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*Of Builders and Dreamers*

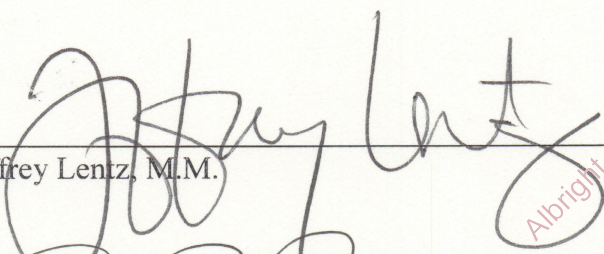
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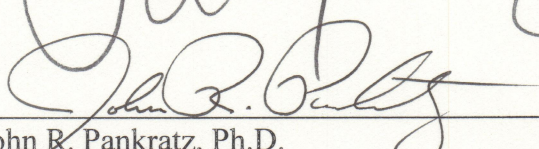
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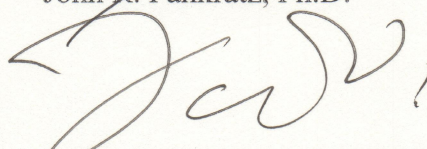
Bachelor of Arts

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for

Departmental Distinction in Theatre

  
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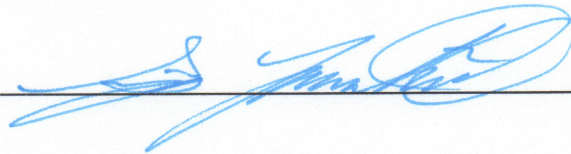
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**Senior Thesis for Departmental Distinction in Theatre  
Seiji Yamashita**

**Advisor: Jeffery Lentz**

**Readers: Victor Capece and Dr. John Pankratz**

**Actors for the original performance in order of appearance.**

**Troy: Dr. John Pankratz**

**Cindy: Katelyn Mullen**

**Alex: Richard Hackman**

**Dawn: Shelly Brown**

**Mike: David Darrow**

**John: Andrew Dell**

**Nurse Gwen/Medical Examiner: Ariel Trocino**

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## Introduction

**Scene:** *A cramped dorm room. A playwright at his desk where there is a computer.*

*Music plays.*

**Playwright:** In his book entitled Three Uses of the Knife, American playwright, David Mamet says, “We all have a myth and we all live by a myth.” I propose that whether we mean to or not, we live the myth of Daedalus. A brilliant man. He was an engineer, mathematician and architect. When queen asked him to find a way she could mate with a bull he devised a way. When that queen gave birth to the Minotaur, it was Daedalus who built the prison to hide away the beast. Daedalus built the labyrinth and was paid for his efforts by being locked inside of it. Like Daedalus we build walls around ourselves until we have not only locked the world out, but also locked ourselves in without hope of escape.

The script you are about to read is the result of over nine months of writing, re-writing, reading, and re-writing. A great deal of the early work was done alone, but soon I presented it to the Domino Players new play initiative, Green and Growing. It was the Green and Growing team who really helped me trim down the script, flesh it out, and trim it back down again. Eventually the script was ready for a staged reading with other Green and Growing projects. The staged reading allowed me to listen to the words while not concentrating on one line or another sounding exactly right. I was able to listen to what the audience was saying and what they said was not exactly what I was hoping to hear, albeit welcome nonetheless. I am very grateful for the opportunity I was given, but even more so for the opportunity to receive feedback from the audience which included



Theatre professionals, my peers, and Theatre aficionados. During the feedback the two greatest criticisms I heard were that the driving metaphor was lost, and that the transition between acts was a little confusing.

This script reflects those attitudes, opinions, and criticisms.

What I present here is more or less the same thing I presented for the staged reading with the second scene in act 1, and a few lines in act 2 scene 1 added in to try and fill in the gaps I found. I also added a small dialogue between Mike and Troy at the very end of Act 3 with the hopes of bringing the driving metaphor to the front.

The project began as an exploration of an archetype using a series of three vignettes and a Brechtian aesthetic. I soon learned that it wasn't working. With the help of the Green and Growing team, I was able to test drive multiple drafts and scripts between September and December of 2005. What they told me was that the archetypal figure of Daedalus, the quintessential builder, was lost among all the other images and confusions. I wasn't able to discuss the allegory of a modern day Daedalus, a man who builds and is lost in his own prison (the labyrinth), because people were too caught up in the story and were too invested in other characters. Despite all my efforts, people invested in characters and wanted to see what happened to them regardless of my desperate pleas to remain objective and detached.

I was forced to write a story.

### *Silence*

The Green and Growing project revealed to me that the archetype was lost and readers and listeners alike were struggling to find the connections between the three pieces. So I began by asking myself why a story about Daedalus wasn't working and



then the answer came to me with sudden clarity of thought. I was immediately intimidated and fascinated by the answer: Icarus. The man can't lock himself in the labyrinth without his son there to try and fly away. And so I included Icarus. I re-interpreted the labyrinth as the walls we put up to protect ourselves, in every way that I could imagine. The incarnations of this experiment were so varied and diverse that of them all only the second part of the final script has survived mostly intact.

The gaps and holes that the audience found so frustrating were easily filled if I converted it to a novel and merely wrote a few paragraphs of description and exposition. This is a piece that was meant to be heard and seen, not read. I am sure of it. I read over my words and I see them unfold on the stage. I see John's face smile in sadistic pleasure while Dawn cowers away to hide. This piece needs to be heard and seen.

### *Silence*

They say that there comes a time when an artist must step away from the work so that they may see the painting and not the brush strokes. I didn't realize this until a second reading was organized over the course of the Honors Presentations. It was this second reading that revealed to me the trees obscuring the rest of the forest. I was until that point, so utterly engrossed in the minutiae and the bits and pieces that I lost sight of the story I was trying so desperately to put into the piece. The conflict I set up in the first act is not resolved at all. The conflict in the second act is a different conflict than the one in the first, and the conflict resolved in the third act only vaguely resembles the arc that began when the curtain went up. The next step is to find that dramatic arc and rebuild it.



I offer special thanks to the Domino Players, Jeffrey Lentz, Victor Capece, Dr. John Pankratz and to the honors committee for giving me the opportunity to work on this project and taking the time to asses it. Special thanks go also to the Green and Growing group who helped me to workshop it, and those actors who weren't afraid to tell me that my script made no sense. Enjoy reading the script. Thrill in the performance of it.

*The playwright continues to write occasionally taking a sip of tea from a bottle. Eventually he prints what he was working on and leaves the dorm. He goes to the theatre. Curtain up.*

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# **Of Builders and Dreamers**

**By Seiji Yamashita**

Albright College Gingrich Library



## Act 1

**Scene 1:** *Troy's study. Billy Joel's Allentown is playing on a stereo. The desk is covered with books and sheets of paper. A blazer is hanging on a coat stand. Troy scribbles something on a piece of paper and frustrated with the result throws it away in a corner already littered with trash. He references one book after another. Eventually he gets up and starts to move among the giant piles of information looking at one thing after another.*

**Troy:** It's here. I know it's here. It has to be here. After all this time, after all the work, it has to be here. But I can't find it. Why can't I find it? Why?

*Enter Cindy. She has a cup of coffee and wears a bathrobe over her nightgown. She turns off the stereo.*

**Cindy:** You're up early.

**Troy:** What?

**Cindy:** You're up early today.

**Troy:** What time is it?

**Cindy:** A little after eight.

**Troy:** In the morning?

*Cindy moves to a window and opens the shade. The room is flooded with early morning light*

**Cindy:** You were up all night again.

**Troy:** Look, Cindy I'm sorry but I'm so close. It's here Cindy. I know it is.

**Cindy:** Your son has a baseball game today.

**Troy:** Again? Didn't we just go to one?

**Cindy:** The last game you went to was at the start of the season Troy.

**Troy:** that was what – Last week? The week before?

**Cindy:** Three months Troy.

**Troy:** Look...Cindy. Gorgeous. I can't go. He'll understand. I'll talk to him.

**Cindy:** I'll send him in so you can do just that.

**Troy:** [*going over to Cindy and kissing her on the cheek*] I'm glad you understand.

**Cindy:** Lets just hope your son does.

**Troy:** He's a smart kid. I'm sure he will.

**Cindy:** Should I tell your daughter that you are going to miss the show tonight?

**Troy:** She has a show tonight?

**Cindy:** They close tonight.

**Troy:** What another show her school is doing?

**Cindy:** This is a professional group doing Chicago. It's been up for six months.

**Troy:** I'm sure she won't mind if we don't go, her teachers are going to record it anyways.

**Cindy:** Her teachers don't go to her shows anymore. Not since she graduated.



**Troy:** Don't be ridiculous honey everything will be fine.  
**Cindy:** Your father called again.  
**Troy:** What did the drunk want this time?  
**Cindy:** To wish you a happy birthday.  
**Troy:** Is that all? He wasn't asking for money or anything?  
**Cindy:** He was hoping you'd go visit him sometime soon. He invited all of us over for dinner next weekend.  
**Troy:** Did you say yes?  
**Cindy:** I said I'd talk to you about it.  
**Troy:** I'm not going to Pat's house.  
**Cindy:** At least admit that he's your father.  
**Troy:** Honey, I've told you before. My relationship with Patrick is complicated.  
**Cindy:** [*with a sigh*] Would you like some coffee?  
**Troy:** what?  
**Cindy:** Coffee.  
**Troy:** Oh thank you.

