys must have school coming up?

LEE

Next week.

HATCH

Huh. So what cha' got there?

LEE

Oh, school clothes...and stuff.

HATCH

Stuff.

LEE

For school.

HATCH

Oh yeah? What did you get?

LEE

(Pulling items out of the bag)

Just the usual. Pants, shoes, skirts, underw-

-cramming a pair of underwear back in the bag along with her head.

LEE

-wwwhere did I put that receipt?

HATCH

What was that?

LEE

Nothing!

HATCH

It's all right.

LEE

What's all right?

HATCH

Whatever it was you pulled out of the bag there.

LEE

(Plopping into a chair)

I'm so embarrassed.

HATCH

Don't be. It's no big deal.

LEE

My god, how can you say that?

HATCH

You saw mine. I saw yours. No big deal.

LEE

(Gaining a bit of confidence)

No big deal.

HATCH

Right. No big deal.

LEE

Then why are you blushing?

HATCH

(Moving to his tool box)

So where's your, Mom?

LEE

She ran downtown.

Hatch gives her a confused look.

LEE

Drive, I mean. She dropped me off.

HATCH

And Danny too?

LEE

He didn't come. He's at work.

HATCH

Right, landscaping for the summer.

LEE

It's a filthy job.

HATCH

Ah but it's a good kind of filth.

LEE

I didn't know there was such a thing.

HATCH

The dirt, from the ground...the smell...it's natural.

Pause.

HATCH

So how's your job goin'? You're workin' at that burger joint?

LEE

I quit. Wanted to spend the last few days of summer with...friends.

HATCH

Huh. I remember those last days of summer, boy.

LEE

Such a bummer.

HATCH

I'd always got real sad. Depressed, even.

LEE

Tell me about it.

HATCH

But I figured out a way to beat it.

LEE

Fat chance. How?

HATCH

I'd make a list of all the things I'd miss and do everything on it one more time before summer was gone.

LEE

Like what kinds of things?

HATCH

Oh for Pete, there'd be fishing, camping, biking hiking...sailing, maybe.

LEE

Sailing!

HATCH

You bet.

LEE

Oh, I love to sail!

HATCH

No kidding?

LEE

But I never get to go.

HATCH

How come?

LEE

Well for starters, we don't have a boat.

HATCH

No friends with boats?

LEE

One. But she turned out to be a slut.

Hatch changes tone and begins collecting up his tools.

LEE

Was it something I said?

HATCH

Nope. But I'm not sticking around here.

LEE

Your leaving?

HATCH

That's right.

LEE

You don't have to feel sorry for me, you know.

HATCH

I don't.

LEE

You don't?

HATCH

Nope.

LEE

Then why are you leaving?

HATCH

We're going sailing.

LEE

We are?

HATCH

Sure, why not?

LEE

But we can't just pick up and go.

HATCH

Why not?

LEE

Because.

HATCH

Not good enough.

LEE

What's not good enough?

HATCH

You know, you're just like your Mom.

LEE

But what about a boat, we need a boat.

HATCH

I have a boat.

LEE

Okay, fine but what about, I mean, what would I wear?

HATCH

A bathing suit maybe, in case you want to swim.

Lee sticks her hand in the shopping bag with a smile.

HATCH

You're kidding?

LEE

(With a swimsuit from the bag)

End of Summer sale!

HATCH

Perfect!

LEE

What about you, what are you going to wear?

HATCH

You're looking at it.

LEE

But what if you want to swim?

HATCH

Not if it's just us two.

LEE

Why not?

HATCH

Who's going to drive the boat?

Hatch closes his toolbox.

LEE

Wait. So you're really going?

HATCH

I'm already gone.

LEE

And so you still want me to come?

HATCH

If you want.

LEE

Are you serious?

HATCH

You bet.

LEE

But I, I would need to change first.

HATCH

So go change.

LEE

Okay!

HATCH

Okay.

LEE

Okay!

Lee exits fast and heads upstairs.

HATCH

(Calling after her)

But make it quick!

LEE (O.S.)

What?!

HATCH

I said, make it quick!

LEE (O.S.)

All right!

HATCH

The quicker we get down there, the better.

LEE (O.S.)

What?!

HATCH

I said...!

Hatch holds the kitchen door open.

HATCH

I said the quicker we get down there the better!

Lee doesn't answer.

HATCH

Lee?

No answer. Hatch moves to the stairs.

HATCH

Hey, Lee? Everything all right up there?

Pause. He exits to the kitchen, picks up his tool box, heads for the door but stops. Beat. He puts his tool box under the sink and stands. Beat. He exits to the living room as LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on the living room. It's the present that same night, Saturday. Donald is asleep in his chair.

DONALD

(Quickly stirring awake)

It's MY design, MY Guidance System-MINE!

Donald snaps out of it. After a beat, he pulls the journal from his robe pocket, opens to a section and begins reading. After a beat, he angrily tears the pages from the book and shoves them in his other pocket. Pause. Danny enters eating a hot dog and carrying laundry as he tip-toes to the stairs. He STEPS ON A CHEW TOY and freezes.

DONALD

Here, Jax, here boy.

DANNY

It's me, Dad.

DONALD

Lee?

DANNY

No Dad, it's me, Danny. Go back to sleep.

DONALD

I wasn't sleeping.

DANNY

(Setting his laundry down)

Then your impression of a dead guy needs work.

DONALD

Who died?

DANNY

No one, Dad.

DONALD

Sure as hell smells like it.

Danny kicks his laundry away from Donald and plops down on the couch.

DoNALD

Who turned off my TV?

Danny gets up to turn on the TV.

DONALD

The hell are you doing?

DaNNY

You wanted to watch TV.

DONALD

Yeah but you don't do it like that!

DANNY

So where's the remote?

DONALD

If we knew, you wouldn't be standing there would you?

Danny turns on the tv and sits.

DANNY

Got me there, Pops.

They watch in silence for a few beats.

DONALD

What channel is this?

DANNY

Whatever you had it on last, I guess.

DONALD

Don't guess, I can guess.

DANNY

Looks like Fox or something.

DONALD

But the channel, the number, what's the number?

DANNY

Five.

DONALD

That's ABC.

DANNY

So ABC it is.

DONALD

ABC sucks.

Danny rises and moves to the tv again.

DANNY

What number's Fox?

DONALD

Ah just sit down, will you?

DANNY

I'm already up so-

DONALD

-Sit!

Danny sits. They watch in silence. Danny pulls a 2nd chew toy from under a cushion. It's a black elephant. Pause. He gives it a squeeze-SQUEEK!

DONALD

If you're gonna' be foolin' around, you might as well look for my remote.

DANNY

Looks like Jax man got a new toy.

DONALD

Looks like it.

Pause.

DANNY

When did she get back?

DONALD

Yesterday. She brought that...annoying thing with her.

DANNY

From California?

DoNALD

Took a train.

DANNY

How long is she staying?

DONALD

Didn't say. Why, how long are you staying?

DANNY

Just the weekend, Pops.

DONALD

Brought your laundry again.

DANNY

Yeah, a few things.

DONALD

Well it stinks.

DANNY

Well...my machine is on the blink again so-

DONALD

-So get it fixed again.

Danny finds the remote under a cushion. He SQUEEZES the ELEPHANT and changes the channel but before Donald can react, he tosses the remote into his lap. Donald snatches it up.

DANNY

So how is Jax man?

DONALD

Wouldn't know.

DANNY

What do you mean, you don't know?

DONALD

Haven't seen him.

DANNY

You haven't seen him?

DONALD

Nope.

DANNY

For how long?

DONALD

Oh...couple a' days, maybe.

DANNY

(Springing off the couch)

A couple a' days!?

DONALD

What are you getting so excited for?

DANNY

Where the hell is he?!

DONALD

Where the hell is who?

DANNY

My god, Dad, Jax! Where the hell is, Jax?!

DONALD

Told you, haven't seen him.

DANNY

(Going to the kitchen and back)

God....Did you at least go and look for him?

DONALD

Why would I do that?

DANNY

Because you haven't seen him in days!

DONALD

I haven't.

DANNY

(Calling upstairs)

Well he's got to be around here somewhere-Jax?!

DONALD

Well he's not around here.

DaNNY

Here, Jax!

Lucy enters from upstairs half asleep.

LUCILLE

(In a loud whisper)

What is all the noise down here?

DANNY

Where's Jax?

LUCILLE

What?

DANNY

What happened to Jax?

LUCILLE

Jax?

DANNY

Yes, Jax!

LUCILLE

Danny, nothing, now please keep your voice-

DANNY

-Dad says he hasn't seen him in days!

LUCILLE

Danny please, Lee is up-she's trying to sleep.

DANNY

Have you seen him?

LUCILLE

Who, Jax?

DANNY

My God!

LUCILLE

(Leading him to the couch)

Danny please, here, now just sit a minute so I can think,

DANNY

What's there to think about? You've either seen him or you haven't!

LUCILLE

All right-Okay-I did. Wait, no I think that was last night.

DANNY

What?

LUCILLE

Or maybe it was the night before?

DANNY

Mom?!

LUCILLE

Donald?

DoNALD

What?

DaNNY

(Springing off the couch)

My God!

LUCILLE

Now getting all...upset isn't going to solve anything.

DANNY

Upset?!

LUCILLE

(To Donald)

Honey?

DANNY

I'm not upset!

DONALD

What?

DANNY

This is NOT upset!

LUCILLE

How long?

DaNNY

I'm nowhere near MY upset!

DONALD

How long what?

DANNY

Days!

LUCILLE

Since you've seen Jax?

DoNALD

Who?

LUCILLE/DANNY

Jax!

Lee enters from the kitchen.

LEE

What about Jax?

LUCILLE

Lee!

LEE

Mom!

