

Crash by Sunny Bow Mar Lake

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Cast of Characters

<u>TJ Sharp:</u>	Male, 25
<u>Sherry Kemble:</u>	Female, 41
<u>Jenna Kemble:</u>	Female, 18
<u>Mack Kemble:</u>	Female, 21
<u>Allen Kemble:</u>	Male, 62

ACT I

Scene 1

A spacious house in Bow Mar: A small suburb of Denver with single-family homes on acre-sized-or-larger lots.

The Kemble's kitchen/living room. Around 7:30 in the morning, Summer. TJ, a young man, 25, is asleep on the couch.

SHERRY, 41, in a bathing suit and gym shorts, drinks her Slimfast. She finishes, throws the container into the trash. She looks around the room, finds sunblock. She puts some on her hands, pats splotches onto her face and arms. She looks at her watch, then she puts the sunblock into her shoulder bag. As she leaves, she continues rubbing in her sunblock.

SHERRY

(to a bedroom offstage)

Jenna, I'm going! See you for dinner!

TJ shuffles, half asleep.

SHERRY(CONT.)

Oh, and there's a kid on the couch! Your dad brought him. Didn't say why. So be nice, Or be pleasant. Gotta go, Bye!

Sherry leaves, slamming the door. Silence. TJ gets up to close the blinds. He observes Sherry as she moves to the car.

TJ

The wife. Sherry.

He looks at his watch.

TJ(CONT.)

7:30. Shit.

TJ considers rushing to get ready. But then, a fatalism takes over.

TJ(CONT.)

Screw it.

(CONTINUED)

TJ takes out a bowl and baggie of weed from where he stored it in the crevasse of the couch. He opens the glass door of the back patio (which the actor will have to mime, since it's on the fourth wall) walks downstage and finds a seat on a lawn chair. He lights up.

JENNA, 18-years-old, in her pajamas, walks in to the kitchen/dining room. She pours cereal into a bowl, Lucky Charms. She pulls out an empty milk container, realizes it's empty, throws it away.

JENNA

Mom, we're out of milk!

TJ hears this, notices Jenna. He is in the middle of a drag and instinctively panics. He coughs loudly. He hides the bowl in the garden.

JENNA(CONT.)

Mom? Are you ok?

Jenna goes to the porch expecting to find her mother coughing. When she sees it's TJ, she startles.

JENNA(CONT.)

Mom! Somebody's in the backyard! Mom!

TJ

Your mom left.

JENNA

Why? What did you do?

TJ

Nothing, I'm just hanging out.

JENNA

Well, what are you doing here?

TJ

I'm crashing on your couch.

JENNA

What?

TJ points to the the couch. The crumpled blanket and guitar give his story some validity.

TJ

Your Dad invited me.

JENNA

Well, then what are you doing out here?

TJ

I like the outdoors. Your backyard is really incredible.

JENNA

You were coughing.
(a beat)
Are you ok?

TJ

I just have a cough.

JENNA

Are you sick?

TJ

No. I was-- given that I don't know you very well, let's say it's a secret.

JENNA

Yeah, that's fine. Ok.

She comes fully onto the porch.

JENNA(CONT.)

Um, sorry for asking but, why did my dad invite you?

TJ

He knows my Mom. I ran into him at, uh, Chickpea's, his restaurant. We saw each other through the window. It took me a while to figure out who he was, we hadn't seen each other in such a long time-- It's amazing how things work. The thing is, I've kind of been, wandering, or I suppose the proper term is "homeless." And so, when I told your dad this he said I could stay in his home for the night. Actually he said three months, but I don't think I could. He's a pretty kind guy. He's got a kind heart.

JENNA

Yeah, I guess so. I'm just surprised he didn't introduce us.

TJ

I stuck around with him and we talked until the restaurant closed. We didn't get here til midnight.

JENNA

Yeah I was asleep, I guess he didn't want to wake me up. Um, sorry, I was so, uh, freaking out. I do that sometimes.

(CONTINUED)

TJ
Yeah. So your name's Jenna, right?

JENNA
Uh-huh.

TJ
Your Dad said you're an artist?

JENNA
No, not really. I draw a lot.

TJ
I don't know, Al said you're an artist.

JENNA
Well, he's my dad. He can be very kind. He can also be-- what did he say about my art exactly?

TJ
Just how creative it was.

JENNA
Yeah. "Creative."

TJ
He meant it in a good way. You know it's not easy for a lot of men to use the word "beautiful." And sometimes I think adults find it difficult to express positive emotions, especially to the people they feel them toward. You've probably noticed this yourself. As people get older, they often get more and more protective and they come to find it difficult to just be vulnerable.

JENNA
(vulnerable)
Hmmm.

TJ
So it seemed like you were making yourself some breakfast?

JENNA
Uh-huh. Cereal, but I think we're out of milk.

TJ
Yeah? Come here, I'll show you a trick.

TJ goes to the kitchen, JENNA follows him, gaining curiosity. TJ opens the fridge.

TJ(CONT.)
Aha!

He takes out some orange juice.

TJ(CONT.)
Best thing in the world, I promise you.

JENNA
Are you serious?

TJ mixes pours the orange juice into Jenna's Lucky Charms. He fills a spoon, holds it up, prepare to take it in.

TJ
Some people might say that Lucky Charms and OJ is too much sweet. I suppose you could take that judgment as fact. But then, take a closer look at the implications of that judgment: A taste should be sweet but not too sweet? Life should be good enough but not as incredible as it could be? Maybe it's your taste buds, not the flavor, that need readjustment.

TJ eats his spoonful, slowly, savoring the taste.

JENNA
How is it? Let me try.

She tries it.

TJ
If you're ready, go ahead. You might find it's a little "weird," especially at first. That's fine. "Weird" is often a word people use to protect themselves from new experience. You like it?

JENNA
Yeah.

TJ
I find that the "weirder" things are, the more opportunity there is to really expand your Self, with a capital 'S', and transcend your preconceptions of how divine life is.

JENNA
Like finding out something is beautiful even though it frightens you at first.

TJ
Yeah.

JENNA

Sorry.

TJ

Don't be sorry, that was like a way cooler way to say it than what I was saying.