*He goes over to her and takes the mug from her. He drinks it in one shot and hands the mug back to her.*

**Troy:** Thank you dear.  
**Cindy:** Of course. You're welcome. [*after a beat*] Would you like some breakfast?  
**Troy:** Yeah, sure thing.  
**Cindy:** Eggs over easy?  
**Troy:** I'll be there in a minute.  
**Cindy:** I'll bring you some toast too.  
**Troy:** Yes, absolutely. I love you too honey.  
**Cindy:** [*with a touch of sadness*] I know. I love you too.

*Exit*

**Troy:** [*throwing down a book*] I'm missing something.

*Troy starts tearing through some of the books and papers. Some things fall onto the floor. Eventually he starts crawling around on the floor. Enter Cindy with a tray of food that she places on his desk. She bends over and kisses Troy on the cheek. Exit.*

**Troy:** what am I missing? Am I missing something? Have I already figured it out and just don't know it? Ha! I make myself laugh. I could write a short story about that. People would be rolling. No. I'm missing something. It's here. I know it is but where? [*taking a careful look at the mess he has made*] God what a mess.

*He starts rearranging everything. Meticulously putting things on the desk in some unfathomable order when he finally notices the breakfast that Cindy has left him*



**Troy:** Breakfast. I didn't even hear her come in. [*Troy sits down to eat, takes one bite and spits it back out making a sound of disgust.*] I hate cold eggs.

*Enter Alex, Troy's son. He is 17 or 18 years old. He is well dressed. Nothing about his appearance suggests that he just finished a baseball game. He is dressed more like a talent scout than a player.*

**Alex:** Excuse me?

**Troy:** Yes, can I help you?

**Alex:** [*brief moment of hesitation*] Your wife said I might find you here. I work for the University of California at Los Angeles.

**Troy:** I see. And your name?

**Alex:** um, Andrew.

**Troy:** Well Andrew, are you here to ask me for money or a favor?

**Alex:** No, no, you misunderstand me sir. I am here to congratulate you.

**Troy:** congratulate me?

**Alex:** yes you must be very proud.

**Troy:** What exactly do you do at UCLA?

**Alex:** You mean your son didn't tell you that I would be coming?

**Troy:** No I haven't seen him all morning.

**Alex:** I see. Well your son did exceedingly well this afternoon at the state championships. So well in fact, that UCLA has agreed to give him a full scholarship.

**Troy:** Wonderful. How wonderful. Of course, he won't be finishing high school for another year. Of course he won't be joining your illustrious institute until then.

**Alex:** What? You think I'm – I mean your kid is still 16? My God you're more out of it than I thought. He's a senior in high school now. He graduates in a few months.

**Troy:** You're new to this yourself, so I'll go easy on you. I don't know who told you that he was ready to graduate high school, but if it was him, you must realize that he was lying. Children do that you know.

**Alex:** He isn't a child anymore.

**Troy:** I'll admit that he has always looked older than he is, but that doesn't change the fact that he is still too young to make such decisions for himself, and that he is too young to understand the gravity of such choices.

**Alex:** and where do you draw the line? When does too young become old enough? When does your precious little boy become a man? When do you let go of the fantasy of your little boy that missed you at the big game? When does he become a man who doesn't care anymore?

**Troy:** Do not lecture me in my own house! When you have children of your own and when you raise them to whatever standards and ideals you have, then you may look at how I reared my children and say something. Until then you are as ignorant as any puking, prepubescent pest.

*Beat*

**Alex:** I see.

**Troy:** Good.



**Alex:** Well I'll talk to my colleagues at the University and see if they will hold this offer for your son. He is an excellent player and all the other scouts agree.

**Troy:** If that's the case then I'm sure at least one of them will be more than willing to wait a year for him.

**Alex:** You never know. You just may be surprised.

**Troy:** Maybe I will be. Then again, maybe not.

*Enter Cindy*

**Cindy:** I heard shouting. Is everything all right?

**Troy:** Yes it is. Our guest was just leaving.

*Troy goes back to his desk*

**Alex:** So I was. [*To mother*] The man doesn't even recognize me and he still thinks I'm in the eleventh grade.

**Cindy:** [*to Alex*] Alex I know your father's distracted.

**Alex:** Distracted? Mom, he didn't even realize I was his own son. He thought I was the guy from UCLA.

**Cindy:** Alex, your dad had it really hard as a kid.

**Alex:** don't give me that mom. You told me yourself that Dad had more than one chance to make up with granddad before he died. This isn't because of his childhood or because he's trying to be the father that he never had. If anything he has become the father he was trying so desperately to avoid.

**Cindy:** Alex the circumstances –

**Alex:** I've read his books mom. I understand the semi-autobiographical bullshit that he throws at people and unlike most people I don't fall for it. He may have convinced the world that he's a saint but not me. He may have bent over backwards to avoid being what he thought his father was like, but I'm willing to do anything to avoid becoming the man I know he is.

**Cindy:** don't say things like that. Besides you are better dressed than usual.

**Alex:** The scout invited me out to dinner mom. I wasn't going in torn jeans and a beat up t-shirt.

*Exit Alex.*

**Cindy:** [*to Troy*] Would you like some dinner Troy?

**Troy:** dinner? What time is it? I haven't even gotten around to lunch yet.

**Cindy:** You never do dear. It's almost six.

**Troy:** Six? I see.

**Cindy:** Do you?

*Beat. After it's clear that Troy isn't going to answer*

**Cindy:** Would you like some stew?

**Troy:** Stew? What's he doing here? I thought he moved out to California.



**Cindy:** Not Steward Honey, stew, as in a thick soup.

**Troy:** Oh. No, no thank you. I'm not hungry.

**Cindy:** Are you going to talk to your daughter before her show tonight? She said she was going to stop by and see you.

**Troy:** I'll sign the permission slip in the morning just have her leave it on the kitchen table.

**Cindy:** Of course dear.

*Cindy grabs the tray and exits. Enter Dawn, Troy's daughter. She is dressed casually and is 23 years old.*

**Dawn:** Daddy?

**Troy:** Why am I constantly interrupted?! Who are you? What do you want?

**Dawn:** [*without the hesitation that Alex had*] My name is Shelly, Shelly Freeman and I work for an arts magazine that's just starting in the city.

**Troy:** So what? You want an interview? A sneak peak at my next project?

**Dawn:** Well yes I would, but honestly I'm just using it as an excuse to get close to you. I'm a huge fan. I've read every one of your books. I even read that collection of short stories that you first published: Midnight Reflections.

**Troy:** I didn't know that anyone actually read that. The title was my editor's idea.

**Dawn:** I thought it was appropriate. I also enjoyed Elysium very much.

**Troy:** I wrote that one for my wife.

**Dawn:** I know.

**Troy:** You do?

**Dawn:** Yes. I remember reading an interview about when it was released..

**Troy:** If you would like to see the rings featured in the story, I think my wife has them lying around somewhere. After she had the band replaced the third time we decided to buy a new pair. Feel free to ask her on your way out if you want to see them.

**Dawn:** don't you think that might be a bit personal? I mean I don't want to intrude on something that your family would rather keep private.

**Troy:** If I had wanted to keep it private I wouldn't have written the novel.

**Dawn:** that's a good point.

**Troy:** Now this interview, I would rather that you at least called and made an appointment or something.

**Dawn:** Oh yes, of course how inconsiderate of me. May I make it now?

**Troy:** Of course. Is later this evening all right?

**Dawn:** I'm afraid I have something scheduled.

**Troy:** Well how long will it take?

**Dawn:** A couple of hours. You see...I'm a bit of an amateur performer and we have a show closing tonight. I have to make an appearance at the cast party at the very least. I'm playing Roxie in Chicago.

**Troy:** I haven't the slightest idea what you're talking about; my daughter is a performer she would understand. When you come back you'll have to give me your contact information so the two of you can get together.

**Dawn:** Oh, I don't know how late I'll be.



**Troy:** I have an unsavory habit of staying up late. Come whenever you can, I'll make sure the door is unlocked for you. We'll talk then Honey.

**Dawn:** Thank you. Just out of curiosity, is your study always so messy? I don't know how you work with so much stuff around you.