LUCILLE

I thought you were sleeping.

LEE

With all the yelling? I could hear you out on the street.

LUCILLE

On the street?

LEE

I was out with, Jax. Hey, Dad.

DONALD

What?

LUCILLE

Thank, God.

Danny exits angrily to the kitchen.

LeE

Good to see you too brother. What's his problem?

DONALD

(Aside)

What isn't?

LUCILLE

He was worried about Jax, honey.

LEE

Why?

LUCILLE

Well, I think your father told Danny he hadn't seen him in a few days and when Danny asked me, I couldn't exactly recall when I'd seen him either so...

LEE

(Sitting on the couch)

I took him out for a walk, he's fine.

LUCILLE

Did you hear that, Donald?

DONALD

Hear what?

LUCILLE

Jax is fine.

DONALD

He's a good boy.

LUCILLE

Lee just had him out for a walk, is all.

Danny enters with Jax's leash and collar.

LUCILLE

Jax is fine, Danny.

DANNY

Really?

LUCILLE

Lee just had him out for a walk is all.

DANNY

And why is there nothing on his collar? His license, I.D. tag, Jax's rabies tag?

DoNALD

Jax got rabies?

LUCILLE

I'm sure there around somewhere.

DONALD

(Aside)

Poor bastard.

DaNNY

They should be here on his collar!

LeE

I threw em' out.

Pause.

DANNY

You what?

LEE

I threw them out.

DaNNY

Do I dare ask why?

LeE

The toxic metal was giving him headaches.

DONALD

(Aside)

Take an aspirin.

DaNNY

The toxic what?!

LeE

The metal in his tags are toxic.

DaNNY

And they were giving him headaches?

LEE

Right.

DoNALD

Take two aspirin.

DaNNY

Wait.

DONALD (CONT'D)

And call me in the morning.

DANNY

So you took them off.

LEE

I did.

DaNNY

Because they were toxic.

LEE

Right, again.

LUCILLE

Jax's dog tags are toxic?

DaNNY

Wait.

LeE

Yes. And they were giving him headaches.

LUCILLE

Poor, Jax.

DONALD

(Calling out)

Here, Jax.

DANNY

He has to have those tags.

DoNALD

Here, boy.

DaNNY

He needs those tags!

LUCILLE

Donald?

LEE

What for?

DANNY

In case he gets lost, is what for!

DONALD

Jax, boy.

LUCILLE

Jax is fine, dear.

LEE

How's he going to get lost?

LUCILLE

Right Lee-lee?

DaNNY

That's not the point!

LEE

Right.

LUCILLE

See?

DONALD

He's a good boy.

LeE

The point is, they were giving him headaches and cutting into his neck.

DaNNY

Cutting into his...

LUCILLE

Jax is cut?

DONALD

Who got cut?

DaNNY

No one is cut!

LeE

If you gave him half the attention he needs, you'd know.

DANNY

Oh, I know! I know because I love that dog!

LeE

Well you've got a funny way of showing it.

LUCILLE

Should I call the vet?

DaNNY

Where are they, Lee?

DONALD

That vet is a quack.

LeE

Gone.

LUCILLE

Lee?

DONALD

Quack!

DaNNY

Gone where?

LeE

I told you, I threw them out.

DONALD

Quack!

LUCILLE

Lee-lee?

LEE

Jax is fine, Mom.

DONALD

Quack, quack, quack.

LEE

And I'm going to bed.

DaNNY

You threw them out where, Lee?

LUCILLE

Good night, dear.

DONALD

Quack.

LeE

Night, Mom. Night, Dad.

DaNNY

If he doesn't have tags then the dog catcher will take him!

LeE

Might be the best thing for him.

DANNY

You know you're putting him on virtual house arrest!

DONALD

Who's under arrest?

LUCILLE

No one, dear.

LeE

Look, I have a friend who makes dog tags out of balsa wood for dogs who suffer from the same thing Jax does.

DaNNY

Oh, great!

LUCILLE

See, now everything is fine.

DANNY

Wooden dog tags?!

DONALD

Quack!

LeE

Yes, wooden. Now good night.

DaNNY

Wonderful!

DONALD

Quack.

LUCILLE

Night Lee.

Lee exits upstairs.

DANNY

(Calling after her)

Why not fashion him a leash made of hemp while were at it!

DONALD

Quack.

Danny grabs Jax's collar and leash.

DaNNY

I'm taking him for a walk.

LUCILLE

But Lee just got in with him, dear.

DANNY

So.

LUCILLE

So Jax is a lot older now and he might be a little...

DANNY

Jax is fine.

LUCILLE

Well remember, he doesn't have any of his dog tags.

DANNY

So I'll be careful not to let him off the leash then.

LUCILLE

All right. But it's awful dark out.

DANNY

Then I'll take a flashlight.

LUCILLE

And the street lights down Highwood Avenue are terrible.

DANNY

We're not walking in the middle of the damn street, Mom.

LUCILLE

I know, I just don't want anything to happen to him is all.

DANNY

To him or me, Mom?

LUCILLE

Well the both of you...of course.

DANNY

Of course.

Danny exits. Pause. Donald begins channel surfing. Lucy turns and stares at the TV.

DONALD

(Attempting to whistle)

Here Jax...here boy...

LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on the kitchen. It's the past the following week and school is now in session. Danny enters from the garage with a backpack.

DANNY

Hello?! Mom?! Anyone home?! Mom?!

He locks the door and removes a bag of pot from his sock.

DANNY

Hello.

He turns on the box radio, MISSISSIPPI QUEEN, sits and begins rolling a joint. It's obviously his first time. He hears something under the MUSIC, freezes for a bet and in a flash, hides the pot, kills the radio, unlocks the door and takes out a book. After a beat, he slowly rises and looks out the window.

DANNY

Mom?!

Danny repeats the above until a sloppily rolled joint sits before him. He lights up and takes his first drag. Before exhaling, he hears something and freezes. As he jumps to turn off the radio, the door knob to the garage begins to RATTLE. COUGHING NOW, he dives to the sink and extinguishes the joint. Hatch enters from the garage with keys in hand.

HATCH

Hey.

Danny frozen and breathless, nods.

HATCH

You okay?

Danny lets out a COUGH/SNEEZE/BELCH.

HATCH

God bless you.

Danny sits and opens a book.

HATCH

I think. What's going on?

DANNY

Not much.

Hatch pulls his toolbox from under the sink.

HATCH

Smells pretty good. Let me guess, Humboldt County, right?

DaNNY

Excuse me?

HATCH

(Smelling the air deeply)

That's gotta' be Humboldt.

DaNNY

I, I don't know what you're talking about.

HATCH

I ain't gonna tell anyone, if that's what you're thinking. Scouts honor.

DANNY

That's not what I was, was thinking.

HATCH

So there you go.

DANNY

(Resumes reading his book)

Tell anyone what?

HATCH

(Turns his book right side up)

And whatever you were smoking, hey, it's no big deal.

DANNY

It's just a little grass.

HATCH

I know.

DANNY

It's my first time, really, I swear to God.

HATCH

Then the worm has definitely turned for you my man

DANNY

It's not like it's heroin or anything.

HATCH

And like I said, it's no big deal.

DANNY

Right.

HATCH

Right I am. Shit. I remember my first time.

DANNY

Probably at Woodstock or something like that, huh?

HATCH

Nope. I was all set to go with a car load a' buddies but when I found out Led Zeppelin wasn't invited, I said to hell with em'. No, it was long before that. About 3000 miles before. Is that door locked?

DANNY

It was.

HATCH

Suppose we could lock it again.

DANNY

We could.

Hatch smiles, rises and locks the door. Danny starts rolling a joint.

DaNNY

So what are you here to fix anyway?

HATCH

Oh, you know, whatever needs fixin'.

Hatch turns on the radio, LIGHT MY FIRE.

HATCH

Here you go.

Hatch Takes the half-rolled joint from Danny and spins it up like a pro. He lights up, drags deep and passes it. Danny takes a drag and COUGHS.

HATCH

Easy, easy, easy.

Danny tries again.

HATCH

Nice n' easy. Good.

Danny hands the joint to Hatch. They pass it back and forth throughout.

HATCH

This really your first time, huh?

DANNY

Yeah. So you were gonna tell me about your first time.

HATCh

Kid I grew up with, Shima. He'd always cop the best dope. Shit made him crazy.

Danny, about to take a drag, hands the joint back to Hatch.

HATCH

Relax, man. I don't mean crazy like violent or psycho crazy. No man, this shit won't do that to you. Shima was quiet. I mean like mute quiet. But he'd get this clown smile plastered on his face that made him look crazy anytime we got ripped.

DaNNY

Ripped?

HATCH

Yeah, ripped. As in high, like the tide.

DANNY

Ripped.

HATCH

Shima was a good killer too. We were all just a bunch of kids 3000 miles from home, trying to stay alive.

DANNY

You mean, Nam?

HATCH

That's where this shit came in handy. Once you'd been in country a while and knew what you were doing, it was okay to toke up every so often. No big deal right?

DANNY

Right.

HATCH

First time I got high was the last time I saw Shima alive.

DANNY

Whoa. That's heavy.

HATCH

Tell that to the hot shit R.O.T.C Sergeant flew into camp that day. He tells us we can look forward to some action soon because we eased up on the twenty-four hour a day carpet bombing to let them come further south you know, get them out in the open and fight Mano-a-Mano for a change. You know, have a real Mexican standoff rather than firing at shadows and chasing ghosts.

DANNY

Shit.

HATCH

Right. So we dug in tight, ready for the shit.

DANNY

Shit.

HATCH

That R.O.T.C college boy scared us good. At sundown, he was on the last chopper out back to some cush position in the rear, you know, out of harms way, which didn't help morale.