JENNA

No, definitely not. Your way was way more... deep. I just said that because, well, that's how I think about my art. I tried explaining it that exact same way, to my mom. Maybe you should explain it.

TJ

I don't know, if people don't feel something first, it often can't be explained.

JENNA

Yeah. And I guess he likes it all right. It's "creative" to him. And, you know, he has to work so hard so he's not vulnerable. My mom, though, she's always like, why don't you paint flowers or something? She really doesn't get it. What she wants is for me to play soccer or whatever.

TJ

And you don't like soccer.

JENNA

I don't like sports. Why do we have to be so aggressive all the time?

TJ

I see what you mean.

JENNA

Yeah, well. Moms, right?

TJ smiles knowingly.

JENNA(CONT.)

Do you mind if I show you something?

TJ

Is it something you want to show me?

JENNA

I don't know, just some drawings.

TJ

What of?

JENNA

Just from my head. Just stuff that I thought maybe...
I'm sorry, this is awkward.

TJ

Not at all, I want to see them.

JENNA

Kay, I'll be right back.

*JENNA leaves to go to her room. TJ sneakily runs
to the porch, looking for where he put his weed.*

TJ

Where'd I put it, shit.

*Before he has a chance to find it, JENNA comes out
with her very large drawing pad. The image on the
front is well drawn although slightly amateur. It
is of a naked woman who has the abdomen and legs
of a dog. The woman has is chain around her neck
and paws. Jenna is surprised to see TJ gone from
the kitchen.*

JENNA

Where'd you go? Hello?

TJ fakes a cough. JENNA sees him on the porch

TJ

I'm sorry.

JENNA

Don't be sorry. Are you, um, sick?

TJ

No. I don't know. Maybe I'll tell you about it
later. Let's just say I just needed some air.

JENNA

Well, ok. But I'm not like a judgmental person. I
mean you I wouldn't judge. I guess you don't have to
tell me if you don't want to.

TJ

It's not a matter of judgment, it's not really a matter
of trust either.

JENNA

Alright. If you have, like pneumonia from being
homeless, I totally won't be afraid to be near you.

TJ

No. It's not like that.

JENNA

I like getting sick, actually. I think it's good for purging stuff. You don't have AIDS or anything do you?

TJ

No I don't have AIDS.

JENNA

Alright, I can tell you're hiding something, though. If you ever want to talk about it, I'll listen.

TJ

Wait, did you really draw this? This looks amazing.

JENNA

You really think so?

TJ

Well, let me look at it for a minute.

He looks at it.

JENNA

So?

TJ

(after a pause)
Transfiguration.

JENNA

Yeah?

TJ

Like Christ.

JENNA

Jesus?

TJ

Or what Christ is a representation of: flesh becoming more than flesh. Did you use a model for this?

JENNA

No, I...

TJ

It feels like it comes from another world. Like it actually exists, but in another world. The face, it's not unlike the Ancient Etruscan God Albina, really. Or the Madonna.

(CONTINUED)

(he smiles)
And you know, it looks a little like you too.

JENNA
Well, thanks, I...

TJ
Not exactly like you. Your soul maybe. Whatever your soul looks like in that other world. Do you feel... choked or restrained?

JENNA
That's not really the one I meant to show you. Here.

JENNA flips her pad to a different page. Here there is a naked man who's bottom half is a giant frog. Out of the middle of his back there sprouts a single webbed wing.

TJ
Wow.

JENNA
What do you think? Do you think it's good?

TJ
Jenna, I don't believe it's ever a matter simple good or bad.

JENNA
Yeah, that's just, like, an expression. But still, what do you think?

TJ is silent, looking.

JENNA(CONT.)
See, I got the whole idea for this one in, like, one flash, which doesn't always happen. Last night. And I was thinking, I feel like something just happened, somewhere, felt so significant because there was this big boom in my head. I looked at the clock and it was 9:45... and I thought, four plus five, well that equals nine...nine nine...

TJ, who has been holding the drawing pad drops it.

JENNA(CONT.)
What?

TJ
Do you believe in coincidence?

JENNA

I don't know, I guess.

TJ

There's no such thing as coincidence.

JENNA

What do you mean?

TJ

I can't tell you, you have to know for yourself.

JENNA(CONT.)

(After some thinking)

Ok, it was 9:45 when you met my Dad. Was it? Oh my god it was. That's not a coincidence, definitely not. And then, that means... so that's you. You're him? That's you and you're... And who is he? He's, well, he's beautiful... and he's a frog because you're... amphibious, drifting between water and air. Right? That's how you seem to me at least. And he's missing a wing. And I think that has something to do with that secret you're keeping from me.

A long pause.

JENNA(CONT.)

Say something?

A long pause. She steps toward him. Another long pause. Suddenly, she kisses him, hard. He lets her. Then, she stops.

JENNA(CONT.)

I'm sorry.

TJ

Don't apologize. You're an amazing kisser.

JENNA

No I'm not.

TJ

Yes, you are.

JENNA

No I'm not. I kiss too rough. It's one of the many reasons I'm entirely unfit for a relationship. Sorry.

TJ

Well, it was enjoyable for me at least.

(CONTINUED)

JENNA

Thanks. Me too.

TJ

How old are you?

JENNA

18.

TJ

Really? So you're in high school?

JENNA

Graduated.

TJ

Man, I thought you were home from college or something. You're very mature for your age.

JENNA

Really? I mean, I get that a lot.

TJ

Yeah. 18, man. That's so young.

JENNA

Yeah. I know. You're young too, right?

TJ

25.

JENNA

Wow. That's, not that old. You're not, like, an adult.

TJ

According to the law, we both are.

JENNA

Yeah.

Pause. Jenna laughs.

JENNA(CONT.)

I'm sorry. It's just that you have this way of looking like you really *know* something.

TJ

Like I know you?

Pause. She kisses him again, hard, long.

MACK, Jenna's sister, comes through the front door. She has just come back from a morning run.

(CONTINUED)

TJ and Jenna hear Mack and break up their kissing. They are silent. Mack makes herself a glass of water, cools down from her cardio. Jenna walks inside.

JENNA

Hey Mack.

MACK

Hey, Jen, how's it going? Didn't expect to see you up this early.

JENNA

Well, I was inspired.