**Troy:** I manage. Good night Honey, go on now. I'll see you later.

**Dawn:** Goodnight, I'll be back soon.

*Exit Dawn*

**Troy:** *[from behind his desk]* She's right. How do I manage to get any work done with all this stuff just lying around? I haven't even referenced some of this stuff since I've started. So what do I do about it? *[after a moment Troy reaches across his desk and pushes everything he can reach off onto the floor.]* Now, lets begin.

*Troy sits down and begins to write again, only this time he doesn't throw out one piece of paper after another. His work is furious. Cindy comes in dressed for a night at the theater and wordlessly puts a bowl of stew on the desk for him and puts the spoon where he can see it. Then she exits. The lights change and night falls. Alex, wearing a t-shirt comes in and turns on the overhead light for his father. Exit Alex. Troy works for a while longer. He notices the stew and takes a few bites without really tasting it or finishing it. Enter Dawn well dressed having just returned from her cast party.*

**Dawn:** Hello?

**Troy:** Oh welcome back ms...oh I've forgotten your name already.

**Dawn:** shelly.

**Troy:** Yes, Shelly Freeman. Of course I remember now: actress and journalist.

**Dawn:** I'm a bit of an amateur when it comes to both.

**Troy:** well never mind that now. Come in sit down. I have a couple of chairs floating about here somewhere. Would you like anything to drink?

**Dawn:** Oh thank you, Tea please.

**Troy:** I'll see if I can't get you some.

*Exit Troy. Returns a moment later.*

**Troy:** The water's on. My wife will bring you the tea when it is ready.

**Dawn:** So how is your current project going?

**Troy:** It could be going better, but it could also be going worse.

**Dawn:** Really? How so?

**Troy:** Well I've had to do a lot of research for this one. The information, as you saw is enough to drown me.

**Dawn:** I did see.

**Troy:** Yes. I figured that if I couldn't swim then I had to get out of the water.

**Dawn:** that's amazing.

**Troy:** You know you remind me of my daughter sometimes.

**Dawn:** really?



**Troy:** Yes. I hope that she turns into the person you are when she finally gets out of college.

**Dawn:** that means a lot Dad-I mean Troy.

**Troy:** I had no idea that you thought that highly of me.

**Dawn:** [*changing the subject*] So what exactly are you writing about?

**Troy:** I'm not telling. I'm still working on it. But feel free to pick up a book and look through it while I work.

**Dawn:** thank you. I think I'll do that.

*Dawn smiles, grabs a book off the ground and reads. Troy works at his desk without pause. After a while Dawn falls asleep and Troy seeing her, takes his blazer off the coat rack and drapes it over her. He smiles and goes back to his desk, pushing his stew off to one side. He starts to work but can't seem to. He leans back in his chair and tries to relax. Instead he falls asleep. Enter Cindy with a cup of tea, and wakes up Dawn.*

**Cindy:** I swear you two make quite a pair.

**Dawn:** Better than you and Dad at the Prom?

**Cindy:** Just about Dawn.

**Dawn:** I suppose I should head home.

**Cindy:** don't be silly. We keep your room here just the way you left it. You can sleep upstairs tonight.

**Dawn:** I guess I'm too old to just sleep in here hmm?

**Cindy:** Your father would wake up confused.

**Dawn:** I miss him mom.

**Cindy:** So do I Dear. Now lets get you to bed.

*Lights down.*

**Cindy:** Sweet Dreams dear.

**Dawn:** Sweet Dreams dad.

*Exit Cindy. Dawn still has the blazer draped over her shoulders. Black.*

**Scene 2:** *outside the house. Mike, Alex's guardian angel is sitting around watching the scene. He does nothing for the entire scene and cannot be seen by the others. Enter Dawn still wearing the Blazer, Cindy, and Alex.*

**Dawn:** really mom. I'm ok. I have work tomorrow and it takes too long to get into the city from here.

**Cindy:** Are you sure baby? It isn't that big a deal you know.

**Alex:** I could drive you in for crying out loud. You don't have to go right now.

**Dawn:** Yes I do. Don't you guys worry about me.

**Alex:** It's late.

**Cindy:** Stay the night.

**Dawn:** I'm not that tired I'll be fine.



**Cindy:** You fell asleep in your father's study.  
**Dawn:** I used to do it all the time. It's a comfortable place Mom.  
**Cindy:** I don't know. I still feel bad about this.  
**Alex:** How about I drive you home now?  
**Cindy:** Like that's better?  
**Dawn:** Yeah I've seen you drive and –  
**Alex:** Oh come on. I'm not a bad driver.  
**Cindy:** You have class tomorrow young man.  
**Alex:** I'm not going to fail if I miss.  
**Dawn:** You shouldn't skip class for me.  
**Alex:** and you shouldn't drive home this late at night when you're tired.  
**Dawn:** Oh because you're such a night owl.  
**Alex:** Thank you yes.  
**Dawn:** No.  
**Alex:** You're just jealous that I got my license before you.  
**Dawn:** Am not!  
**Alex:** OH really?  
**Dawn:** Why should I be jealous of the guy who got his car wrecked TWICE in the same year?  
**Cindy:** Children!  
**Alex/Dawn:** yes mother?

*Cindy laughs at the innocent faces her children give her.*

**Cindy:** Just get out of here. I'll see you both later.

*Exit Cindy into the house.*

**Alex:** So are you going to give me your keys or what?

*With a sigh of resignation Dawn hands the keys over. Enter a mysterious figure (John) who lurks for a time in the background and lights up a cigarette.*

**Alex:** thank you. Now lets get you home.

**Dawn:** You know for a little brother you sure are getting big.

**Alex:** Mom keeps on saying the same thing. She says that's why the old man has a harder time talking to me than you.

**Dawn:** Don't start on that now Alex.

**Alex:** Yeah I know, you don't like me to criticize him.

**Dawn:** well he is our father you know. You do remember that right? We owe him something for raising us at least.

**Alex:** Mom raised us "D".

**Dawn:** Look lets leave it alone.

**Alex:** Hey you started it.

**Dawn:** did not.

**Alex:** did too.



*They sit there for a while before leaving to go to the car.*

**Alex:** So how did the show go?

**Dawn:** good, and the game?

**Alex:** We won. It was pretty cool. There were some scouts there that offered me a free ride.

**Dawn:** Yeah I heard about that, congratulations.

**Alex:** I don't know D. I have a feeling that something is just waiting to happen to ruin it all.

**Dawn:** don't be so pessimistic. I mean things are pretty good right now. We're living the town that Dad helped build. We aren't that far from the city. You are going to college on a full ride soon. My career is finally starting to take shape. Dad is even getting better. I think he almost recognized me.

**Alex:** Here's hoping D. Here's hoping.

**Dawn:** I don't have to hope. I know.

**Alex:** Yeah I know. Come on, it isn't that warm a night. Lets get you home before we both fall asleep on the curb.

**Dawn:** Ok.

*They start to move and exit. John follows behind them. Dawn screams.*

## Act 2

*A small closed space. Dawn is wearing the same clothes as previously.*

**Dawn:** Cold. So cold. He said that things are cold because they move too slow. I'll never be warm again. I'll never move again. So cold. It was cold. I am cold. Cold and dirty. I want a shower. I need to shower. Not a bath. Never a bath. Never. Can't just sit in water. Need to bathe. Running water. I'm dirty. Must be clean. I'm so dirty. Need to clean. Need hot water. Burn it off. Tired. So tired. Must sleep. Can't sleep. He might come again. I can't sleep. So cold. So tired. So dirty. Cold Dirty Tired Cold Dirty Tired Cold Dirty Tired. Cold...Dirty...tired. So tired and cold. Never warm again. Never clean again. Never sleep again.

*Lights up. We see the psychiatric ward of a hospital. All the other mental patients are faceless persons. Dawn looks around frantically having just become aware of her surroundings. Enter the nurse with a little cart that has small paper cups filled with pills. Beautiful Dreamer plays in the background. NOTE: Dawn ALWAYS hears the music.*

**Nurse:** (To the others) Take your pills now. Take your pills. Take your pills dear. (To Dawn) Take your pills.

**Dawn:** Pills?

**Nurse:** Take your pills honey.



**Dawn:** what pills? Where am I?

**Nurse:** You're safe. Take your pills.

**Dawn:** What are they?

**Nurse:** they're pills.

**Dawn:** but –

**Nurse:** No buts. Take your pills. (*brief pause*) Do I have to call John to help you?

**Dawn:** John?

**Nurse:** John!

*Enter John. He is an orderly. NOTE: the actor who plays the orderly must also play all the other characters named John.*

**Orderly:** yes Nurse?

**Nurse:** It would seem that our newest guest doesn't want to take her pills.

**Orderly:** Shall I hold her down?

**Dawn:** (*All the while cowering in fear of John*) NO!

Dontouchmedonttouchmedonttouchme! Pleasepleaseplease don't touch me! I'm sorry I'm sorry. Don't touch me. I'm sorry I'll do anything. Yessir anything yessir.