DANNY

No doubt.

HATCH

So anyway, I was sharing my hole with this guy, McGee and it was around 2am when the first probe flare went up. I thought it was Shima messing around with some FNG.

DANNY

FNG?

HATCH

Fucking New Guy. Shima had the highest kill ratio in the platoon so he got away with shit. He's probably in his hole with this FNG, who's scared out of his mind, telling him the orange warning tag at the end of a probing flare has to be removed for safety reasons but it's Shima just fucking around. Shima tells him to point it up and away just in case, dives out of the way as the new guy pulls the orange tag and sets off the probe, lighting up the entire camp and scaring the shit out everyone. Thing was, the probe hanging up there in the sky? The one I thought was Shima just fucking around? It was green.

DANNY

Green. Cool.

HATCH

Not cool. Our probes are white.

DANNY

Shit.

HATCH

And then came the whistles. NVA officers use them to signal their lines that it's time to charge. Turns out that hot shit R.O.T.C guy was right. They threw everything they had at us. Up the hill, behind my hole, is Henry, our go-to guy when the shit hit the fan. He's on an M-1 with 10,000 rounds and the first guy to let loose. I could see him up there firing away, stopping and yelling at the gooks every time he hit one. It was like watching some insane carnival game in slow motion except the targets weren't little ducks on a conveyor belt but real people, firing back, trying to kill you. And then the funniest thing happened. McGee, who'd been in country a while and saw more action than any five guys combined, drops his rifle, hops up on the edge of our whole and sits there like he's watching a Fourth of July parade go by. I yell at him to get down, to get back in the whole and he pulls out his side arm, sticks the end of the barrel in his mouth and before I could take another breathe, he was gone and...it was the funniest thing. Then all hell broke loose. The incoming mortars were the worst I'd ever seen. Before I could return any fire, one exploded right outside my hole. When I opened my eyes, I was lying next to McGee, looking up at another probe, lighting up the sky. I got back on my feet and started to return fire. And what was funny again was that I could see the tracer rounds fly out of my rifle and I could feel the steel, pulsing kick of it in my hands but there was no sound. And that's why I never heard the 2nd mortar. It hit closer than the first, hard and I was hurt bad. I lost my rifle but I didn't care. I just wanted someone to come and take me the hell out of there. Everyone else must have seen the hit our hole took because no one came. Not even a god damn medic. No one could survive a direct hit like that. But I did. So there I am lying next to what's left of McGee all fucked up and as scared as some FNG and that's when I see the butterfly. There, outside my hole, dancing back and forth, bopping this way and that, like he wants me to come out and play. The explosions keep knocking him from side to side but he's hanging in there tough like a tiny ship trying to right itself on a rough sea. When the probe burns out, I lose him. It's dark and I start to feel something warm and wet underneath me. The initial rush of the direct hit is wearing off because I sense great pain coming. The thought makes me sick to my stomach. I don't know if it's my own or McGee's but the hole is staring to pool with blood and I'm about to feel the extent of my wounds if I don't pass out first. I just wanted to close my eyes like a kid under the covers. With your eyes closed you can't see the monsters out there. If they're open, you let the monsters in. Another probe goes up. It's one of ours. I don't see the butterfly anymore but I see the muzzle of an AK-47 slide out of the shadows by my head. I see the rim of a helmet and the underside of someone's chin. A bead of sweat lands on my cheek and it felt so..familiar. If I try to close my eyes, he'll see it, so I lie there wide eyed, playing dead like McGee. Fire starts exploding from the tip of his Automatic Rifle of Kalishanikov, 1947 but I don't hear it. I feel the bullets slam into the dirt between my legs, and next to my side and all around me but I feel no pain. And I'm thinking, is this how easy it is to die?

Pause.

HATCH

And then the firing stops. I don't know if I'm hit or not but he stops and I just lie there, staring up at him, almost through him until he disappears into the shadows. I just lie there with my eyes open and wait. Then I see the butterfly. He's back. He's back and he's flapping and bopping and dancing there above me as if there's nothing wrong in the world. And for a brief moment, I understand. I understand and I finally close my eyes. I close my eyes and smile because we're still alive.

Hatch gets up, turns off the radio, unlocks the door and grabs his tools.

HATCH

Gotta' go shave Lee's door jam down before your folks get home.

Hatch moves to the door but stops.

HATCH

Thanks, Danny.

DaNNY

Sure. Sure thing.

Hatch exits. LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on the kitchen later that same afternoon. Lucy enters with groceries and sets them aside. She stops and sniffs the air. Hatch enters from the living room with his tools.

LUCILLE

Jesus-My go-you scared the...

HATCH

Sorry. I was just finishing up Lee's door.

LUCILLE

I thought you were out of town.

HATCH

I leave tomorrow. Down the Cape for a few days.

LUCILLE

How nice. Business or pleasure?

HATCH

Pleasure. I'm sailing in a race.

LUCILLE

I didn't know you sailed.

HATCH

As much as I can.

LUCILLE

Do you own a boat?

HATCH

I do.

LUCILLE

You never told us that.

HATCH

You never asked.

LUCILLE

So you do, you own a boat?

HATCH

Twenty-seven footer.

LUCILLE

How wonderful. I've wanted a boat for years now.

HATCH

So why don't you get one?

LUCILLE

Well...

HATCH

Ah, well, there's your first problem right there.

LUCILLE

Excuse me?

HATCH

Right. You make excuses.

LUCILLE

I do?

HATCH

Yup.

LUCILLE

And could you be even more forward and share with me what it is exactly, you think I make excuses for?

HATCH

To not do what's going to make you happy.

LUCILLE

To not...that's going to...I am happy.

HATCH

I'm sure you are.

LUCILLE

I am! And what is that smell?

HATCH

Look, all I did was suggest maybe you buy a boat because you love to sail.

LUCILLE

Well, there's a lot more to it than that.

HATCH

And there you go again.

LUCILLE

There I go again with what?!

HATCH

No offense. Most people do the exact same thing. They know exactly what's going to make them even slightly happier yet they come up with excuses for why they shouldn't be.

LUCILLE

And you somehow think that I...you know, we don't hire you from time to time to come in here and, and...

HATCH

You love boats.

LUCILLE

Sure. Who doesn't?

HATCH

And you love to sail.

LUCILLE

I do. When I get the chance.

HATCH

So take one.

LUCILLE

Take one what?

HATCH

A chance. You live less than a mile from the water, you love to sail, yet you don't own a boat and have every excuse in the world for not getting one.

LUCILLE

Why do I feel like I want to reach out and strangle you? No offense.

HATCH

Because you know I'm right.

LUCILLE

Well, then I guess I'm just one of those people who goes through life too afraid to be truly happy.

HATCH

I think that's one of the saddest things I think I've ever heard.

Pause.

HATCH

Not to sound like an asshole but I have a funny feeling that money isn't what's stopping you.

LUCILLE

A boat, sure, no it isn't the money, I mean Donald makes a very good living and all but....

HATCH

There you go again!

LUCILLE

There I go again what?!

HATCH

You can afford it, if I go and look out your second floor bathroom window, I can see the god damn ocean, you love to sail, so do it!

LUCILLE

Believe me, I would want nothing more than to be able to drop everything on a whim and whisk off down to the water anytime the mood tickled my senses for a moonlit sail along the coast but Donald...well...he's a bit, I mean, he's not the most....

HATCH

The most...?

LUCILLE

He's not the most...my god, how do I put this?

HATCH

Here's your chance. Just put it.

Lucy starts unpacking groceries.

LUCILLE

So tell me about your sailing this weekend.

HATCH

Right.

LUCILLE

It's a race, right?

HATCH

It's a regatta, actually.

LUCILLE

Is there was a difference?

HATCH

There's usually more than one race in a regatta.

LUCILLE

Huh. It still sounds wonderful.

HATCH

If the weather holds, it should be.

LUCILLE

My god, this is driving me-do you smell something?

HATCH

Like what?

LUCILLE

I don't know. Like something burning. Sure smells odd.

HATCH

Maybe it's the new dog.

LUCILLE

That dog, for your information, is still an adorable, little puppy.

HATCH

Sure but, you know, the things they get into.

LUCILLE

And the kids just adore him.

HATCH

She's still a pup, what's not to adore.

LUCILLE

He, is still a puppy.

HATCH

He. So does he have a name?

LUCILLE

His name is Jax.

HATCH

Jax.

LUCILLE

Jax. And what ever that smell is, it's making me queasy.

Lucy folds the paper shopping bag and slides it between the fridge and stove.

LUCILLE

Can I offer you something to drink?

HATCH

I think you just did.

LUCILLE

Scotch okay?

HATCH

Sounds great.

Hatch sits as Lucy fixes their drinks.

LUCILLE

So Lee's door is okay now?

HATCH

Yup. All it needed was a little TLC.

LUCILLE

Well Donald couldn't figure out for the life of him what the problem was. When you said it was just the steam from the shower, Donald and I felt a little...

HATCH

It's a common problem. All you need is an intake fan.

LUCILLE

That sounds complicated.

HATCH

Not at all.

LUCILLE

I'll have to check with Donald first but if that will do...

HATCH

Can I ask why?

LUCILLE

Why, what?

HATCH

Why you have to run everything by your husband first.

LUCILLE

Well if he's the one paying for it, it's just courteous.

HATCH

So what if there's no cost involved?

LUCILLE

Are you offering me a free intake fan?

HATCH

No. Just for arguments sake let's say.

LUCILLE

Okay, so no cost for what?

HATCH

Well...

LUCILLE

For arguments sake.

HATCH

Oh I don't know, I was just curious.

LUCILLE

Well now you've got me curious. Because everything, as far as I know, has a cost.

Hatch takes a good sip of scotch.

HATCH

This is good scotch, thanks.