MACK

Doing some doodles?

JENNA

Yup.

MACK

Outside? That's unusual for you.

JENNA

I just needed some air.

TJ is outside. He looks for his bowl and baggie. spots it, but realizes the girls can see him so doesn't pick it up.

MACK

Who's that out there?

JENNA

No, that's, um, that's... Dad's letting this guy crash on our couch.

MACK

He is? He didn't tell me about it.

JENNA

Me neither. Sort of last minute. But don't worry, he's pretty cool.

TJ, realizing they're talking about him, comes inside.

TJ

Hey, nice to meet you. I'm TJ.

MACK

Mackenzie.

They shake hands.

MACK(CONT'D)

TJ stand for anything?

TJ

Just TJ. How about Mackenzie? Stand for anything?

Jenna laughs.

MACK

Don't mean to be a creeper, but, you don't happen to go to CU, do you?

TJ

Yeah, I hung around there for a couple of years.

MACK

You play the guitar, right?

TJ

Yeah.

MACK

TJ Sharp, that's right. You were in Holly's band.

TJ

That's right, Holly O'Neil, great singer. How is she? You guys still...

MACK

No, we broke up.

TJ

Sorry to hear that.

MACK

At least now I don't have to sit through all that awful music. You know, open mics. No offense.

TJ

None taken.

MACK

Anyway, what brings you all the way down to Bow Mar?

TJ

Well, I ran into your dad, and he knew my mom...

(CONTINUED)

MACK

Really? How?

TJ

I'm not sure exactly. I'd rather not talk about it, if you don't mind.

MACK

Ok, I guess. What does that mean?

JENNA

Mackenzie!

TJ

Jenna, it's fine. I'd rather not talk about it because, well, Al is your dad, not mine, and I think it would be better if you heard about it from him.

MACK

What, he fuck your mom or something?

JENNA

Jesus, Mackenzie!

TJ

Like I said, I really think it would be best if I let your dad tell you.

MACK

All right.

JENNA

Where is Dad anyway?

MACK

Working, probably. Or you know, telling other people to work. Anyway, I smell like a slaughterhouse, so I'm gonna go take a shower. See ya.

JENNA

See ya.

MACK

Nice meeting you. Again.

TJ nods in agreement, MACK leaves to take a shower.

JENNA

So you know my sister, huh?

TJ
Not quite know. Know of.

JENNA
Funny. Coincidences, right?

She looks at him significantly.

TJ
You haven't eaten much breakfast yet. Are you hungry?

TJ finds a bowl in the cupboard, begins to fill it with Lucky Charms and Orange Juice.

JENNA
I guess. Wait. Hold the OJ. I've got an idea.

JENNA runs to her room. While she is gone, TJ gulps a little straight from the Orange Juice container. JENNA returns with a bottle of red wine.

TJ
Wine? Is that yours?

JENNA
Well, long story. I was seeing this guy and he gave it to me. But he was kind of a jerk.

TJ
I'm sorry to here that.

JENNA
Yeah, I don't want to talk about it. The wine's a Merlot. I was gonna save it for college, but then I thought, what the heck.
(As she is opening the wine bottle)
I mean, if I don't expand myself while I'm young. Like my Self, you know, with a capital 'S'.

TJ
You've never had wine before?

JENNA
Of course I've had wine before. But not on cereal. Want some?

TJ
Sure I'll try it.

JENNA pours the wine over her cereal.

JENNA

Or, I can get us glass if you want.

TJ

If you want, that sounds delicious.

TJ eats while JENNA pours.

JENNA

We should probably drink quick. My sister'll be done with her shower soon.

JENNA hands TJ a cup of wine.

TJ

Thank you. This whole household is so generous.

Before they can drink, SHERRY enters.

SHERRY

Home early, I know. Nobody even got in the water today.

As she talks, she puts her towel, bag in their proper places. She takes her shoes off, and puts a shirt from her bag over her swimsuit. She takes a banana from the counter, peels it, eats it.

SHERRY

Right when I get there, a lifeguard says he sees lightning. Sky is completely clear, 85 degrees, but he says he sees lightning. Remember this happened in June too? If it happens again I'm going to talk to the pool management. I mean, I understand if it's cloudy. But having to wait outside for an hour just because of one lightning strike a hundred miles away, that's a little ridiculous. And we have a meet on Saturday, and the girls will do fine, but still. They'll be jumping into the water for the first time in three days. And then there's never practice on Friday, of course. I just really shouldn't think about it. You know, about how none of them swim more than the hour I have with them. They're there to have fun, and I get that. And part of the problem is their moms don't want to have to drive them to and from the pool, 'cause, well, who knows what they do all day, watch soap operas or take knitting classes.

JENNA

You made me swim two hours a day and I still sucked.

SHERRY

No. Don't say that. You were a great little swimmer.

JENNA

I came in last almost every race.

SHERRY

True. But I was still proud of you. Anyway. I see you two have met. And you're eating a healthy breakfast as usual. Is that orange juice on lucky marshmallows? Is that grape juice?

JENNA

Sort of. It's Merlot.

SHERRY

Merlot? I see. Wine?

JENNA

Yes, Mom, we're having wine.

SHERRY

(to TJ)

So you think it's a good idea to give a teenager alcohol for breakfast?

JENNA

Mom, shut up! It wasn't him!

SHERRY

Honey, why don't you go to your room if you're going to use that attitude?

JENNA

It was my wine. I gave it to him.

SHERRY

Oh really. How did you get a hold of such nice wine?

JENNA

Dave gave it to me.

SHERRY

Dave? I thought you told me you weren't seeing that kid anymore?

JENNA

I'm not. He gave it to me a long time ago.

SHERRY

And you just kept it in this house? You just kept it in this house? What if your father found it, did you think of that? No, you were probably thinking of yourself. And your hormones.

(CONTINUED)

JENNA

It's just a little wine.

SHERRY

But what if your father found it? Do you remember Christmas?

JENNA

Yes, I remember Christmas.

SHERRY

Well, maybe you're too young to understand the bigger picture here. But your father is doing very very well. And just the smell of that wine on your breath could, well, I don't even want to think about it.

JENNA

I'm sorry, it's my fault.