**Nurse:** take your pills then.

*Dawn grabs the pills out of the nurses hand and swallows them down as quickly as she can.*

**Nurse:** That's a good girl. That will be all John.

**Orderly:** Very well Nurse.

*Exit Nurse.*

**Dawn:** (*very afraid of John*) What do you want?

**Orderly:** From you?

**Dawn:** yes.

**Orderly:** I'm not telling.

**Dawn:** Please don't hurt me.

**Orderly:** I won't. Not yet.

**Dawn:** why won't you leave me alone?

**Orderly:** It's a secret.

*John puts a finger on Dawn's lips as if to silence her. All the others raise their fingers to their lips. Exit Orderly.*

**Dawn:** Not yet? Not yet. Safe for now. Safe from him. What about the others? He was always talking about others. Will they come? Am I safe? She said I was safe. Can I trust her? No. Can't trust her. She's with him. They work together. Can't trust him. Can't trust her. Can't trust anyone. How is leaving a secret? He left just now. I don't understand.



*Enter Cindy.*

**Cindy:** Oh my God there you are. I was so worried about you. (*goes to hug Dawn, but Dawn scampers away.*) Baby? Sunshine? It's me. Don't you recognize me? I've been so worried about you. You've been missing for days. (*Beat*) You don't recognize me do you? He said this might be the case.

**Dawn:** You talked to him?

**Cindy:** Yes.

**Dawn:** don't believe him. He wants to hurt me.

**Cindy:** who wants to hurt you?

**Dawn:** Him.

**Cindy:** Him who?

**Dawn:** The one who gave me the pills. He wants to hurt me.

**Cindy:** Oh my God what have they done to you?

**Dawn:** He did it. It was only him. He took me away. He...he...(*she stops and starts rocking herself back and forth humming to herself.*)

**Cindy:** Oh baby. Poor baby. It's okay now. I'm here. I'll take care of you just like always. It will be ok baby. Everything is going to be ok. Nobody can hurt you now. You're safe here. You're perfectly safe here.

*Enter Doctor (John), Nurse, and Detective (the same actor who played Troy). The Doctor wears traditional doctor's outfit with the exception that he has a red armband on his left arm.*

**Detective:** That one. That's the one Jack.

**Doctor:** (*Looking at clipboard and flipping some pages*) yeah. She would be.

**Detective:** What does that mean?

**Doctor:** She isn't responding to the medication. Usually when we start someone out with the kind of regimen she is getting they immediately become more aware and responsive. This one. She's in a whole different league: double dosage today and just the same as yesterday. I don't suppose you know who that is with her.

**Detective:** Yeah that's her Mother. She filed a missing persons report a few days ago and we got a match on the fingerprints.

**Doctor:** She's been missing for days?

**Detective:** Days.

**Dawn:** (*in fear*) There! That's him! He's the one. The one with the red.

**Cindy:** The Doctor? Honey he doesn't want to hurt you.

**Dawn:** What doctor dresses like that? Huh? Tell me that. He's no doctor.

**Cindy:** Oh honey you really are in trouble. All doctors dress like that. Don't go anywhere I'll be right back.

**Dawn:** NO! Don't leave me. Don't trust him. NO! Please God no.

*Cindy goes over to Doctor. She is at first worried but then relaxed by the Doctor's answer. She eventually starts flirting with him. After the first few moments of discussion the Detective comes over to Dawn.*



**Dawn:** Even she can't be trusted. My own Mother. She belongs to the enemy. I can't trust her. I can't trust anyone. She can't keep me safe. She doesn't know. She can't watch over me while I sleep. I can't sleep.

**Detective:** Excuse me.

**Dawn:** Daddy?

**Detective:** Excuse me?

**Dawn:** Daddy!

*The music stops abruptly. She excitedly rushes towards the detective and hugs him fiercely*

**Dawn:** Oh Daddy, I'm so glad that you're here. I'm scared.

**Detective:** I'm sorry miss you must be mistaken. I'm not your dad.

**Dawn:** What?

**Detective:** I'm not you're father.

**Dawn:** But, you are. I mean, you look just like him. I don't understand.

**Detective:** Look, I'm a Detective. See? (*Shows her his badge and ID*) I'm a bona fide defender of the peace.

**Dawn:** It looks fake.

**Detective:** (*looking at badge*) You know what? It does doesn't it?

**Dawn:** Your department is cheap. That isn't even copper. It's thin lead with copper paint.

**Detective:** OH really? And how would you know that?

**Dawn:** If you turn it over you can see for yourself. I can even see it on the edges a little bit.

**Detective:** (*Looking at the badge*) Well look at that. You're right.

**Doctor:** (*to Cindy*) If you'll excuse me miss. As much as I enjoy your company I really must look to my patients. Your daughter among them. (*to detective*) And you, high and mighty defender of the peace, should leave as well. My patient is not much use to you right now. Try again in a week or so. If something comes up before then I'll give you a call.

**Cindy:** Of course. Detective, if there is anything I can do to help –

**Detective:** Yes actually I think there is. Why don't you come with me to answer some questions. (*to Dawn*) I'll see you again.

**Dawn:** Wait. Before you go you should know. You can't trust them. Either of them. He wants to hurt me. She is with him. They can't be trusted.

**Detective:** I know.

**Dawn:** You do?

**Detective:** You can't trust anyone in my business.

**Dawn:** Please. Don't leave me.

**Detective:** I'm not you're father honey, but you are safe here.

**Dawn:** But they are here.

**Detective:** (*to the others*) Will you excuse us for a minute?

*Exit Cindy, Doctor, and Nurse*



**Detective:** I know we can't trust them? I know.

**Dawn:** then you know you can't leave me here.

**Detective:** But I can't take you out of here either or they might suspect something. You have to stay. I have people in here. They will watch out for you ok? I can't take you out of here. Please understand.

**Dawn:** Please don't leave me here with him. Please. You don't understand. You can't leave me here.

**Detective:** I'm not leaving you here. I'm leaving you in the hands of people I trust. You can trust them too.

**Dawn:** You trust him.

**Detective:** I trust him to know his job.

*Beat*

**Dawn:** Please. Don't be gone too long.

**Detective:** I won't. (*as he exits*) I'll see you soon. Promise.

*Exit*

**Dawn:** I didn't get his name. How sad. I like that man.

*Enter John dressed as a doctor the Other patients have formed a circle around them like walls of a room.*

**Dawn:** You. Why won't you leave me alone?

**John:** Oh you never learn do you? You never learn to listen. I'll be nice for now and repeat myself but only this time. It's a secret.

**Dawn:** You can't hurt me.

**John:** (*Laughs*) But I can.

**Dawn:** Not here. You can't hurt me here.

**John:** Really? And why is that.

**Dawn:** There are people. They'll protect me.

**John:** Who? Look around sweetheart. There isn't anyone to protect you. It's just you and me.

**Dawn:** No.

**John:** You and me and a nice big room.

**Dawn:** Please no.

**John:** Just like it used to be.

**Dawn:** Please no. Please. Don't hurt me. Please.

**John:** But you need to be hurt.

**Dawn:** No. Please no.

**John:** No? You don't think so is that it? Well for now, because you cower so nicely, I'll hold back. But you must thank me for it.

**Dawn:** Yes. Anything.

**John:** You know what I like.

Albright College  
Lehigh Valley  
Library



*Dawn begins to take off her clothes. She gets the blazer off and fade to black. The music starts up again. Lights up. We are in an alleyway. Dawn is wearing the same clothes. She is vaguely aware of her surroundings and in the same position that she was in the previous moment. Enter Female Stranger (the same actor who played Cindy) and the music stops.*

**Female Stranger:** Oh my God miss are you all right?

**Dawn:** What? Where – get away from me!

**Female Stranger:** Please miss I'm trying to help.

**Dawn:** You don't want to help. You're with him. I saw you. The two of you. Get away.

**Female Stranger:** Him? What? Please miss you need help. Let me help you.

**Dawn:** You're just trying to trick me. Just like all the rest.

**Female Stranger:** The rest? What are you talking about? Miss please you were unconscious. I thought you might be dead. You're covered in bruises please let me help you.

**Dawn:** You just want to take me to him don't you? You're going to take me there. I won't go. I can't go. He'll be there, you know that!

**Female Stranger:** Please miss. Calm down. Just calm down a moment. Please? Just take a deep breath.

*Dawn takes a deep breath and begins coughing. The Female Stranger approaches her trying to help but Dawn won't let her get near.*

**Female Stranger:** Oh God. Miss you're coughing up blood. You need to see a doctor.

**Dawn:** No Doctors. He's a doctor.

**Female Stranger:** Miss, you're cold to the touch. Here at least take this. (*picking up the neglected blazer*) That at least will help.

**Dawn:** (*Hesitantly*) Why?

**Female Stranger:** Why what?

**Dawn:** Why help me? You're with him.

**Female Stranger:** I don't know who you're talking about but the only "Him" I'm with is my queen of a cousin who happens to be plastered and probably puking in the ladies room right now. He isn't going to hurt you. He doesn't know how to hurt someone.