LUCILLE

Thank Donald. It was his $200 dollars that paid for it.

HATCH

So where's the rest of the Goodwin clan?

LUCILLE

Lee's baby sitting, Danny is involved with an after school extracurricular group and Donald works late on Tuesdays.

HATCH

Extracurricular. Might need to look that one up.

LUCILLE

It's for his transcripts really. Colleges like to see that involvement outside the classroom. They feel it prepares them more for the social realities of college life.

HATCH

If that's what they call it nowadays, then I'd say he's on the right track. So...

LUCILLE

So, you'll have to tell me about the race when you get back.

HATCH

Regatta.

LUCILLE

Right. I'll bet it's nice and cool out there on the water.

HATCH

It can be.

LUCILLE

With that nice sea breeze.

HATCH

Couldn't sail without it.

LUCILLE

Mmmm. It certainly has warmed up the last few days.

HATCH

Just a short run of Indian summer. Clipper comin' in should cool things down in a day or two.

LUCILLE

What a shame. And just when I was starting to enjoy it.

HATCH

So...is there anything else you'd like me to take a look at? While, while I'm still here?

LUCILLE

Anything like...

HATCH

Like...anything that might need fixin'?

Lucy downs her scotch, rises and slowly circles the table.

LUCILLE

Now that you mention it, there is something upstairs that's come a little loose.

HATCH

Oh?

LUCILLE

I've been meaning to tell you about it for a while now but...

HATCH

Slipped your mind?

LUCILLE

No. I just haven't had this kind of chance yet.

HATCH

Are you going to tell me what it is or should I take a guess?

LUCILLE

Well, it's kind of hard to explain from down here. Come. I'd be happy to show you myself.

Lucy exits to the living room. Hatch downs his scotch and follows. After a beat, Lee enters and makes a sandwich.

LEE

Mom?! I'm home! Joanne's baby got sick again! (Aside now) Ear infection or a high fever or rickets...or something. She took her to the hospital to be safe! Mom?! (Aside now) Sent my butt home without pay...again...bitch. Mom?!

Lee takes exits to the living room.

LEE (O.S.)

Mom?!

LIGHTS FADE

END OF ACT 1

-----------------------------------------------------------

ACT 2

LIGHTS UP on the living room later that night. Lee does homework on the couch as Danny plays Atari's Missile Command.

LEE

Do you have to have it so loud?!

DANNY

It's Atari’s Missile Command, nuclear war, it's suppose to be loud.

LEE

I know what it is stupid.

DANNY

Stupid? Mm'wah?

LEE

Way.

DANNY

So how's the math coming, Isosceles?

Lee throws an eraser at Danny's head.

DANNY

Take a chill pill, will ya'?

LEE

You're going to be in deep trouble when Dad gets home.

DANNY

I'm shaking.

LEE

Deep.

DANNY

Yeah, n' why's that? You're the one throwin' shit.

LEE

No TV until AFTER our homework is done.

DANNY

I'm not watching TV.

LEE

You know what he meant, Danny.

DANNY

Relax. Dad won't be home for hours.

Lucy enters from the kitchen putting on ear rings. She's dressed to impress.

LUCILLE

All right kids, I'm off. Lee, tell your father there's a plate in the fridge. Lee?

LEE

What?

LUCILLE

Did you hear what I said?

LEE

Does a bear crap in the woods?

LUCILLE

That's my little girl. Danny, don't sit so close to the TV, you'll ruin your eyes.

Lucy exits to the kitchen. Pause.

LEE

Doesn't that strike you as a bit odd?

DANNY

Doesn't what strike me?

LEE

Mom going out all dressed up without Dad?

DANNY

Like he really gives a shit.

LEE

Where the hell is he anyway?

DANNY

Working late.

LEE

Again?

DANNY

What, am I speaking french?

LEE

So who's going to help me with this fucking math?!

DANNY

Holy shit! Did you just swear?!

LEE

So.

DANNY

So I've never heard you swear before.

LEE

Yeah? Well meet the new me.

Lee goes back to her work.

DANNY

The answers are in the back of the book, loser.

LEE

It's losers like you who cheat.

DANNY

It's not cheating.

LEE

Is so.

DANNY

Not if you already know what you're doing.

LEE

Whatever.

DANNY

They put the answers in there are so the kids who already know how to do the problems don't have to waste their time.

LEE

Like you don't lie around wasting your time anyway?

DANNY

Hardly.

LEE

Usually.

DANNY

All right Miss Priss, ask me what I got in math last year, in the exact same class you're in now.

LEE

An F probably.

DANNY

Try a B plus.

LEE

That's because you cheated.

DANNY

Not on the tests, I didn't.

LEE

But you did on all your homework.

DANNY

Homework is just practice. Once you know how to do the problems, why bother? It's a waste of time.

LEE

So you said.

DANNY

So it's not cheating is it?

LEE

Everyone cheats.

Danny resumes play. Lee tries to focus.

DANNY

Want some help?

LEE

No. I'll just wait for Dad.

DANNY

Suit yourself.

LEE

Why does he have to work so late all the time anyway?

DANNY

Because the fate of the free world depends on it.

LEE

Yeah, well so does my math homework.

DANNY

Do you even know what Dad does for work?

LEE

He works at some plant or something.

DANNY

He works at the Raytheon plant on Route 1.

LEE

Big deal.

DANNY

Do you even know what they do there?

LEE

They do whatever it is they do at a plant.

DANNY

Yeah, like what?

LEE

How the hell should I know?

DANNY

You wouldn't because you don't.

LEE

Do you?

DANNY

Damn right. They make bombs, Lee. Nuclear bombs.

LEE

Yeah right.

DANNY

I shit you not.

LEE

You lie.

DANNY

Why would I lie?

LEE

Because you're good at it.

DANNY

Look, Dad works at Raytheon.

LEE

So?

DANNY

And Raytheon makes nuclear bombs.

LEE

Bologna.

DANNY

Bull nothing. Don't be such a naive wuss.

LEE

If Dad made nuclear bombs, then he would have to be like, best friends with the President or something.

DANNY

Hardly. The military needs nukes, Raytheon knows how to build them and Dad works at Raytheon. Do the math.

LEE

I'm sure Dad would have said something if, if he was building nuclear bombs.

DANNY

Dad never said anything because you never asked.

LEE

Just because I never asked doesn't mean it's true.

DANNY

Haven't you ever wanted to know what Dad does?

LEE

No. Have you?

DANNY

Don't need to. I've always known. I think it's cool.

LEE

You would. So how do I know you're telling the truth?

DANNY

Ask him when he gets home and see for yourself.

LEE

Maybe I will.

DANNY

Maybe you should.

LEE

Why would anyone even want a job like that?

DANNY

Because it pays a lot of money.

LEE

I know it isn't but if it were true, why would Dad?

DANNY

Because he's good at it. Besides, someone has to.

Lee gives Danny a chilling look and tries to get back to her homework. After a few beats, she takes out her diary and starts writing. LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on the kitchen the following night. Lucy enters with a new energy in her step. From one bag, she pulls a bottle of wine, a six pack of Schlitz and some flowers. From a second, a small, black porcelain elephant she places gently on the table. THE PHONE RINGS. Lucy answers it.

LUCILLE

Hello. Hi sweetheart. You're what? From you...but how..a telephone in you car?! A Motorola? That is amaze-Hello? Hello...?

Lucy hangs up and puts the wine away. THE PHONE RINGS. She answers it.

LUCILLE

Hello? No, it just cut off. Can you hear me now? Good. Well you're coming home early for a change. Really? I can't wait. Oh not much really, just a little shopping.

Lucy picks up the elephant.

LUCILLE

Maybe. It's a secret. Just a little something I saw and thought you'd like. I will. I love you too. B-bye.

Lucy hangs up and sets the elephant on the table. She ties on an apron, puts the flowers in a vase and starts dinner. A CAR PULLS UP outside. Lucy smiles. After a few beats, there's a KNOCK at the door. With a playful air, Lucy holds the elephant close to her and stands with her back to the door.

LUCILLE

It's open.

Hatch enters. Lucy turns with the elephant held out and drops it. It SHATTERS.

LUCILLE

No! God damn it!

HATCH

(Bending to pick up the pieces)

Sorry about-

LUCILLE

(Pushing him away, picking up the pieces)

No! Please! Just...don't.

HATCH

It was an accident.

LUCILLE

Yes. It most certainly was.

HATCH

Hope it wasn't anything too expensive.

LUCILLE

That's not the point.

HATCH

I said I was sorry.

LUCILLE

So be sorry.

HATCH

Look, Lucille...

LUCILLE

It was a gift, all right? And life, as a gift, goes on.

Lucy drops the pieces in the trash and goes back to preparing dinner.

LUCILLE

I thought you were on the Cape?

HATCH

Got cancelled. What are you cooking?

LUCILLE

Shepherds pie. Look John, we need to talk.

HATCH

Call me Hatch. Old nickname.

LUCILLE

Fine. Hatch. We need to talk.

A CAR PULLS UP. Lucy looks outside.

HATCH

He's home early.

LUCILLE

(Turning with a glare)

He lives here.

HATCH

Maybe I'll just get goin', huh?

LUCILLE

Stay. He'll want to talk to you too.

HATCH

Look, the whole thing was your idea, I mean I never-

LUCILLE

-About Danny's basketball hoop.

Pause.

LUCILLE

Something to drink?

HATCH

No, I just stopped by to see, to check on the uh...Scotch?

LUCILLE

We're out. How about a beer?

HATCH

As long as it's cold.

LUCILLE

There's Schlitz in the garage. Make yourself at home.

Lucy exits. Hatch looks outside.

HATCH

If it isn't Mr. Donald Goodwin. So Donny boy, got anything else round' the house needs fixin'?