SHERRY

Just be glad nothing bad actually happened. But you're still grounded. For a week. Maybe two.

JENNA

Mom, I don't see how that's completely fair.

SHERRY

Well then, maybe you need to go to your room.

JENNA

What?

SHERRY

I think you should go to your room and consider what would have been a better course of action. You could have told us about the wine. Or at least me.

JENNA

Mom. I'm eighteen years old.

SHERRY

Want to be grounded for three weeks?

JENNA

Fine. But, I'm telling Dad.

SHERRY

Well it's three weeks then.

JENNA

Fine!

JENNA goes toward her, then remembers the drawing pad. She grabs it, goes inside her room, slams the door. A few beats.

SHERRY

I'm so sorry about her. About that. We really don't fight that often.

TJ

She's young.

SHERRY

She certainly is. I'm sorry, my husband told me your name, but--

TJ

TJ. And you're Sherry?

SHERRY

That's right. So you're good with names, huh? Gonna be a businessman?

TJ

Maybe one day.

SHERRY

Well, it's certainly worked out for Al. Financially at least. And he gets to make his own hours. Although, there's usually so many of them.

(referring to the wine)

You don't mind if I...

TJ

Not at all.

Sherry pours herself a glass. Drinks.

SHERRY

How old are you, TJ?

TJ

25.

SHERRY

You have a girlfriend?

TJ

No, not currently.

SHERRY

When I was twenty-five, I already had them to take care of...

(She gestures toward her children.)

TJ

You've got a very nice family.

SHERRY

I suppose that's true. But, you know rebellious teenagers... I'm just biding my time until the little artist moves out. I don't know what I'll do, go to parties or something, if they have those for old women. Are you in college?

TJ

Not currently.

SHERRY

Do it. I wish I'd finished. I was in the top of my class. Math. I could be some successful accountant or something right now. But I guess that wouldn't have been so great. So I guess don't go to college. Find someone who's older and who has a lot of money.

TJ

I don't know if I see marriage in my future. And in my opinion, financial motivation isn't really a solid bedrock for any relationship.

SHERRY

Right. Of course not. I was joking. You young people are so serious.

TJ

Allen seems significantly older than you. Is that true?

SHERRY

Yes. But no, it's not about money for us. Well, it is and it isn't. I guess everything, on some level or other, comes down to money, right?

TJ

It does? My philosophy is that everything comes down to love.

SHERRY

Easy for you to say that. I feel like you've got a very familiar looking face. Haven't I seen you on TV? No. You know who you look like? Al. You look exactly like a picture of Al when he was thirty. I didn't know him until he was forty and bald. You're very handsome.

TJ

Thank you.

SHERRY

Mind if I put my hand on your hair? I want to see what you'll look like in twenty years.

TJ

Sure.

Sherry covers up the front part of TJ's hair.

SHERRY

It's hard to tell. Your hair is so thick now. That'll change. Anyway, how do you know Al? All he said was that you're a friend of the family. You're not related to him, are you?

TJ

My mom knew him. In school. I shouldn't say anything else. Al asked me not to. He said he would tell you when he's ready.

SHERRY

When he's ready. I generally have to wait years until he's ready. You know I didn't find out he was an alcoholic until this past Christmas. I have to admit, for twenty years, he was very good at concealing it. He was just a regular puritan, one who would occasionally come home very hung over from his "business trips." And even after it was readily apparent what had been going on, readily apparent, I still had to pull his teeth to get him to say it out loud. And let alone getting him to go to AA, it took literally three months, I had to nag him every day. But it's not nagging when someone has a serious life threatening problem. I mean besides the health risks, he gets himself into this place where I'm afraid he's going to kill himself. And so now you show up, and he's going to tell me about you when he's ready?

TJ

Would you like me to tell you?

SHERRY

No. No. I'm going to give him a chance. Anyway, I hardly know you. But thank you for offering. And try not to let him know that you know about, you know, AA, and all.

TJ

Though I believe openness is usually the healthiest stance, I respect your wishes of privacy.

SHERRY

Good. Thanks. I really shouldn't drink more. It'll interact with my Zoloft. Oh well.

MACK enters unseen, in shorts and a T-shirt. SHERRY swallows what's left of her wine.

MACK

Mom, you're drinking?

SHERRY

I'm allowed. You drink at school.

MACK

Yeah, but you said no alcohol in the house. Dad?

SHERRY

He's at work. Your sister snuck it in. And I think we can make a minor exception if we're entertaining a guest.

MACK

And you put it in Lucky Charms?

SHERRY

Once again, blame your sister.

MACK

Yeah, you do that a lot.

SHERRY

What's that supposed to mean?

MACK

Nothing.

SHERRY

Good.

Mack grabs a Slimfast from the fridge.

MACK

I'm just thinking you could go a bit easier on her. If you haven't noticed, she's kind of a loon.

SHERRY

I'm glad that you're so considerate of your sister, Mack.

MACK

You should try it. Considering another person besides yourself.

SHERRY

That's a very hurtful thing to say.

MACK

I'm sorry. I guess in college I've been getting into the habit of being honest with people.

MACK heads toward the door.

SHERRY

And who pays for that college?

MACK

I'm going to Boulder.

SHERRY

Now?

MACK

Lindsey wants to see me.

SHERRY

Your girlfriend.

MACK

Yes, my *girlfriend*.

SHERRY

You know I'm perfectly fine with that.

MACK

Yes, I know because you keep telling me how perfectly fine you are with it.

SHERRY

Well, what do you want me to say? I'm fine with it.

MACK

Nothing. It's just that I wish I could have one single conversation in this house instead of another fucking argument.

SHERRY

Well, it takes two to argue.

MACK

See you guys later. Tonight or tomorrow.

MACK leaves.

SHERRY

(To the door)

Are you eating dinner here tonight?

A pause as MACK's exit sinks in. SHERRY suppresses a small urge to cry.

SHERRY(CONT.)

I just can't believe the day I'm having! Anyway, can I get you anything? Have you eaten breakfast? I could fry you up some eggs.

TJ

That sounds delicious, but I've already had some cereal.

SHERRY pours herself another drink.

SHERRY

Good, because I'm pretty sure we're out of eggs. I should go shopping. That's what I should do. I should make a list and go shopping. That's what needs to get done. Mackenzie coming down, eating all the food, leaving. Do you think I should go shopping?