**Dawn:** But I saw you.

**Female Stranger:** You must be mistaken.

*Beat. Dawn takes the blazer and puts it on. She keeps it for the rest of the show.*

**Dawn:** Thank you. I'm very cold. And dirty.

**Female Stranger:** You're probably tired as all get out too.

**Dawn:** Very tired. I can't sleep though. He'll come if I fall asleep.

**Female Stranger:** Don't you worry honey we'll take you inside and get you some help.

**Dawn:** Police?

**Female Stranger:** If you need them we can call them. OK?

**Dawn:** Ok. Thank you.



*Enter John, well dressed. He's the club owner.*

**Dawn:** It's him! Get away!

**Club Owner:** What? What's the matter? What's going on?

**Female Stranger:** I came out for a breath of air and I just found her here by the dumpster.

**Dawn:** Get him away! He wants to hurt me again! Please.

**Club Owner:** She looks pretty beat up. I suppose I should call the cops or something.

**Female Stranger:** Yeah just maybe.

**Club Owner:** Yeah. I should.

**Female Stranger:** What?!

**Club Owner:** I don't need any more bad press here ok. I mean my club just opened and between the whole heroine and coke thing...I really don't need the cops nosing around right now.

**Female Stranger:** Look at her!

**Club owner:** yeah she is pretty beat up.

**Dawn:** Stop! Stop! Don't talk about me like I'm not here!

**Female Stranger:** We have to do something for her.

**Club Owner:** Not the cops all right?

**Female Stranger:** What then?

**Dawn:** Stop it! Stop it! Can't you hear me.

**Club Owner:** *(Pulls out a gun and shoots the stranger)* Now it's just you and me. Again.

**Dawn:** Why won't you leave me alone?

**Club Owner:** *(slaps her)* I won't repeat myself. I already told you that it's a secret. You'll find out soon enough.

**Dawn:** Why? Why me?

**Club Owner:** Because you, my dear are perfect. Now close your eyes. You wouldn't want to spoil the surprise now would you?

**Dawn:** No. No surprises. Just leave me alone.

**Club Owner:** I can't do that.

**Dawn:** Leave me alone!

**Club Owner:** If I've told you once I've told you a million times –

**Dawn:** LEAVE ME ALONE!

**Club Owner:** I can't do that.

*Dawn Screams and starts running with the music playing. She races frantically about the stage looking for something. She sees mannequins The Nurse, Cindy, the Detective, but most importantly she sees John. Every time she sees John she stops and spins around to try and find another way out. Eventually she runs full tilt into a Medical Examiner complete with white coat. Note: this should be the same actor as the nurse. The Music stops while the ME is shouting.*

**Medical Examiner:** Officer! Officer! We got a runner! A little help please!



*Enter The Detective and John with a billy club and badge. He is a Police Officer with a red armband.*

**Detective:** Ok. Ok. It's ok now. You're safe here. No need to run.

**Dawn:** You.

**Detective:** Yes it's me.

**Dawn:** You lied to me.

**Detective:** Excuse me?

**Dawn:** You lied to me!

*Dawn tries to attack the Detective but the Medical Examiner and the Police Officer are holding her back.*

**Dawn:** There was no one to protect me. You work with him. You were working with him all along. I should never have trusted you. *(She stops struggling and starts to cry)*

**Medical Examiner:** Well at least she stopped running.

**Detective:** John. Help her out. Take her back to the examination room. I'll be there in a minute.

**Medical Examiner:** No need. She's calmed down I can take it from here.

**Police Officer:** If you say so Kat.

*Exit Police Officer and Detective.*

**Dawn:** Never should have trusted him. Not any of them. Can't even trust you.

**Medical Examiner:** Nonsense.

**Dawn:** But I can't. You are all together. You all work together.

**Medical Examiner:** Well of course we all work together. Do you think that's by choice?

**Dawn:** What?

**Medical Examiner:** Do you think I enjoy working with those two?

**Dawn:** You don't?

**Medical Examiner:** Of course not! They are so demanding. Men! They're like babies: if you don't give them what they want when they want it they scream and pout for all they're worth.

**Dawn:** So you don't like them?

**Medical Examiner:** Darling you can trust me ok?

**Dawn:** No. Not ok. I can't trust anyone.

**Medical Examiner:** Listen this is important.

*By this time they have reached the examination room. There is a table for patients to lay down on. Off to one side, almost invisible is a table with a tray of surgical instruments.*

**Medical Examiner:** Those two men have to come back here. They have to ask you some questions. If you don't want to answer that's ok but if you want to get the person who hurt you the worst then you will have to answer. Ok?

**Dawn:** I'm not sure I can remember.



**Medical Examiner:** You don't have to remember everything. Anything you do remember will be useful.

**Dawn:** But why?

**Medical Examiner:** I haven't even gotten a good look at you so I can't say for sure just how much those people have done to you, but... Darling, look at yourself. You've been beaten bad.

**Dawn:** People? No. There was only one.

**Medical Examiner:** Tell the detective. And once your done I'll do some tests for you ok?

**Dawn:** Tests? What kind of tests?

**Medical Examiner:** Well...I don't mean to be insensitive you see.

**Dawn:** I'm cold.

**Medical Examiner:** It's ok dear. I'll do what tests I can to see what exactly he did to you ok?

**Dawn:** I...

*Enter the Detective.*

**Detective:** Hello there.

**Dawn:** You lied to me.

**Detective:** Honey I can say that I've said a total of maybe three or four things to you since I've met you and none have been lies.

**Dawn:** You said they would look after me.

**Detective:** We are looking after you. You're here aren't you? I haven't lied to you since I've met you.

**Dawn:** He came for me again once you had left.

**Detective:** He's here?

**Dawn:** I...I don't know. I can't remember.

**Detective:** It's ok. It's ok. Just take a deep breath. There you go. Now, what's the last thing you remember?

**Dawn:** It's a secret. He keeps saying that. Over and over. "It's a secret."

**Detective:** Do you remember what he looks like?

**Dawn:** He...no. I can't.

**Detective:** What about his name? Do you ever remember hearing his name?

**Dawn:** No. I've heard it. But...I can't remember

**Detective:** It's ok. What can you remember?

**Dawn:** A gunshot. Blood. Slime. I'm dirty. Is there somewhere I can take a shower?

**Detective:** You can't shower just yet honey, Katherine, our Medical Examiner has to take a look at you first.

**Dawn:** I'm so cold.

**Detective:** We'll get you a blanket. But first you have to let Kat here take a look at you. I'll turn my back so I don't see.

*Detective takes a step away and lights dim on the table.*



**Detective:** So what's your name? We didn't find any ID. Or should I just keep calling you "honey."

**Dawn:** (*From the dark*) Honey works. My father used to call me that. I like the sound of it.

**Detective:** (*slightly uncomfortable being called Dawn's father*) Before I start asking you questions is there anything else we can do for you?

**Dawn:** I'm cold.

**Detective:** I'd think so. That table isn't the friendliest thing in the world. I'll get you something warm to drink. Coffee?

**Dawn:** Tea.

**Detective:** I'll see what I can do.

*Enter Police Officer*

**Detective:** Jack, just in time. Can you get our friend a cup of tea and a blanket?

*Exit Police Officer*

**Detective:** So where did you get that blazer from?

**Dawn:** What?

**Detective:** The jacket you're wearing, it wasn't made for a woman. Do you remember where you got it?

**Dawn:** (*From the black*) No. I didn't always have it. I got it from my father. It seems like a lifetime ago. Detective?

**Detective:** Yes?

**Dawn:** When will I be able to leave?

**Detective:** I'd like to ask you some more questions before you leave but you can leave whenever you want to.

**Dawn:** Thank you.

**Medical Examiner:** All done.

*Lights back up.*

**Detective:** Thank you Kate.

**Medical Examiner:** I have some paperwork to fill out but I'll be back in a few minutes if you need anything.

**Dawn:** Thank you.

*Exit Medical Examiner*

**Detective:** Ok, now listen honey. You are the victim. We are here to help you in any that we can. That does not mean that you have to accept our help. If you want us to leave you alone then we will. Ok?