Lucy enters, hands Hatch a beer and goes back to preparing dinner.

HATCH

(Opening, sipping his beer)

Cold.

LUCILLE

Pardon me?

HATCH

I said, it's nice and cold.

Hatch looks out the window again.

LUCILLE

(Without looking at him)

That's the third time you've looked out that window since you walked in.

Hatch takes a long sip on his beer.

HATCH

Old carpenters habit I suppose. Soon as you create something new, can't take your eyes off it at first. Hard to walk away.

LUCILLE

I know. I was the same way with Danny and Lee after they were born.

HATCH

There's a house over on Pleasant Street I painted 10 years ago. I still drive by to look in on it from time to time.

WHISTLING OS. Donald enters.

DONALD

John.

HATCH

Donald.

LUCILLE

It's Hatch.

DONALD

I'm sorry.

LUCILLE

(Kissing Donald hello)

John wants us to call him Hatch.

DONALD

Hatch.

HATCH

It's an old nickname.

DONALD

Really?

HATCH

How about you Donald. Any old nicknames?

DONALD

Not that I can recall.

LUCILLE

Beer, hon?

HATCH/DONALD

Sure.

Pause. Lucy exits to the garage.

DONALD

I saw the post set up on my way in.

HATCH

She'll be good and solid by morning.

DONALD

Wow. That's pretty fast work.

HATCH

Hardest part is netting the rim.

DONALD

Oh yeah?

HATCH

Post is easy. Dig a hole, drop your post, pour the mortar-

DONALD

-And watch it dry.

HATCH

Right.

Lucy enters and hands Donald a beer.

HATCH

Just make sure you don't bump er' too hard.

DONALD

Of course.

HATCH

She still might be a little...tender.

DONALD

Got it.

HATCH

She'll need at least twenty-four hours to settle.

DONALD

Will do. Thanks.

HATCH

Well, gotta' get down to the water. Today's the big deadline. Harbor Master wants everyone in dry dock by midnight.

DONALD

For a boat?

HATCH

That's right.

DONALD

I didn't know you owned a boat.

HATCH

Twenty seven footer.

DONALD

Big.

HATCH

Your wife thought so too.

DONALD

Power?

HATCH

Sail actually.

DONALD

Sounds nice.

HATCH

Nothing better.

DONALD

Here that honey? John, our handyman here, is a sailor.

HATCH

Please, call me Hatch.

LUCILLE

Sounds lovely.

HATCH

Lucy here has always loved boats. Right, sweetheart?

LUCILLE

It would be nice.

HATCH

So why don't you get one? They're great fun.

DONALD

Oh ,I'm sure it is.

HATCH

You know what I don't get? People who live here in town, right on the water, and no boat.

DONALD

Well, from what I hear, owning a boat can be pretty expensive, John.

HATCH

Hatch.

DONALD

There's probably lots of upkeep, fuel costs, registration and docking fees, maintenance, repairs...

HATCH

All they really need, Donald, is a little TLC.

DONALD

And that is your specialty, isn't it?

HATCH

No complaints yet.

Hatch finishes his beer.

HATCH

I guess I'll stop by tomorrow to put up that backboard. You know how to thread the rim, Donald?

DONALD

I think I can figure it out.

HATCH

Great. See you tomorrow.

DONALD

Then we'll break her in with a game of one-on-one.

HATCH

Careful, I think Danny's got a few inches on you.

DONALD

I meant you and I, Hatch.

HATCH

Oh no.

DONALD

What?

HATCH

Not this guy.

DONALD

Oh come on, it'll be fun.

HATCH

I couldn't, really, but thanks.

DONALD

I'll even spot you ten points.

HATCH

No, it's not that.

DONALD

All right, fifteen.

HATCH

It's my bum knee that won't let me.

DONALD

You didn't injure it sailing on the high seas did you?

HATCH

No. Vietnam.

Pause.

HATCH

Besides, I'm more of a board game man myself. Nothing better than a good game of chess.

DONALD

Right.

HATCH

See you tomorrow.

Hatch exits. Lucy goes back to preparing dinner.

DONALD

How's dinner coming?

LUCILLE

Another half hour or so. Hungry?

DONALD

Starving. What are you making?

LUCILLE

Just shepherds pie.

DONALD

Do you smell something?

LUCILLE

Like what?

DONALD

Like something burning.

LUCILLE

Maybe the neighbors are barbecuing again.

DONALD

Maybe. So where's my surprise?

LUCILLE

Surprise?

DONALD

Remember when I called, you said you had a surprise.

Lucy walks right up to Donald and kisses him passionately.

LUCILLE

Well? Are you surprised?

Donald removes his tie and exits to the living room with a smile.

LUCILLE

Be right up.

Lucy removes the pieces of the elephant from the trash, places them in a paper bag and exits to the living room. LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on the living room. We're in the present later that night. Donald watches TV. Danny enters and sets Jax's leash on the table. He finds a chew toys and gives it a SQUEEZE.

DONALD

What's the problem now? Cat's gone missing?

DANNY

Lee's cat Polly, died twelve years ago, Dad.

DONALD

Good. Hate cats.

DANNY

So when you ran her over in the driveway it was on purpose.

DONALD

I didn't say that.

DANNY

So what are you saying?

DONALD

I'm not saying anything cept' I hate cats. One night I found Polly upstairs with her feet wrapped in duct tape.

DANNY

Really.

DONALD

Took everything I had to keep that cat quiet. Cost me a pint of blood getting that tape off before your sister got home.

DANNY

Huh.

DONALD

That wouldn't have been you would it?

Pause.

DANNY

I won't tell if you wont-

DONALD

-Deal.

Donald turns on the tv via remote.

DONALD

If it's money you come sniffin' round' for, you can forget it, I'm broke.

DANNY

I didn't come for money.

DONALD

Oh no?

DANNY

No. Have I asked you for any money?

DONALD

Not yet but give it time.

Danny gets up in a huff, pacing.

DONALD

You're gonna have to take a bad check cuz' it's all I've got.

DANNY

Stop it! All right? I didn't come over here to borrow money.

DOnALD

People who borrow are usually obligated to pay it back.

DANNY

After the shit you put me through for a measly $500-

DONALD

-500?

DANNY

500, 700, 900 whatever!

DONALD

Try 1200.

DANNY

Jesus Christ, I said I'd pay you back!

DONALD

I won't hold my breathe.

Pause.

DANNY

I want to know something.

DONALD

If it's about money, I already told you, I'm broke.

DANNY

No. I want to know if you think I have potential.

DONALD

For givin' me a god damn headache maybe.

DANNY

Like you had before your stroke. I figure hey, like father like son.

DONALD

Like I had?

DANNY

A lot of important people relied on you.

DONALD

And I worked hard for them.

DANNY

And they needed you.

DONALD

Very hard, for years.

DANNY

And I needed you too.

DONALD

You got what you needed.

DANNY

Did I? Because I still feel this nagging tug to drag myself over here but once I get here, I have no idea why I came.

DoNALD

Makes two of us.

DANNY

I leave more frustrated and dissatisfied than before I came.

DONALD

So what in the hell do you want from me now?

DANNY

To take some responsibility.

DONALD

Resp...You don't know what I was responsible for.

DANNY

You were responsible for me!

Pause.

DaNNY

With Lee, at least you found a way to be still for five minutes in the same room with her. What about me? What did I have to do to get you to see me? To respect me. To see how I-

DONALD

-To not Quit!

Donald gets up and head for the table.

DONALD

You remember quittin' don't you? Of course you do. Just a spoiled, brat kid who crumbled every time the ball didn't roll his way. Believe it or not, that, then, has got everything to do with who you are now. I never stood up to your mother and what she did right here in this house, under my roof, in my own god damn bed! But I never quit! I never let it in. She never knocked me down. I NEVER FELL! And I was never able to show you, my own son, how a man picks himself up again. So from a father to a son, I showed you nothing in that regard. And if it boils down to me trying to stay strong, as I was, as I had to be, then yes, I'm guilty of that. And I'm sorry for not being able to show you that it's okay to fall down. But I'm even more sorry for not being able to show you how to get back up again. Potential? Maybe at one time but if you had it, you'd know it and you wouldn't be hanging it over me now like it was somehow my fault.

DaNNY

You never quit.

DONALD

That's right.

DANNY

You know, I'm not as bad off as you think. Sure, I quit a few things along the way but those were shit jobs or shit friends or overpriced brands of god damn breakfast cereal.

DONALD

What's your point?

DANNY

My point, Dad, is when you try something on and it doesn't fit right, you shove it under the bed or to the back of the closet. But with people, we don't have that luxury. And I'm not talking about showing up the neighbors with an expensive car or a brand new boat. I'm talking about showing up for life. There's a big difference between being alive, really alive and just merely existing. And life Dad, is full of people.

DONALD

What makes you such an expert?

DANNY

Because at least I showed up. At least I got out of the gate and gave it a shot. At least I give people a shot. But you...zigzag through life, unaffected. And if that's all you're capable of, then fine. But don't ever expect me to admire or envy or respect your so called strength. No. That's your disease, Dad...not mine.

Danny moves to the stairs. LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on the kitchen. It's the past the following night. Lucy finishes super gluing the elephant. As she exits to the living room with it, Lee enters from the garage and sits. As Lucy gently places the elephant in the glass case with the others, Lee takes out her diary and begins writing. Lucy crosses and enters the kitchen. Lee shoves her diary back in her bag.

LUCILLE

Lee, Lee, you're home.

LEE

Hey, Mom.

LUCILLE

I didn't even hear you-

WHISTLING OS. Lucy grabs a Schlitz from the fridge and meets Donald at the door with a kiss as he enters.

DoNALD

Hi. Hey, Lee.

Lee takes out a book and waves hello with a pencil.