TJ

I think that it's sometimes necessary. We're all consumers, you know.

SHERRY

Yeah, so I'll go shopping. No. I'll go shopping this afternoon. I'll take a bath. I need to take a bath. Just soak for a while.

TJ

That sounds like a good idea. Mrs. Kemble, are you crying?

SHERRY

No. I'm sweating. I'm sweating and I got sunscreen in my eyes. Shit.

She gets Kleenex, she gets the Kleenex wet, dabs her eye with it.

SHERRY(CONT.)

I'm not crying. I'm sorry. TJ, that's your name, right?

TJ

Right.

SHERRY

I see you have a guitar. Are you a musician?

TJ

Yes.

SHERRY

Well, play something. Earn your keep.

TJ

Ok.

SHERRY

What are you going to play?

TJ

Is there anything you'd like me to play?

SHERRY

Stairway, unless that's too hard.

TJ

No.

He plays the opening of stairway to Heaven.

SHERRY

(singing)

There's a lady who knows all that glitters is gold, and
she's building a stairway to heaven.

(spoken)

That's all I know.

TJ

Yeah me too.

SHERRY

Anyway...

TJ

May I ask you a question?

SHERRY

Ask away.

TJ

This is not coming from a place of judgment or from a
place of condescension. This is really just an honest
question, based out of a desire to help another human
being along in their journey.

SHERRY

Ok. Ask.

TJ

How long has it been since you've enjoyed the release of a sexual experience?

SHERRY

Excuse me?

TJ

I apologize if I've made you uncomfortable.

SHERRY

Is that a pick-up line or something?

TJ

Of course not. I was only responding to a certain flustered energy that I had been receiving. I can fully understand why you may be uncomfortable discussing this subject with me.

SHERRY

You're talking to a forty-year-old woman, do you know that?

TJ

Yes.

SHERRY

It's none of your business.

TJ

I fully respect your privacy.

SHERRY

Good. Then don't ask about it.

TJ

Certainly. Although, I hope you don't mind if I'm honest with you for a moment.

SHERRY

Yes, I think I do mind.

TJ

Ok then, I respect your boundaries of comfortability.

SHERRY

Good. Jesus. Fine. I'm curious, what were you going to say?

TJ

I was going to say that I come from a philosophy that sex is an act able to connect the body to the spiritual life and the emotional life. It's not an end in

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TJ (cont'd)

itself, obviously. In fact, pursuing sex for the sake of sex degrades the sanctity of the act. Nevertheless, if one is opened to one's sexuality, one can have a fuller experience both of one's emotional life and one's spiritual life.

SHERRY

Right. Ok. I see what you're saying. It's all about sex. It's really about sex. Easy to say when you're a twenty-year-old college drop-out musician. But what your trying to tell me is that my life, all the Zoloft prescriptions, all the hobbies and stupid sports, the reason I need to be constantly obsessed with coaching a bunch high school girls, but even when they win, even when they make it to state, even when one of my little stars gets 1st place in breast-stroke, I'm still never... full, and I still have to come home to this awful place, this big, empty, space, and be here with a completely empty man, Allen, I don't know what he does all day, I don't even know what he does when he's here--and no, I'm not crying it's the sunscreen--and my children seem to hate me the more I love them, so I give up loving them, and now, trying to even talk to any of them, we're all just... so ... sarcastic? No. Empty, just empty.

TJ

That was beautifully said.

SHERRY

And what you're saying is, sex is the answer. She's wound up because she hasn't had sex in six months, and yes it's been six months, and so this hysterical woman, if she had sex, like you do, 20-year-old sex, well then...

TJ

No, that's not what I'm saying. I'm saying that by reopening you to the raw beauty of existence, a healthy sexual experience allows you to break the patterns in your life, the patterns in your emotions, and even the patterns in your body, that were nourishing at one point but have since become, as you so beautifully put it, "empty."

SHERRY

You sound like you're trying to convince me to do Yoga.

TJ

That would help. It can also help with sex. Do you practice Yoga?

SHERRY

Actually, I did. On and off. Aerobic Yoga.

TJ

Ashtanga.

SHERRY

Yeah, that.

TJ

Well, Ashtanga is a great tradition for strengthening the body. But in my opinion, to reach the spirit, you often have to be a bit more gentle. Are you familiar with the pose Supta Baddha Konasana?

SHERRY

I don't think so.

TJ

It's also sometimes called "Goddess Pose." It's a great pose for working on vulnerability, which is really essential for positive sexual experiences. Do you want to try it?

SHERRY

Now?

TJ

It's very relaxing. You'll need a little bit of room on the floor. I'll do it with you. Here, if we just move the couch a bit.

They move the couch.

TJ(CONT.)

Alright. Now lay down on your back with your knees in the air. Relax your eyelids, close them if that's comfortable. Breathe. Put your hand against your belly and breathe against your hand. Imagine a God of air, whatever he may look like to you, and imagine that his mouth is your mouth, he is breathing into your lungs, filling your belly, then your chest, your back, completely full... then release... then filling your belly, your chest, your back... then release... Good. Now let your knees fall apart and let your heels come toward your center. You may feel the stretch in your hips. On each exhale, let your knees fall further, further than you thought they could. On the inhale, pull your heels closer, closer... If you're comfortable, a partner can help deepen the stretch.

(CONTINUED)

SHERRY

Mmmhh...

TJ kneels in front of SHERRY, gently pushing her knees down and apart.

TJ directs her breath with his own. In... Out... In... Out... In...

The door opens suddenly. SHERRY releases a scream of shock. It's ALLEN at the door.

ALLEN

Sherry, what's happening?

SHERRY

Oh my god, I'm so sorry. Oh my god. You startled me. I'm sorry.

ALLEN

Don't worry about it. Are you ok?

SHERRY

No, I'm fine, I'm fine. Your young friend TJ here was just teaching me some Yoga exercises. He says they'll help me to relax.

ALLEN

That's good. That's great. Maybe you can teach me some, Teej, if I get the time. And Jenna. She could probably use the exercise.

SHERRY

I wasn't expecting you home.