**Dawn:** Ok.

**Detective:** You said the last thing you remember him saying was "It's a secret."

**Dawn:** Yes.



**Detective:** Do you remember anything else he said.

**Dawn:** I – well I...I don't want to talk about it right now.

**Detective:** I know it's hard honey but the sooner you talk about it the sooner you can start to feel better.

*Pause*

**Dawn:** Ok, but not here. Let's go someplace else. A coffee shop or something. Someplace outside with a lot of light.

**Detective:** I know a place. Let me get some things and I'll be right back.

**Dawn:** Please hurry. I don't like it here. It's too much like...

**Detective:** Like what?

**Dawn:** I don't know. But I don't like it.

**Detective:** Fair enough. I'll be right back.

**Dawn:** Thank you.

*Exit Detective. After a moment enter John wearing a suit and a red armband over his left arm. The lights have changed slightly and the Others have once again formed a wall around them*

**John:** Hello there sweetheart.

**Dawn:** How did you get in here?

**John:** Didn't you know? I can go anywhere.

**Dawn:** But how? How can you?

**John:** Sshhhh. It's a secret.

**Dawn:** There are police all over this building. One scream and they'll come running. You can't touch me.

**John:** You think so? Well I'll amuse you. Go ahead and scream. Let's see who comes running.

**Dawn:** Help! Somebody help! He's here! Help me! Help!

*A long Pause*

**John:** Where are they sweetheart? They must have heard you scream.

**Dawn:** What have you done to them?

**John:** Me? I haven't done anything to them. They are exactly where you left them.

**Dawn:** I didn't leave them. What are you talking about?

**John:** The Door is locked and I have the only key. Just like old times isn't it?

**Dawn:** No. I've had enough. You can't do this anymore.

**John:** Wrong again sweetheart. I can do precisely what I want.

**Dawn:** I won't let you.

**John:** You said that once before.

**Dawn:** Not like this. I will never let you touch me again.

**John:** Really? *(John slowly and deliberately walks over to her. She backs away but bumps into the table. She cannot escape. He gently touches her cheek)* See? You may try to escape but you can't. I have you no matter where you go. Now. Shall we play?



**Dawn:** Play?

*John walks over to the surgical tray.*

**John:** There are all kinds of toys here just waiting for you. (*Picking up a bone saw*) This looks like fun don't you think?

**Dawn:** No.

**John:** But you aren't in a position to say one way or the other are you?

**Dawn:** You can't.

**John:** I think we've already established what I can and can't do.

**Dawn:** No.

**John:** For the last time, YES! (*He slaps her and she falls to the ground.*) Don't play games with the big boys sweetheart. We always win.

**Dawn:** Why won't you leave me alone?

**John:** (*grabber her hair and pulling her head back*) It's a secret.

*The Music starts playing again. The others each hold a finger to their lips. John takes a needle and injects her with something. Then he fades into the background. Lights up in two areas. The one is a small, contained area where Dawn was. The other is outside and separate. The others all stand behind Dawn. The Nurse and Alex are watching her on screens. Dawn no longer responds to the music.*

**Nurse:** She does that. She will bounce herself off the walls for a couple of hours. She seems to relive the events of those two weeks. Complete with her rapist. She would be in the catatonic ward if she didn't have those outbreaks.

**Dawn:** Cold.

**Nurse:** She's talking again.

**Dawn:** So cold.

**Alex:** What's the temperature in there?

**Dawn:** Didn't know it could be this cold.

**Nurse:** Same as always: 95 degrees.

**Dawn:** So cold. He said that things are cold because they move too slow. I'll never be warm again. I'll never move again. So cold. It was cold. I am cold. Cold and dirty. I want a shower. I need to shower. Not a bath. Never a bath. Never. Can't just sit in water. Need to bathe. Running water. I'm dirty. Must be clean. I'm so dirty. Need to clean. Need hot water. Burn it off. Tired. So tired. Must sleep. Can't sleep. He might come again. I can't sleep. So cold. So tired. So dirty. Cold Dirty Tired Cold Dirty Tired Cold Dirty Tired. So tired and cold. Never warm again. Never clean again. Never sleep again.

**Alex:** when was the last time you sedated her?

**Nurse:** Last night. She stayed asleep the whole time.

**Alex:** I haven't actually seen one of her outbreaks before. It's a little frightening.

**Nurse:** I know dear heart. She scares all of us.

**Alex:** She's been here over three years.

**Nurse:** You should stop coming here.

**Alex:** Our father can't come. So I do. It's the least I can do.



**Nurse:** I understand.

**Alex:** thank you. For understanding.

**Nurse:** will you're mom be coming anytime soon.

**Alex:** No. It's still too painful for her to hear Dawn accuse her.

**Nurse:** Of course. And you? She never says anything about you.

**Alex:** Our father always came first to her. Even when he first started to lose it she doted on him. I don't understand why. He never returned the sentiment.

**Nurse:** Did you want to see your father? He came in today for his usual checkup.

**Alex:** I have nothing to say to my father that I didn't say years ago.

**Nurse:** It's too bad he can't come here. It might help her.

**Alex:** I doubt it. *(beat)* What's the secret?

**Nurse:** That she's trapped. The poor thing is trapped and doesn't even realize it.

**Dawn:** Daddy?

**Alex:** She's talking again.

**Nurse:** Odd. Usually her catatonic phase lasts for hours or days.

**Alex:** I have to go Gwen, the cops wanted to talk to me some more.

**Dawn:** Daddy!

**Nurse:** they don't still think that you did this do they?

**Alex:** They can't prove it if they do. I think they are trying to get me on a similar case now. I don't know. I lost track.

**Nurse:** Did you do it?

**Alex:** Gwen. It's me.

**Nurse:** Of course babe. Sorry. I'll see you tonight?

**Alex:** Yeah.

**Dawn:** Daddy I'm here! Over here!

**Alex:** Bye.

*Exit Alex. The Music stops.*

**Dawn:** Bright lights. Cold lights. Cold floor. Steel bed. *(In a near inaudible whisper)* It's a secret.

**Others:** *[All the Others raise their fingers to their lips]* Ssshhhhhh.

### Act 3

**Scene 1:** *Lights up. The Labyrinth. Elevator music plays in the background. The first song is Vincent by Don Mclean. Alex has a bag with him and seems to have been walking for ages. He wears a prison uniform. He is tired and almost listless in the way he walks. He comes to a cross roads and looks around helplessly trying to discern one direction from another. Finally exasperated he sits down. Enter Gwen. Their first exchange must seem scripted. It is a ritual that they have performed many times before. They don't speak at first both just listening to the music.*

**Gwen:** Hello Lover.

**Alex:** Hello Gwen.

**Gwen:** Happy to see me?



**Alex:** Aren't I always?

**Gwen:** I'm so glad. Have you missed me?

**Alex:** Every day more than the last. And you? Have you been missing me or too busy getting into trouble?

**Gwen:** I'm always in trouble. Doesn't mean I don't miss you.

**Alex:** [*with a brief pause and sudden seriousness*] I really have missed you.

**Gwen:** Oh stop it. You know I'm right here.

**Alex:** Yes, but still.

**Gwen:** Why are you so gloomy anyways hmm?

**Alex:** What do you mean? Look around. They may as well have put me in a gas chamber when they sent me to this place.

**Gwen:** You could have tried a plea bargain.

**Alex:** Do you know why the caged bird sings?

**Gwen:** No, but I heard that Maya Angelou does. You might want to ask her.

**Alex:** [*ignoring the joke*] She would understand. You obviously don't.

**Gwen:** well that wasn't very nice.

**Alex:** And suggesting that I could just give up and go to jail was?

**Gwen:** well at least you would know where your next meal was coming from there.

**Alex:** I know where my next meal is coming from here as well. (*indicating the bags*) I just hope that there is enough to last me until I get out.

**Gwen:** You're going to need more luck than you have to get out of here alive.

**Alex:** Do you think I should go left?

**Gwen:** What?

**Alex:** Here. Do you think I should go left?

**Gwen:** Why are you asking me? I don't know.

**Alex:** But you're the only person I can bounce ideas off of right now.

**Gwen:** Alex, I'm not actually here.

**Alex:** I know but maybe you can help me.

**Gwen:** Alex -

**Alex:** I know but I need you now.

**Gwen:** I can't give you what you think you need.

**Alex:** then what good are you?

**Gwen:** You tell me.

**Alex:** I need you Gwen.

**Gwen:** I can't give you anything Alex. You must understand.

**Alex:** I think God is pissed off at me.

**Gwen:** You wouldn't want Mike to hear you say that.

**Alex:** Mike can suck my hairy left testicle for all I care. I haven't had one good thing happen to me in years.

**Gwen:** That's not true and you know it.

**Alex:** Ok one thing Gwen. Give me one thing.

*An uncomfortable silence.*

**Alex:** My life hasn't been easy these past couple of years.

**Gwen:** Well don't take it out on me.



**Alex:** Why are you here Gwen? Let's drop the pretenses and put our cards on the table. Why are you here? I didn't call you this time. I wasn't thinking about you or longing for you. Why are you here?