LUCILLE

How was work?

DONALD

(Opening his beer)

Busy, busy, busy.

LeE

Can you help me with my math, math, math?

DONALD

(Loosening his tie)

Abso, absolutely. Where's Danny?

LUCILLE

With his after school group.

LeE

Dad?

DONALD

Yeah, sweetie.

LEE

Math?

DONALD

Let me catch my breath princess, I just walked in the door.

LUCILLE

Lee-lee, let your father catch his breath.

DONALD

How about we hit it right after dinner?

LUCILLE

Good idea. Dinner's almost done and the table needs setting.

LeE

But I have over thirty problems and no idea how to do them.

DONALD

Same type of problems you were working on last night?

LEE

They ARE the same problems but you got home so late I-

DONALD

-So let's take advantage of the fact that I'm home early for a change and we'll tackle those problems right after dinner.

LUCILLE

Lee? Table?

DONALD

We'll get to it right after dinner, Kiddo.

LeE

(Aside)

I'm not a kid.

Lee starts setting the table. Donald settles back with the evening paper.

DONALD

So how long does this thing with Danny last?

LUCILLE

Through senior year.

DONALD

Wow. That's quite a commitment.

LUCILLE

It'll look great on his transcripts.

DONALD

Sure but what about his grades?

LUCILLE

His grades are fine and if you're referring to his D in chemistry, it's not Danny's fault.

DONALD

(Laughing)

Oh no? Then who's fault is it?

LUCILLE

Well, we're going to discuss it with Danny.

LEE

Not right after dinner, right Dad?

LUCILLE

Lee.

DONALD

Regardless of who's fault it is, a D is still a D to any Admissions Office.

LUCILLE

Danny has a small issue with one of his teachers, that's all.

LeE

Arty Nayhill.

DONALD

Arty?

LUCILLE

Lee? And once we work it out, his grade will improve.

LeE

He's also the varsity basketball coach.

DONALD

What does basketball have to do with failing chemistry?

LUCILLE

Nothing.

LeE

Because Danny and Mr. Nahill had a fight.

DONALD

They what?!

LUCILLE

Lee!

LeE

In the gymnasium. My friend Jenny saw the whole thing.

LUCILLE

It was not a fight.

DONALD

A teacher hit Danny?!

LeE

Danny shoved him first.

LUCILLE

Lee, please!

LEE

And Mr. Nayhill shoved him back.

Donald gets up and grabs to the phone.

LUCILLE

What are you doing?

DONALD

I'm calling the school.

LeE

They call him Arty Anthill.

LUCILLE

Why?

DONALD

Isn't it obvious?

LeE

He's only five foot four.

LUCILLE

It's late dear and the offices are probably closed.

Donald hangs up the phone, grabs his jacket and heads for the door.

DONALD

Then I'll just have to drive down there, won't I?

LeE

Anthill, because he's so short.

LUCILLE

Lee, please. Honey, the school is still going to be closed whether you drive down there or not.

Lucy hands Donald his beer.

LUCILLE

Why don't you just go back to your paper and we'll talk about this with Danny after dinner.

LeE

Dad?!

LUCILLE

Lee, please!

DONALD

(Sitting)

A teacher fighting with students?

LUCILLE

Now we don't know that for sure, dear.

DONALD

What could possibly motivate a teacher to go after a student?

LeE

Because Danny made a wise crack about his height.

LUCILLE

Lee, enough.

LeE

Mr. Nayhill is only five foot four.

LUCILLE

Lee!

DONALD

Well that doesn't give him the right to fight with Danny.

LUCILLE

There was no fight.

LeE

Mr. Nayhill told Danny he wasn't good enough to play varsity so Danny got up in his face.

LUCILLE

Lee, please.

DONALD

Varsity? Varsity what?

LUCILLE/LEE

Basketball.

DONALD

Danny tried out for basketball?

LUCILLE

He didn't make it.

LeE

He could have made J.V.

DONALD

J.V.?

LEE

Junior Varsity.

DONALD

So what's wrong with Junior Varsity?

LEE

J.V. sucks, Dad.

LUCILLE

Lee, the table?

DONALD

So from what I'm hearing, technically, Danny started it.

LUCILLE

We don't know that, dear.

DONALD

Lee? Where you there?

LeE

No but my friend Jenny was and she saw the whole thing.

LUCILLE

Honey, I really think we should wait until-

DONALD

-Lucille, please. Lee...

Danny enters. He looks tired, withdrawn, high and depressed.

DaNNY

What's going on?

No one answers him. LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on kitchen. It's the present the following morning, Sunday. Lucy, in a bathrobe, makes eggs. Danny enters from the garage. He drops Jax's leash on the table and looks under the sink.

LUCILLE

Morning, Danny.

DANNY

Where's the detergent?

LUCILLE

Under the sink, why, is it not there?

Danny stands showing his empty hands.

LUCILLE

Check the garage then.

Danny exits to the garage. Lee enters from the living room.

LeE

Smells good.

LUCILLE

Morning, thanks, hope you like scrambled eggs.

LEE

Where is everyone?

LUCILLE

Danny's doing laundry and your father is still asleep.

Danny enters with detergent and exits to the living room.

LEE

He's still steamed about Jax's tags, isn't he?

LUCILLE

He was just being concerned, dear.

LEE

Rude is more like it.

LUCILLE

Well, he does love that dog.

LEE

So do I. That's why I took his tags.

LUCILLE

There just dog tags, Lee. What harm could they have done?

LEE

It's the smaller wounds that go untreated, Mom.

Danny enters and crosses.

LUCILLE

Danny?

Lucy crosses Danny's path with a plate of eggs and sets it on the table. Danny follows it down, sits and dives in.

LUCILLE

Lee?

LEe

Oh, no thanks. I think I'll just wait for lunch.

LUCILLE

Are you sure?

LEE

I'm sure, really, save some for Dad.

LUCILLE

There's more than enough here.

LEE

Mom?

LUCILLE

Yes?

LEE

I'm not hungry.

LUCILLE

Suit yourself.

DaNNY

So what happened to the TV?

LUCILLE

Your fathers new one? It's nice, isn't it?

DANNY

Not anymore. The whole back's been torn off.

LEE

Here we go.

LUCILLE

(Dropping it on Danny's plate)

More bacon?

LeE

Dad's dismantling.

DANNY

He's what?

LEE

Dismantling.

DANNY

What the hell does that mean?

LEE

You haven't noticed? He doesn't know?

LUCILLE

Lee?

DaNNY

Doesn't know what?

LUCILLE

(With a cup of coffee)

Run this up to your father, tell him his eggs are on.

LEE

Here we go.

Lee exits with the cup of coffee.

DaNNY

Doesn't know what?

LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on the living room. We're in the past later that night. Lee enters with the same cup of coffee and sets it on the table. Donald sets the paper aside. Lee sits.

DONALD

Thanks, angel.

LeE

You're welcome.

DONALD

No one makes a better cup of coffee than your Mom.

LEE

Can I try some?

DONALD

Better not sweetheart, it'll keep you up. Besides, it'll stunt your growth.

LeE

So work was busy today, huh?

DONALD

Why yes it was and thank you for asking. How was school?

LEE

Lame.

DONALD

Just lame? Well that doesn't sound too good.

LEE

Busy, lame, what's the difference?

DONALD

(Opening a book)

Okay, here we go, integers, I remember this.

LEE

Dad?

DONALD

Yeah, baby.

LEE

How come you never talk about work?

DONALD

How do you mean, sweetheart?

LEE

Well...you never talk about your job.

DONALD

Well it's kind of like your math here. It's not the most exciting thing in the world but someone has to do it.

LEE

You work at a plant, right?

DONALD

It's more like a loony bin but yes, technically it's a plant.

LEE

What's it called?

DONALD

Raytheon. Raytheon Tech.

LEE

Like for technology?

DONALD

Right.

LEE

What kind of technology?

DONALD

Well, all kinds, I guess.

LEE

Like high technology kinds of stuff?

DONALD

Well, sure. Why do you ask?

LEE

Danny said you build bombs. Is that true?

Donald sets the book aside.

DONALD

Well...that's a very complicated question, Lee.

LEE

Is it?

DONALD

There's a heck of a lot more to it than that.

LEE

A lot more to what?

DONALD

To what it is we do there.

LEE

So it is true?

DONALD

Well...

LEE

Dad?

DONALD

One of our departments, they design and eventually construct what are called triggers.

LEE

Triggers?

DONALD

Right.

LEE

Triggers for what?

DONALD

For...the warheads.

LEE

Nuclear warheads?!

DONALD

Lee, you don't-

LEE

-It's true?!

DONALD

It's much more than that and if you let me try to explain-

LEE

-I can't believe it!

DONALD

Lee.

LEE

You build nuclear bombs!

DONALD

Lee.

LEE

My own father!

DONALD

Lee, you're not being very reasonable.

LEE

How could you?!

DONALD

If you'll just give me a chance to explain what we do-

LEE

-Nuclear bombs, Dad?!

DONALD

Lee, listen to me.

LEE

Nuclear fucking-

DONALD

-Lee!-

LEE

-Bombs!

DONALD

Damn it all!

Donald slams the coffee cup down. It breaks into several pieces, spilling coffee over the table, burning his hand. Pause. Lee begins to cry.

DONALD

I'm sorry, Lee, I...I didn't mean to...It's more complicated than...

Donald reaches for her, Lee recoils.

DONALD

(Cleaning up the coffee)

From the time I was a boy Lee, I loved to build things. From Lincoln Logs and Leg-go's to model airplanes and rockets that flew a thousand feet. By the time I got to high school, technology was taking off, getting higher and higher because that's where technology goes. I became fascinated and in college I studied physics, sub-atomics, critical-mass design theory, chaos theory, all of it. At graduation, a man from Raytheon approached me. The next day, we met with a room full of men in uniform and they offered me a job. A first year graduate making that kind of money was unheard of. A week later, I had my own office at Raytheon Technology on Route 1, America's technological highway.