ALLEN

Well, I'm the boss, so I write my own rules. Ain't so bad. How are the swimmers?

SHERRY

They're all dry. Practice was canceled. Lightning.

ALLEN

On a day like today? Well. Anyway, I came by mainly to pick up TJ. Remember that 7:00 a.m. shift you agreed to?

TJ

Yes, Mr. Kemble.

SHERRY

You're not making TJ work for you, are you Allen?

ALLEN

No, I'm not making him. I'm paying him. And getting him a place to stay while he gets on his feet.

TJ

I want the work, Mrs. Kemble. Providing nutrition and sustenance is a very honorable profession.

ALLEN

And you were supposed to meet John at the Chickpea's by Belleview.

TJ

I know, and that's what I did. But then, when I got there and nobody could tell me who John was.... I didn't realize that you have more than one of these restaurants.

ALLEN

I have eleven.

TJ

Yeah, I remember you saying that, but for some reason I thought they were all in different states.

ALLEN

Well, franchising doesn't quite work like that.

TJ

But by the time I biked back here, and figured out where I went wrong, it was already an hour too late.

ALLEN

Next time, please let me know.

TJ

I didn't have your phone number.

ALLEN

That's fine. That's fine. Anyway I just came by to see if you were here, maybe you and I can drive you to Chez's location in Fort Collins. I think you'll like Chez, he's a fun guy like you, and he knows how to cook. The shift starts at noon, but it takes an hour or two to get there.

TJ

We can leave at ten. Or we can leave right now? I wish I could say I had better clothes to change into.

ALLEN

I actually haven't had much to eat. Have you?

TJ
Cereal.

SHERRY
Don't look in the kitchen!

Sherry goes to hide the wine.

ALLEN
Why?

SHERRY
No reason.

ALLEN
Honey. What is it, a present or something?

SHERRY
Just don't look!

ALLEN
Is that a bottle of wine?

SHERRY
I said not to look!

ALLEN
I won't care if it is, just tell me, is it alcohol?

SHERRY
Yes.

ALLEN
So you're drinking? If you are, that's--

SHERRY
No. It was Jenna's. I've already punished her. I just didn't want you to see it. It might be a trigger.

ALLEN
Honey, that's not how it works. If I was at a party and everybody had a glass, that would be one thing. But no, it's not a trigger. I'm fine. Can I see it?

Sherry hands Allen the bottle.

ALLEN(CONT.)
Merlot. How did Jenna get a hold of this?

SHERRY
Some boy gave it to her.

Allen looks at TJ.

SHERRY(CONT.)

Not that one. The one with all the piercings.

ALLEN

Oh yes...Dan? Looks like she drank quite a bit of it. Good thing you stopped her.

SHERRY

Yeah. It is a good thing.

ALLEN

Well, when I was her age, I was drinking more than wine. But, I certainly suffered for it, that's for sure. Where is she? In her room?

SHERRY

Yeah, I sent her there. And just so you know, she's grounded. Jenna! Jenna! Jenna! She's probably just blasting her music in her ears. TJ, can you go get her?

TJ

Sure.

TJ goes offstage into JENNA'S room.

SHERRY

Anyway.

ALLEN

So swimming was canceled.

SHERRY

Yep, lightning.

ALLEN

Still doing soccer though.

SHERRY

That ended in May.

ALLEN

That's right.

SHERRY

You haven't told me anything about this TJ kid. He says you knew his Mom?

ALLEN

Is there wine in that cereal?

(CONTINUED)

SHERRY

You'll have to ask Jenna about it when she comes out.

ALLEN

I certainly will. And, yes, about TJ. I guess you could say, yes, I knew his mother.

SHERRY

So, basically, what you're hinting at, and I don't want to seem accusatory here, but it seems like at one point during your long dark years as alcoholic playboy chef, it seems that that boy's mother may have been a woman you were seeing, sexually, hooking up with?

ALLEN

No, God no. That's...

SHERRY

So he just happens to look a lot like you.

ALLEN

He doesn't look exactly like me. Although, I do see what you mean. It is funny how that works.

SHERRY

What's funny?

ALLEN

I should have said something about this a while ago. A long long while ago. TJ's mother is my sister Kate.

SHERRY

You don't have a sister.

ALLEN

I do. An older sister. Kate.

SHERRY

You said you were an only child.

ALLEN

That part's true. I told you even when we got married that I couldn't tell you everything. That's because I really feel I can't and shouldn't.

SHERRY

"Everything" means... interior... emotional... daily... bullshit. Not basic fundamental facts. Twenty years. Jesus. What could possibly be so wrong with your family that you don't even want me to know they exist?

ALLEN

I don't like thinking about them.

SHERRY

And that's it, that's really it? Why?

ALLEN

Because I don't like thinking about them. But you're right. I should start being more honest. AA, right? Well, with TJ around, I'm sure quite a lot will... come to light. And that's a good thing. You know what, maybe we can all go out somewhere for lunch. Here's an idea. The lake? Why not the lake? We hardly ever go out to that lake, and it's so darn close. And it's a great day. We can eat some Chickpeas, we're experimenting with a new curry I think you might like, and anyway TJ can tell us about his mom, Kate, my sister, it can be a sort of big family meeting. A Kemble reunion. Is Mack around?

SHERRY

She went to Boulder.

ALLEN

Well, we'll have another one later with her too. But I can afford to take some time off work. Heck, I wasn't being terribly productive. I don't know. Honey, what I'm saying is this seems like it could be a good thing for us.

SHERRY

What could?

ALLEN

You know, lunch. Or, um facing, facing... just talking by the lake. It's a beautiful lake. And it's a great day. Man, I really want you to try this new curry. It's got a different flavor, and I really think it could be something more than just fast food. It's really unique. Anyway, I'm gonna go the food, can you get everyone ready?

SHERRY

Sure.

ALLEN

Thanks, you're the best. You're the best wife I could ever ask for. Are we good?

SHERRY

Yes, we're good.

(CONTINUED)

ALLEN

Well, we're gonna be, we're gonna be more than good. Like we were. Usually are. Better. Ok. I'll be right back. Actually, I'll be by the lake. Get to get ready to... relax. Bye.

Allen exits out the front door.

SHERRY

What the hell.

(A beat.)