**Gwen:** Can't I want the comfort of your company every once in a while?

**Alex:** No. Actually every time that you came to me it was because you needed something other than my company.

**Gwen:** What about that time after the division championships?

**Alex:** You thought I had been cheating on you and wanted to try and catch me.

**Gwen:** Oh yeah. I had forgotten.

**Alex:** Because I hadn't been cheating on you.

**Gwen:** Well there's a first time for everything.

**Alex:** I don't believe you.

**Gwen:** Leave it alone Alex.

**Alex:** now I know you're hiding something.

**Gwen:** Please leave it alone Alex.

**Alex:** Tell me or get lost. I'm not in the mood for games Gwen. What do you want?

**Gwen:** [*after a great deal of hesitation*] I want to say I'm sorry.

**Alex:** What?

**Gwen:** For not believing you.

**Alex:** [*severely*] We've had this conversation before.

**Gwen:** A million times. But I have to say it at least one more. I am sorry.

**Alex:** You're a little late sweetheart.

**Gwen:** It doesn't mean I'm not sincere.

**Alex:** You aren't even really here. You're a figment of my imagination, a memory. You're not real. Like you said you're in Seattle planning your wedding. It doesn't mean anything for you to be saying how sorry you are that you didn't believe me when I said I was innocent.

**Gwen:** But it does matter Alex. Don't you see?

**Alex:** No. I don't see. I don't see how you coming here and asking for my forgiveness can possibly matter when you're fake. You're not real. How many times do I have to say it? When I was sitting in the defendant's chair and you could have corroborated my alibi you didn't because you had fallen asleep and didn't believe me when I said I had spent the entire night by your side. You didn't believe me when I said I didn't do it. You never believed me. How can I forgive you? You're the reason I'm here at all.

**Gwen:** But that's why I'm here. I'm sorry.

**Alex:** No you're not. Go away. Get out of my head. Get lost. Never talk to me again.

*Gwen fades away into the darkness. Enter Mike.*

**Mike:** Well that wasn't very nice.

**Alex:** Oh God.

**Mike:** He's busy right now; you have to deal with me if you want any answers.

**Alex:** That was a figment –

**Mike:** Of you're imagination. Yes. I know. That was still a pretty rotten thing to say.



**Alex:** Mike, if you have something you need to say to me, say it. I'm tired. I'm probably going to die here. I don't want to spend my last moments on earth beating around the bush with the – being that claims to have saved my life more times than I can count.

**Mike:** Say it Alex. You'll feel better once you do.

**Alex:** I don't want to. For all I know you are another figment of my imagination. You are a delusion. Something I created as a defense mechanism when everything started to collapse around my ears. I'm psychotic and you're the proof.

**Mike:** Hardly. I'm the proof that you're still sane.

**Alex:** Yeah and the pope is Jewish.

**Mike:** Cut the man some slack he wanted to be sure before he converted.

**Alex:** What?

**Mike:** Well he wasn't sure about Judaism or Catholicism so he waited until his Bar Mitzvah and learned more before deciding he finally wanted to convert. So he did.

**Alex:** You're serious.

**Mike:** You didn't know?

**Alex:** no.

**Mike:** oh. Well now you know.

**Alex:** Know what? that I'm nuts? Insanity runs in the family you know.

**Mike:** It isn't always genetic.

*A brief pause*

**Alex:** Do you have any cigarettes?

**Mike:** those things are bad for you, you know.

**Alex:** So I've heard.

**Mike:** Yeah, from me.

*Mike passes Alex a pack of cigarettes and a lighter.*

**Mike:** So what are you going to do when you get out?

**Alex:** One thing at a time Mike.

**Mike:** You mean you haven't thought about it at all?

**Alex:** Well of course I've thought about it, but I'm more worried with getting out of here alive.

**Mike:** That's right, you die if you don't eat. I always forget that one.

**Alex:** Some guardian angel.

**Mike:** Hey it's hard to keep track of all the ways you humans die, I'm still getting used to this whole mortality thing.

**Alex:** Figures. My guardian angel is as likely to kill me as anyone.

**Mike:** Don't say that. Come on man you know I'm on your side. We've had this conversation before.

**Alex:** Is this proof that God favors me?

**Mike:** You mean in a medieval kind of way? The whole, "God defend the righteous" thing?

**Alex:** yeah. Are you proof that I'm going to get out of here alive?

**Mike:** I'm not allowed to answer.



**Alex:** Why not?

**Mike:** Because if I say yes then you won't learn anything. But if I say no then you will just give up and kill yourself. A self-fulfilling prophecy either way.

**Alex:** I won't learn anything from being dead either.

**Mike:** This is one of those things where He would rather you fight for it one way or another. Kinda like the Israelites in the desert.

**Alex:** Am I going to be stuck here for 40 years?

**Mike:** It will only seem like it. Time, after all, is a question of perception.

*Pause*

**Alex:** I don't suppose you know the way out.

**Mike:** The true path is always found within.

**Alex:** Don't start with that.

**Mike:** You want to go left here, but just so you know, it's going to be tough and you aren't going to like it.

**Alex:** yeah, yeah whatever. As long as I can get out I'll get out.

**Mike:** You're going to have to speak to a couple of people, including Gwen.

**Alex:** Get off my case about my family.

**Mike:** I'm your guardian angel it's my job to be on your case.

**Alex:** Well guard me out of here and you can get back on my case.

**Mike:** Did you ever consider that Gwen appears and reappears because you need something deeper from her?

**Alex:** Don't psychoanalyze me Mike. Please.

**Mike:** Did you ever consider that she is asking for your forgiveness for a reason other than she needs it to feel better about herself?

**Alex:** No. And I don't want to either. Either help me out or leave me alone.

**Mike:** Head left. I'll catch up with you later.

*Mike disappears into the darkness. Alex, left alone, gazes around with sudden realization.*

**Alex:** Which left? Left this way or left that way? Which left? [*shouting at the no longer visible Mike*] Which way is left? Asshole.

*Alex considers his four options having no clue which way he came from or what perspective he should take to try and find the exit. Just as he is about to make up his mind enter Cindy's ghost.*

**Cindy:** You probably shouldn't choose a direction unless you know for sure.

**Alex:** [*caught off guard*] What? Oh. Hi mom.

**Cindy:** Hello honey.

**Alex:** I'm kinda surprised to see you.

**Cindy:** Are you really?

**Alex:** Yeah. Just a bit.

**Cindy:** Why?



**Alex:** Well, after Gwen and Mike I had thought that I would be stuck talking to people I owed something to, or I didn't really want to talk to. You know?

**Cindy:** Yes dear. I understand. But not all things are bad right?

**Alex:** It's good to see you again mom. I didn't think I would.

**Cindy:** But of course you would. You'd think Mike would make you a believer.

**Alex:** Let's not get into that mom.

**Cindy:** Well, you should've known that I wouldn't have left without saying good bye.

**Alex:** It was a surprise to get the letter yesterday. I didn't expect it that's for sure.

**Cindy:** I was hospitalized for the first time shortly after you went to jail. You couldn't have believed that I'd survive much longer. Especially with you being the only one I had left.

**Alex:** I know. [brief pause] Mom, I'm scared.

**Cindy:** Fear is good hun. It let's us know we are alive.

**Alex:** I want to feel a free breeze on my face before I die.

**Cindy:** Your father did too.

**Alex:** Don't talk to me about Dad.

**Cindy:** [with a sigh] alright, I won't. But you can't push him out forever.

**Alex:** He pushed us out.

**Cindy:** But he never understood. You do.

**Alex:** Understand what mom? That he hurt us? He hurt Dawn most of all. She's still waiting for him to come save her. She still thinks she's 23 mom.

**Cindy:** I know. I know better than you think.

**Alex:** Maybe, but that doesn't mean that I have to let him back into my life either.

**Cindy:** Alex, he's been dead for years. Make peace with him.

**Alex:** No.

**Cindy:** Then all that's left for me to say is Goodbye.

**Alex:** Wait. Mom. Don't go yet. I still need you here.

**Cindy:** You haven't needed me since you were eighteen Honey. You'll do just fine.

**Alex:** No wait.

**Cindy:** What is it honey?

**Alex:** It's not that I'm afraid even though I am. I need...I need to tell you.

**Cindy:** What?

**Alex:** Mom, I'm sorry. I'm sorry I wasn't there when you need me.

**Cindy:** I forgive you dear. Can you forgive yourself?

**Alex:** I don't know.

**Cindy:** Can you forgive yourself for Dawn?

**Alex:** I don't know.

**Cindy:** Will you be able to leave the horrors of this place behind you?

**Alex:** I don't know.

**Cindy:** I suggest you work on it Honey. It'll help you later on. Goodbye now.

*Exit Cindy. He stands up and starts to walk again. Enter Dawn. Again, this is only Alex's memory of his sister.*

**Dawn:** Brother.

**Alex:** Dawn.



*A silence. The Music has stopped.*

**Dawn:** So are you going to say something?

**Alex:** Why Dad? Why did you always call out for dad?

**Dawn:** Well it's not like you were there for me when I needed you.

**Alex:** He wasn't either.

**Dawn:** More than you.

**Alex:** I was there two to three times a week after they found you. I even tried talking to you.

**Dawn:** You didn't try hard enough.

**Alex:** I didn't know what else to do.

**Dawn:** you could have done more.

**Alex:** I stood in that room with you for six hours one day.

**Dawn:** Exactly. ONE DAY. It was only six hours and it was only one day. You never tried it again did you? You were never able to bring me out.