LEE

But why?

DONALD

Because it's my job. And nothing more. And like any job, it puts food on this table and coffee in this cup.

Lee crosses to the glass case.

LEE

Remember you used to take me and Danny to the zoo?

DONALD

Yeah. I remember.

LEE

The Stoneham Zoo off of Route 1.

Donald crosses to her.

LEE

They had lots of elephants, didn't they?

DONALD

They certainly did.

LEE

And I know how much you like elephants so...maybe...

DONALD

What? Working at a zoo? Me?

LEE

As an elephant trainer?

DONALD

Lee.

LEE

Why not?

Donald removes the elephant Lucy fixed.

DONALD

I don't know the first thing about taking care of elephants.

LEE

They could teach you.

DONALD

(Staring at the elephant oddly)

Sure, I suppose but...

LEE

But what?

DONALD

Did you know Lee, that at Raytheon, if you walked through our labs and looked out onto our design floor where they actually construct the triggers for the warheads, you wouldn't have even the slightest idea about what you were looking at.

LeE

That's what scares me.

Lee picks up the broken coffee cup and heads for the kitchen.

DONALD

Lee?

Lee stops. Donald crosses to her.

DONALD

Here. I...want you to have this.

Donald hands her the black elephant.

DONALD

I know it's not much of a consolation but...I'd really like you to have it. Please.

Lee takes the elephant and gives it a long, hard look.

LEE

How come you never take us to the zoo anymore?

Donald is speechless. Lee sets the elephant on the table and exits to the kitchen. LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on the kitchen, in the present, as before. Lee enters with the coffee and sets it on the table. Danny is still eating. Donald enters as Lucy puts his plate on the table. Donald sits and moves Jax's leash aside.

DONALD

Where's Jax?

Pause.

LUCILLE

Danny?

DaNNY

What?

LUCILLE

Your father asked you a question.

Danny continues eating.

DONALD

Well?

DANNY

Haven't seen him.

DONALD

What?

DANNY

You heard me.

LUCILLE

Danny!

DaNNY

What?!

Lee throws the cup of coffee at the wall. IT SHATTERS. Pause.

DaNNY

Jesus-What the hell is wrong with you?

LeE

Everything! And for once in my life I realize, it's not me! I can't believe I'm sitting here watching this, listening to this now after all these years. Nothing has changed. The silence. The accusation. The resentment. The guilt. I've never seen anything so, so...so alive. And for what? A little lost pride? To even some intangible score? And I'm watching it continue to devour. How you've all allowed it to survive all these years makes me want to run out screaming with my hair on fire and never look back. But I can't do that this time. I won't. I did that a long time ago and it wasn't the answer. It's never the answer. And now I'm back because I thought I might have missed something or that I could offer something or that whatever I thought was missing had finally found its way here. But it hasn't. I came back because I thought I left for all the wrong reasons. But I see now that I was right. And nothing has changed. If anything, it's only gotten stronger because of it's own wicked will to survive. I wanted so badly for it to be different this time. For this to be a place that I could finally call home. But it isn't, is it? And that breaks my heart. This place, from the outside, masquerading as a home, is not the place for me. It's not the place for me and it's no place for me to raise my baby.

Pause.

LUCILLE

(Breaking)

Oh, Lee...

LEE

I thought you all would have wanted to be a part of that.

Lee exits to the garage. Pause. A KNOCK on the door. Lucy crosses and opens it.

LUCILLE

Baby?

Lucy freezes for a beat then rushes out after Lee. Hatch enters.

HATCH

Morning. Was that Lee I just saw?

DONALD

Close the door.

HATCH

(Closing the door behind him)

Morning, Danny.

Danny takes a last bite, rises, drops his plate in the sink and crosses to Hatch. He reaches into Hatch's shirt, grabs his cigarettes and lights one up.

HATCH

Since when did you start smokin'?

Danny hands the cigarettes to Hatch.

DANNY

I just quit.

Danny takes a drag and exits to the garage.

HATCH

Morning, Donald?

DONALD

John.

HATCH

You're not gonna run out too? So how long is Lee home for?

DONALD

For good.

HATCH

For good? That's great. So she's moving back home?

DONALD

We hope.

HATCH

Great.

DONALD

You want to hear something great? Lucille and I are going to be grandparents.

HATCH

Grandparents? I had no idea.

DONALD

How could you?

HATCH

Well it's a small town and I see Danny all the time so-

DONALD

-This isn't about Danny.

HATCH

Lee? Well...congratulations, grandpa.

DONALD

And we're going to get it right this time.

HATCH

Of course. Congratulations.

DONALD

You said that already.

HATCH

Did I?

DONALD

Lee's going to have a baby and it will be raised here, in this house, in our home.

HATCH

And Danny's gonna be an uncle.

DONALD

He is.

HATCH

I remember when Danny and Lee used to call me Uncle John.

DONALD

That was a long time ago.

HATCH

Certainly was. Wow. So what am I gonna be now, the Godfather?

DONALD

Leaving.

HATCH

How's that?

DONALD

You're leaving.

Pause.

DONALD

You're leaving town. Before the baby is born.

HATCH

Before the...you mean, Lee's baby?

DONALD

You'll be gone.

HATCH

Oh. Huh. To where...exactly?

DONALD

Doesn't matter.

HATCH

Now...why am I leaving again?

DONALD

Because I'm asking you to.

HATCH

You are?

DONALD

I am.

HATCH

Oh. Okay. Are you asking me or telling me?

DONALD

Doesn't matter.

HATCH

Doesn't matter. Okay. Can I ask a silly question?

DONALD

By all means.

HATCH

Why?

LIGHTS UP on the kitchen. We're in the past. Lee, at 18, stops writing in her diary, takes the black elephant from one of two travel bags and hides it behind the stove. She looks out a window.

LEE

Come on, come on.

Danny enters from the garage. Several years of drugs and alcohol have taken their toll. He doesn't notice Lee and opens the fridge.

DANNY

Th'fuck happened to all the food?

Lee ZIPS up her bag.

DANNY

(Poking his head up)

How's that?

Lee doesn't answer. She looks out the window. Danny notices the suitcases.

DANNY

I see before me, a suitcase and a bag. Where did you go?

Lee doesn't answer him.

DANNY

MY suitcase to be exact.

LEE

I haven't gone yet.

DANNY

Could have fooled me.

Danny resumes his search of the fridge.

DANNY

If I ever have a kid, remind me to name him Exact. So where you headed with MY exact suitcase?

LEE

Nowhere, Danny.

DANNY

Nowhere, Danny. Never been. Sounds as random as Anywhere-But, Illinois. Never heard of it.

LEE

What are you doing home? It's only eight o'clock.

DANNY

Came in on a fly-by to fuel up. Me and Devo'er goin' out drinkin'. But it don't look like that's gonna happen.

LEE

There's hotdogs out in the freezer.

Danny pauses for a beat then makes a quick exit to the garage. Lee lights up a cigarette. Danny enters.

DANNY

Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice...shame, shame. There are no hot dogs out there. Only brats and sausages.

LEE

What's the difference?

DANNY

(Searching the fridge again)

The difference my love, is that I can't eat brats or sausage.

LEE

Why not?

DANNY

They don't agree with me. I'm more of a ball park frank man.

LEE

I'll try and remember that.

Lee quietly crosses to the stove and picks up the elephant.

DANNY

(Noticing her)

Stash alert, stash alert! What cha' got there?

LEE

Just something I forgot.

DANNY

Looked like some tripped out, black, voo-doo child flask for transportin' sweet elixir of the Gods.

LEE

It's not a bottle, Danny.

DANNY

Oh, really?

Before Lee can get it in her bag, Danny swoops in and grabs it.

DANNY

Whoa. Cool. An elephant.

Danny sniff it.

LEE

Told ya'.

DANNY

Hey wait a sec, I remember this. This is that same elephant Dad gave Mom.

LEE

You mean the one Mom gave to Dad.

DANNY

And Dad gave it to you?

LEE

Yeah.

Pause.

LEE

And now, now I want to give it to you.

DANNY

Yeah?

LEE

Yeah.

DANNY

You're giving me an elephant?

LEE

That's right.

DANNY

So now do I have to like, you know, give you any-

LEE

-No, Danny. There's just one gift here. One from me to you.

DANNY

Okay. Cool. Thanks.

LEE

You're welcome.

Lee looks out the window again.

DANNY

You waiting for the pizza guy or something?

LEE

Nice try.

DANNY

So we got suitcases n' sausages, brats and elephants...What's going on?

Pause.

LEE

I'm leaving.

DANNY

Gettin' out a' Dodge. Cool. Where to?

LEE

Not sure yet. Maybe out west.

DANNY

Like Texas?

LEE

Maybe.

DANNY

So for how long then?

LEE

Don't know.

DANNY

Oh. Cool. So...how long again...did you say?

LEE

I didn't.

DANNY

Must be a while seeing you had MY elephant all packed and ready to go.

LEE

You're right. It will be. For a while.

DANNY

Oh.

LEE

Is that all right?

DANNY

All right.

LEE

Are you going to be okay?

DANNY

What?

LEE

Are you going to be...

DANNY

Sure, no, I'm, I'll be fine. Sure. Hey, more food for me.

LEE

All the sausage you can eat.

DANNY

Yeah.

A CAR PULLS UP OUTSIDE. Lee looks out.

LEE

I think that's my ride.

A CAR HORN. Lee gathers her things.

DANNY

It ain't the pizza delivery guy is it?

LEE

Not this time , Danny.