Jenna? TJ? What's taking you so long? Jenna! Jenna!
Jenna!

Jenna enters, her shirt is on inside out and her hair is a mess. TJ enters after her, looking slightly less disheveled.

SHERRY

Jesus fucking Christ. You two weren't...

TJ

Weren't what, Sherry?

SHERRY

Oh, dear God. Wait, TJ, do you know?

TJ

Know what?

SHERRY

Your mother, what's her name?

TJ

...Kathryn.

SHERRY

Oh, God. And so you know that she's Al's sister.

TJ

Is that what he's told you?

SHERRY

Uh-huh.

TJ

Yes, it's true.

He gives a slight shake of his head to JENNA.

SHERRY

And so you knew that Jenna was your cousin, and still, right over there, just now, you were fucking her?

(CONTINUED)

TJ

Mrs. Kemble, we weren't fucking.

SHERRY

"Making love" then? What the hell were you doing in there for so long?

JENNA

I was showing him the drawing I made for him. Two angels, each with one wing.

SHERRY

Right. Your animorphs. Why is your shirt inside out?

JENNA

Well, I was using charcoal, and I didn't want to get any smudges on the outside.

SHERRY

There's no charcoal on your hands.

JENNA

Because then I decided to switch to colored pencil.

SHERRY

And look at how much you're sweating.

JENNA

It's hot. Look, you're sweating too. You're really sweating. Jesus.

SHERRY

Anyway, well, sorry. This day has been such a roller coaster. Anyway. Jenna, this is your cousin TJ. And I guess I'm your aunt-in-law? Right. So, your dad should be back somewhat soon to take us on a little picnic by the lake. That should be fun. Get ready. He told me to tell you to get ready. I'm pretty sure I for one need a shower. Um. The sunblock is in my bag.

About to leave.

SHERRY (CONT.)

And you're cousins. So please... just don't... touch each other.

Sherry exits to the shower.

A beat.

TJ
Would you like to smoke?

JENNA
It's not healthy.

TJ
Pot.

JENNA
Pot?

TJ
Have you smoked pot before?

JENNA
Yeah. One time. Me and my friend, we made this really cool collage thing.

TJ
It can be very expanding.

JENNA
Yeah. But not as much as sex, right?

TJ
Not quite the same.

JENNA
Let's have sex.

TJ
I don't know. Not yet. There's an exact moment that things are supposed to happen. And if you rush so much, well, things happen, but not divine things.

JENNA
You're right. You're always right.

TJ
Follow me.

TJ leads her to the back yard.

JENNA
Where are we going? Are we going to run away?

TJ
Sh...

JENNA
I really wouldn't mind. I really wouldn't. What could they do, anyway? I'm eighteen. I guess they wouldn't

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JENNA (cont'd)

pay for college. But I don't even want to go to college. What are they going to teach me there? You could take me with you, and we could hitchhike or whatever. I don't need much. Just food and some paper and pencils. That's all my parent's really give me. Maybe I could make a living selling my art. I don't know, do people's soul portraits. What's that?

TJ

It's a bowl. You smoke pot out of it.

JENNA

Cool. What do you think of the plan?

TJ

I think you're rushing.

JENNA

You're right. But. Well, I guess we have to wait then? I guess you can leave whenever, but I have to stay here.

TJ lights the bowl, inhales. Coughs.

JENNA(CONT.)

You really shouldn't do that. If you're sick with something, it can't help.

TJ

Come here.

TJ takes another hit, breathes it into Jenna's mouth. They both cough.

TJ(CONT.)

Are you good?

JENNA

Yeah. Good. Do it again.

TJ picks the bowl back up.

JENNA(CONT.)

No, not that. Kiss me.

He kisses her. She kisses back, vigorously, reaches to remove his shirt. He stops her.

TJ

We can't, your Mom'll be out of the shower soon.

JENNA

You're right. I'm sorry. I don't usually rush this much. In fact, I don't think I've ever rushed at all before except around you. We're not really cousins, are we?

TJ

No.

JENNA

Good. That's what I thought. And even if we were, I don't know, compared to everything else, is that such a big deal? I mean, it's obvious that the universe is telling us to be together. I guess the only real reason we shouldn't is that our baby might come out weird. But I don't even want a baby. And anyway, isn't weird beautiful? I mean, why are we afraid of a mutation? Maybe it will be a really great mutation, you know, one that helps humanity.

TJ

Like the wings in your drawing.

JENNA

Oh my god, yes. Like the wings in my drawing. You don't think that that's what it all means, do you? I mean, it's impossible, right?

TJ

I don't think anything's impossible.

Jenna feels a little faint.

JENNA

Oh my God, I'm really rushing now!

TJ holds her.

JENNA(CONT.)

Kiss me again.

He does. This calms her breathing a little.

JENNA(CONT.)

Thanks. So... My mom. Why do you think she said that?

TJ

I don't know.

JENNA

You don't? I mean why would she say that we're cousins? I think it's because she's jealous. She's jealous of me because I'm not a man-woman like she

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JENNA (cont'd)

is. I saw the way she was with you before. I was going to come out to show you my drawing, but I saw that she was making you touch her legs or something. It was weird. She's weird. I'm sorry about her.

TJ

Don't be. She has a lot of stress.

JENNA

Yeah. Sometimes she doesn't, uh, release it in the right way though. You really handled it well. That's what you have to do, even when someone's being terrible, you just sort of have to go with the flow. Even when it's a bunch of stupid lies and everybody knows it. Just agree with them like you did, gets them to stop. You know a couple months ago, at parent-teacher conferences, my dad couldn't go, so it was just her, and she was being really awful the whole time. Like, most of my teachers were saying pretty good things, because I'm pretty smart, you know, but she was always twisting it around so that the main thing they were saying was that I was lazy or annoying or something, and that's not at all what they were saying. She'd make all these jokes that were like, mean, about me, and the school, like who cares if it has a bad football team, get over it. Anyway, what was the point? Oh yeah. So then she starts coming on to my English teacher. He's kind of muscular, and she's like "You didn't tell me your English teacher was a body builder," right in front of him. And, like that's not enough, she asks him out. On a date. Well, she didn't say it like that but basically. And he was like "No, Mrs. Kemble, it would be entirely inappropriate for me to meet with you for coffee and help you appreciate poetry seeing as you are a fully married woman who is old and somebody's mom." Well, he didn't say that, but he was really embarrassed. And then, I told Dad about it, and it was the weirdest part, he was like "Thanks for telling me, but if it happens again, you don't have to." Don't tell him about it? What the hell? He just doesn't want to think about anything except his stupid restaurants. It's so fucking obvious, so fucking, fucking obvious that they are not in love. Not at all in love. My mouth is really dry. Could you get me some water?