**Alex:** They wouldn't let me. After you attacked me the first time –

**Dawn:** They wouldn't let you? If that isn't the lamest of them all.

**Alex:** I couldn't do anything more for you.

**Dawn:** You could have tried.

**Alex:** this isn't how I remember you. This isn't my sister. She would understand.

**Dawn:** If she would understand, then why don't you?

**Alex:** They really are empty excuses.

**Dawn:** Are they? Did you try and help me?

**Alex:** God knows I tried but I couldn't. God I tried. In the end I did everything I could and it wasn't enough.

**Dawn:** It will never be enough. If you had managed to help me do you think that would have made you feel better? Wouldn't you have just said that you could have done so faster if only –

**Alex:** Yes. I know. But everything I have ever done still isn't enough.

**Dawn:** It will have to be Alex.

**Alex:** I'm sorry.

**Dawn:** I know.

**Alex:** Goodbye.

*Exit Dawn. Enter Mike.*

**Mike:** That was almost a daytime television moment.

**Alex:** You never let up do you?

**Mike:** Of course I don't. If I did you wouldn't work as hard.

**Alex:** Yeah fine whatever.

**Mike:** You still have to make up with Gwen.

**Alex:** No. Not right now.

**Mike:** Now or never Alex. I'll leave you two alone.



*Enter Gwen. She has been crying. They stand opposite of each other for a moment not sure what to do or say. Eventually.*

**Alex:** You look horrible when you cry.

**Gwen:** Yeah I know.

**Alex:** It's how we met, remember?

**Gwen:** Yeah. It was at that sports bar. You were playing pool. I was crying.

**Alex:** You just caught your boyfriend cheating on you.

**Gwen:** My friends had dragged me there thinking that what I needed was a rebound guy. All I wanted was someone to hold me while I cried. So they ditched me.

**Alex:** Then I took you home. Your house smelled of sage incense.

**Gwen:** It was a good time once I stopped crying.

**Alex:** I proposed to you in that bar.

**Gwen:** Yes you did.

**Alex:** Will you take the ring back Gwen?

**Gwen:** Alex...

**Alex:** Right. I forgot.

**Gwen:** Do you mind if I change the subject?

**Alex:** Are you going to anyways?

**Gwen:** (*ignoring the remark*) How come you never talked about your father?

**Alex:** Not a good place to take this conversation.

**Gwen:** I was just wondering.

**Alex:** My relationship to Troy is...complicated.

**Gwen:** Why do you always call him Troy? Is it so hard to call him dad?

**Alex:** It is Gwen. It really is.

**Gwen:** You won't leave until you deal with him.

**Alex:** Yeah. I figured as much.

**Gwen:** I have regrets Alex.

**Alex:** I don't Gwen. I don't regret one thing with you.

**Gwen:** That means a lot.

*Enter Troy's ghost.*

**Troy:** Cute. Kinda nauseating but cute.

**Alex:** Thanks for killing the moment Troy.

**Gwen:** No Alex. It was almost over anyways. I should go.

**Alex:** Wait.

*Gwen Exits and Alex takes a few steps after her.*

**Troy:** Going somewhere?

**Alex:** I was hoping I could avoid you.

**Troy:** Too bad.

**Alex:** I'm going now.

**Troy:** That's the wrong way you know.

**Alex:** And how would you know?



**Troy:** Because you have to go left.

**Alex:** And this isn't left?

**Troy:** Now that would be telling wouldn't it?

**Alex:** Just shut up Troy. I don't give a rat's ass about you or your opinions.

**Troy:** But you used to. At one point in your life you did care about what I said. You gave more than a rat's ass about my opinions.

**Alex:** Yeah, before you started to ignore me and everything I did I used to care. A lot. I used to care so much about your opinions that I would drop whatever it was I was doing at any given time just to hear your opinion on something. But that was before you had forgotten what I looked like.

**Troy:** That is so petty Alex. I thought better of you.

**Alex:** And I once thought better of you.

**Troy:** I'm used to that kind of abuse. I got it from my own father you know.

**Alex:** You're always the victim here aren't you? It always has to be a pity party for Troy. Well go cry somewhere else you won't get any pity from me. Mom told me plenty about Granddad. I knew him pretty well before he died.

**Troy:** So you are going to take sides with the drunk now?

**Alex:** Yes, yes I am. Because for all that he ignored you and was drunk, there came a time when he had seen what he had done and tried to make amends. You never came out of your study for almost five years. Five years!

**Troy:** I was working! Who do you think was paying for your college education while you were off playing baseball and changing your major every four weeks?

**Alex:** I was paying for it! I was paying for it with baseball. I had a full ride.

**Troy:** You had tuition. Who was paying for housing and books? I was.

**Alex:** I rather you would have been watching me win the division championship.

**Troy:** And a whole lot of good that division championship did for you didn't it?

**Alex:** What is that supposed to mean?

**Troy:** It didn't help you stay out of jail did it son? It didn't give you an alibi. It didn't help Gwen trust you the way she could have. All it did was put you here with the rest of the monsters plaguing our society.

*Pause*

**Alex:** I am not guilty

**Troy:** A Jury of your peers disagreed.

**Alex:** I am not guilty! I am not the Minotaur. I am not a beast. I am not some creature to be locked into a sadistic freak show because of the mindless fears of others. I am not guilty! I did not kill those girls.

**Troy:** Well. If you say so. [*sarcastically*] Gwen Believed you why shouldn't I?

**Alex:** Fuck you Troy! You may think you're hot shit. I'm sure all the other people who knew you growing up and who saw the way you never spoke to your own father if you could avoid it would agree right? The same people who thought that you were the best shit to hit the shelves since Stephen King right? All the retards who gathered close to you hoping that a bit of your genius would rub off on them, I'm sure they all thought that you were hot shit.

**Troy:** Are you done yet or do you have more to say?



**Alex:** I never had anything to say to you. Not since you stopped listening.

**Troy:** Well here I am boy. Come on. Take on your old man. Let's see what you got.

**Alex:** I don't have anything to say to you.

**Troy:** Run out of steam?

**Alex:** Don't antagonize me OLD MAN. I'm not in the mood.

**Troy:** And What is that supposed to mean?

*Alex Jumps at Troy and they start to fight and wrestle on the ground. Alex and Troy finally stop beating at each other. They sit on the ground panting for air.*

**Troy:** Feel better?

**Alex:** yeah. Much better actually.

**Troy:** Good.

**Alex:** That doesn't make up for everything Troy.

**Troy:** I can't make it up kid. God knows I would if I could. We both know I can't.

**Alex:** Yeah. So what's outside.

**Troy:** Does it matter?

**Alex:** I always dreamed that there was something better out there. Something other than all this shit we have to live through. I remember having a dream where you were building all of us a great mansion to live in. It was beautiful, but once we were inside we could never find each other. I must have had the dream a thousand times and I was always alone looking for everyone else. My shrink said something about it but all I remember getting out of it was the hope that one day I would be able to find that mansion, and everyone inside of it. I think now, that maybe everyone was outside in the garden.

*Alex stands for a moment before he starts to leave.*

**Troy:** Hey Alex. Good luck.

**Alex:** Thanks.

*He exits. Enter Mike*

**Mike:** Well that takes care of that.

**Troy:** Aren't you going with him?

**Mike:** Nope. I work on a case by case basis. He was the case when John decided to go for his sister instead of him. He doesn't need me anymore.

**Troy:** If you say so.

**Mike:** Time for you to go too. You've been hanging around in here way to long anyways.

**Troy:** Is death the only way to escape?

**Mike:** Don't you pay attention? Your son just walked out and he's still alive isn't he?

**Troy:** Are you sure you shouldn't go with him? Just case there is another like John after him.

**Mike:** there will always be Hitler's, Hussein's, and John's in this world Troy. If you keep them out then you keep everyone out. Come on. Lets get out of here.



*Exit Troy and Mike as bright white light floods the stage and audience.*  
*End*

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## Set Considerations

Please note that as of yet this play has NOT been presented as a full production. These set considerations are the result of classroom discussions with Scenic Designer Victor Capece regarding what the script requires and how to meet those requirements in an aesthetically pleasing and fulfilling manner.

What has been determined is that the script does not require a great deal of set and could easily be limited down to a series of furniture pieces that are brought on and off as they are required. However, as each piece is brought on, it allows something to fall and remain on the floor. In the first act it would be a desk covered with materials that are then scattered to the floor and left there.

When the desk is struck at the end of Act 1, it is replaced by hospital beds and tables. The surgical instruments with which John threatens Dawn are then left on the floor.

Nothing new is brought on for Act 3, but all of the debris is left for Alex to trudge his way through.

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