Lee heads for the door.

LEE

Take it easy, huh?

DANNY

Thanks. You too.

Lee stops at the door. Pause. She puts down her bags and moves back to Danny.

LEE

I want you to do something for me, Danny.

DANNY

Sure.

LEE

No. I need you to listen to me.

DANNY

Okay.

LEE

Are you listening?

DANNY

Yes.

LEE

When I go, I want you...I want you to...

WE HEAR THE CAR HORN again.

LEE

I want you to take this elephant.

DANNY

My elephant?

LEE

Yes, your elephant, I want you to take your elephant and I want you to set it somewhere for me, somewhere safe.

DANNY

Okay.

LEE

Set it somewhere safe and out of the way, but remember, you have to remember to make sure that it faces the door, okay?

DANNY

Okay, behind the door.

LEE

No, listen! You have to listen and remember! Remember what I say. Take the elephant Danny, your elephant and put it somewhere, somewhere safe, somewhere out of the way.

DANNY

Somewhere safe.

LEE

And out of the way.

DANNY

Out of the way, okay, I will.

LEE

But it has to be facing the front door. If it's not facing the front door then it won't work. You have to try and remember that, Danny. The elephant has to be left somewhere so that it's facing the front door.

DANNY

Facing the front door.

LEE

The front door, right.

DANNY

I'll remember.

LEE

Do you understand me?

DANNY

Yeah.

LEE

Do you?

DANNY

I do.

Lee lunges at him in a goodbye embrace THE CAR HORN.

DANNY

I will.

Lee lets go and exits with her bags.

DANNY

I'll remember.

Danny looks about the room. He hides the elephant on the floor behind the stove, stands for a beat, then exits to the garage. LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on the kitchen as before. Hatch gets up and looks out the window.

HATCH

Can you believe it's still standing after all these years? It's a shame we never got around to that game of 1 on 1, huh? I remember that day I set the post. That night you asked me to play. I remember I told you I couldn't. Something about my leg or a bum knee...or something.

DONALD

An old war wound.

HATCH

Ah. Right. Vietnam. I'll let you in on a little secret, Donald. I never went to Vietnam. Ssshh. I was never in the United States military. No one's military for that matter. Not my cup of tea, really. But don't tell Danny, huh? I kind of told him about the war once when he was a kid and you know how kids feel about war...so he kind of, looks up to me and..

DONALD

Your lie is safe with me.

Hatch takes a Schlitz from the fridge.

HATCH

When you asked me to play that day, was it because you really wanted to play or was it because you suspected that I was fucking your wife? I'll let you in on another little secret, Donald. I wouldn't play you for two reasons. One, I could play basketball pretty well back then so I didn't want to embarrass you in front of your family and two, I was fucking your wife. No sense in beating a man when he's already down, huh?

Hatch moves back to the table and sits.

HATCH

So about my big move, what if I refuse to go?

DONALD

You won't.

HATCH

Well Donald, you sure got our minds made up on this, don't you?

DONALD

I do.

HATCH

And what makes you think you can just get me to up and go?

Donald removes Lees old diary from his robe pocket and tosses it on the table.

HATCH

So...what the hell is that?

DONALD

All the proof I need.

HATCH

Please, elaborate.

DONALD

It's Lee's old diary.

HATCH

Diary. Huh. Was kind of hopin' it was a beginners guide to sailing or something.

DONALD

From what I hear, you could probably use one of those too.

HATCH

You mean, the whole sailing thing. Shit. I don't even know how to swim let alone sail. I had a rubber raft once though, when I was a kid but never could stand the water. Funny though isn't it? For a guy to live this close to the water and not sail? Guess we have more in common than you think.

Pause.

HATCH

So Lee's diary, huh? Isn't that invasion of privacy?

Donald picks up the diary and opens it.

DONALD

Entries beginning June 9th, 1980.

HATCH

1980, 1980, 1980. That was a long time ago.

DONALD

Regardless.

HATCH

And you think something Lee wrote in there has to do with me?

Pause. Hatch lunges and grabs the diary. He rifles through it, searching.

DONALD

Ever play any board games, John?

HATCH

These pages are blank.

DONALD

Maybe a good game of chess?

HATCH

Entire sections are torn out.

DONALD

They are.

HATCH

So this is what, nothing, there's nothing here, you've got nothing.

DONALD

Not until now. What matters is that you moved.

HATCH

I moved. Not yet I haven't, hm? Still here.

DONALD

And I needed to be sure. If you moved for the diary, that would have told me everything I needed to know.

Pause.

DONALD

And you did. And I knew you would.

HATCH

You're good. Bravo, Donald. Bravo. So, where are they?

Donald doesn't answer. Hatch rises angrily and stands over him.

HATCH

The torn out pages, you're wild card, where are they?!

Donald stares him down. Hatch backs down and begins circling the table.

HATCH

You surprise me Donald. You really do. I'm impressed.

DONALD

I'm her father.

HATCH

And what about your wife? You're supposed to know if someone's been fucking your wife for the past fifteen years!

DONALD

Fourteen. Fourteen years, three months, twenty two days, nine hours...

Donald looks to a clock on the wall.

DONALD

And eleven minutes.

HATCH

What, no seconds? You're a sharp one, Donny. You and your stroke and your gimpin' around all these years. You fooled everyone didn't you? Can't slip a thing by you, no sir-ree.

DONALD

I lost the love and respect and the passion that once filled my wife. My son and daughter driven away because I was incapable of anything outside of myself. And that lead to contention. Taught me to blindly look the other way. But today, here, in my house, in MY kitchen. IN MY HOME...I accept that passing and...

Donald rises up without using his cane.

DONALD

...I take back that which is rightfully mine!

Donald throws his cane. Hatch catches it.

DONALD

Now either stand your ground with that stick of wood and defend yourself...or get the hell out of my home you god damn, spineless son of a bitch!

Hatch drops the cane and backs up, reaching for the door knob. He finds it and exits. Pause. Donald removes the torn pages of Lees diary from his robe. He finds a book of matches and sets the pages afire, dropping them into the sink. He watches them burn then crosses, picks up his cane and sets it on the wall by the garage door. He crosses and takes the elephant from the shelf above the sink, places it on the table facing the door and exits to the living room. LIGHTS FADE.

LIGHTS UP on the living room and kitchen. It's the following morning. Danny is at the kitchen table working on his fathers hand held radio. Lee, in the living room, goes through a box of baby clothes. The dismantled TV sits on the table. Lucy enters from upstairs with a box.

LUCILLE

I almost gave up.

LeE

Where was it?

LUCILLE

In the attic, right where I left it almost thirty years ago.

Lucy pulls pink baby shoes from the box.

LEE

Are those mine?

LUCILLE

They certainly are.

LEE

They're so small and so...pink.

LUCILLE

We didn't buy these until after you were born. The way you kicked and rolled, we thought you were going to be a boy.

LEE

And Danny?

LUCILLE

Didn't make a peep, thought he was a girl.

LEE

Mom, why don't we just go ahead and do the test.

LUCILLE

And spoil the surprise? Never.

LEE

All right but don't say I didn't offer.

LUCILLE

You say that like I might be disappointed somehow.

LEE

Well what if it's twins?

Lucy pulls out a blue pair of shoes. They hug.

Danny screws in the back of the radio and turns it on. BIG BAND MUSIC.

DaNNY

Holy...It works. It works! It-Dad! Dad, it works!

Lucy crosses and enters the kitchen.

LUCILLE

What on earth are you yelling for?

DANNY

It works, it works!

LUCILLE

Is that your fathers radio?

DANNY

I fixed it! And it works, it works, it works!

Danny starts dancing with Lucy.

LUCILLE

You fixed it?

DANNY

And it works!

LUCILLE

Your fathers radio?

DANNY

Yes!

LUCILLE

It works!

Danny dances her into a chair.

DANNY

I gotta go tell Dad. He's gonna flip!

Danny exits to the living room, kisses Lee in passing and runs upstairs.

DANNY (O.S.)

Dad! Dad!

A smile appears on Lucy's face as she listens to the MUSIC. Lee crosses and enters the kitchen.

LEE

What happened in here?

LUCILLE

Your fathers old radio. He did it, Danny fixed it, listen.

DaNNY (O.S.)

Mom?

Lee turns toward her brothers call.

LEE

Mom, I think Danny is calling you.

Lucy doesn't turn away from the MUSIC.

DANNY (O.S.)

Mom...?

LEE

Mom?

Lucy doesn't answer. Lee exits into the living room and looks upstairs.

LEE

Danny, what?

DANNY (O.S.)

Mom! Go get Mom, Quick!

Lucy cocks her head a bit but doesn't take her eyes off the radio.

DANNY (O.S.)

Mom!

Lee back up and enters the kitchen.

LeE

Mom.

Lucy doesn't answer her.

DANNY (O.S.)

MOM!

Lucy leans in closer to the radio, trying to ignore the inevitable.

LEE

Mom? Danny's calling you.

DANNY (O.S.)

Mom! It's Dad!

LEE

Mom?!

DANNY (O.S.)

Mom! Come quick! Something's wrong with Dad!

LEE

...mom...

LUCILLE

I know, dear...I know.

Lee backs up into the living room.

DANNY (O.S.)

MOM!

Lee curls up on the couch and begins to cry. LIGHTS FADE in the living room.

DaNNY (O.S.)

Mom! Mom! Mom!

Lucy turns up the volume and leans closer, drowning out everything around her as Danny CONTINUES CALLING OUT. Lucy sees the elephant, reaches out for it, picking it up. She stares into it as LIGHTS SLOWLY FADE in the kitchen.

BLACKOUT.

THE SOUND OF THE ELEPHANT SHATTERING off the kitchen floor.

BIG BAND MUSIC continues...

The end.