TJ

Sure.

TJ puts the bowl and baggie in the garden and goes into the kitchen to fill a glass of water.

(CONTINUED)

JENNA

My arms feel really long. Do my arms look long to you? Maybe this is what being a bird feels like. No. Probably not.

TJ comes back in. He gives her the water.

JENNA(CONT.)

Thank you, you're really nice. Have I been talking too much? I'm sorry. I don't get stoned a lot.

TJ

That's fine. Everything you're saying is very personal and honest. I'm glad to be here for it.

JENNA

Yeah, but I'm not letting you say anything personal or honest. I mean, I don't know, your turn.

A pause.

TJ

I find it's usually in vain to manufacture honesty or meaning. I think it's better to respond to the moment.

JENNA

Ok, can I ask you some questions? Like, if you're not my cousin who are you? Like, I know you're TJ, but what's your last name?

TJ

Sharp.

JENNA

And where are you from?

TJ

That's a long story.

JENNA

I want to hear it.

TJ

Well. The short answer is, nowhere.

JENNA

Did your parents move a lot?

TJ

Not exactly. I moved parents a lot. I never knew who my real parents were, and I was never quite fully adopted.

(CONTINUED)

JENNA

Oh my god, that's so sad. You're an orphan.

TJ

Yes.

JENNA

Can I see your belly button?

She lifts up his shirt.

JENNA(CONT.)

Sorry, I just thought for a second that maybe you didn't have one. You know if, you don't have parents. Maybe you were just sort of sent down.

TJ

Well, I do have a belly button.

JENNA

But if you were in foster care, how come you're so, you know, cool, I guess?

TJ

People are who they are in the long run. Or, people can choose to live life the way they choose it.

JENNA

I guess. So you don't have any issues or anything?

TJ

I do. Therapy helps. And being honest. And music. And breathing.

JENNA

Wow. You really are pretty amazing. But if you don't have a mom, then my dad doesn't know your mom. So... I mean, what the fuck?

TJ

Are you sure you want to know?

JENNA

Yes, I'm sure.

TJ

When I was a baby I was adopted by a couple, George and Kathryn. One day, Kathryn died. A little while later, George gave me back to the adoption agency and left.

JENNA

That's terrible.

(CONTINUED)

TJ

He left and he changed his name to Allen. And then he started a family somewhere else. With somebody else. His real family. His biological family.

JENNA

Me.

TJ

That's right.

JENNA

That's so awful. I can't believe he did that.

TJ

I don't really remember it happening. But I grew up knowing that somebody named George left me. I used to have dreams about finally finding him. And now it's just sort of happened.

JENNA

Are you mad?

TJ

Yes, of course I am. When I was a teenager, I really wanted to hunt him down, beat him up or something, I don't know why. I feel whole lot of emotions around it, but I know that anger on my part would only make the situation worse. Usually when I breathe through anger, underneath I find it's actually a feeling of powerlessness, which I think comes from a lack of love. I'm not perfect, sometimes I do get angry, but I try my best to act out of love for the present moment. Which, once you get started, isn't that hard: There's a lot in the present moment to love.

JENNA

Huh.

TJ

I imagine this is a lot to process.

JENNA

It is.

TJ

I'm sorry if I've been too revelatory.

JENNA

No, it's good. It's good to know things. My Dad. George. Is the last name the same?

TJ
Kemble, yup.

JENNA
So why did he change his name?

Out of nowhere, a huge flash of lightning, and booming crash of thunder.

JENNA(CONT.)
Holy fucking shit! Holy shit! What was that, was that lightning? I guess mountain weather, right? Oh my fucking God!

TJ
(Looking to the back of the audience)
I think it hit somebody.

JENNA
Where?

TJ
By the lake. Is that George?

TJ runs offstage through the audience.

TJ(CONT.)
Call the paramedics.

JENNA
TJ, where are you going? Wait! I'm coming.

JENNA runs offstage behind TJ.

A long, empty moment.

SHERRY enters, wet from the shower but dressed.

SHERRY
Did you guys hear that? On a day like today. Mountain weather. I guess it's a good thing they didn't swim after all. Jenna? TJ? Allen? You two better not be...

She checks Jenna's room, see's it's empty. She looks out the upstage windows toward the front of the house.

SHERRY(CONT.)
All the cars are here. There's Allen's.
(calling for him)

Allen?
(a beat)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SHERRY(CONT.) (cont'd)

Good. They'll just have their little picnic without me. Didn't even think to leave a note.

She looks around for a note.

SHERRY(CONT.)

That's fine. Good. I'm glad. I'll have my own little picnic.

She locates the wine, pours herself a drink. Fade out.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT IIScene 1

The Kemble house again. It is 10pm. It is raining. A beat. The flash of headlights of a car through the window, sound of it pulling up. SHERRY, in Goddess Pose, startles slightly. She gets up, looks out the window, sees the car. She haphazardly attends to the dirty dishes in the sink. MACK and ALLEN enter. ALLEN is missing his mustache, and much of his hair and eyebrows. He has a first-degree burn on his cheek, that leads down to his neck, and then to his shoulder, which is heavily bandaged. He wears hospital scrubs and sweatpants.

SHERRY

Allen. You look terrible.

ALLEN

I feel fine. A little exhausted.

SHERRY

What happened to your mustache? On the phone you said it was just singed a little.

ALLEN

They shaved it for me. It was lopsided.

SHERRY

Well, you look much younger. That's good. Although you do seem kind of like Frankenstein. Ha. What an interesting scar.

MACK

That's first-degree, it should go away.

SHERRY

Great, that's great. Well, you look like you're about to fall over, do you want sit down?

ALLEN

Yes.

He finds his way to the couch. He sits so that his bandaged side doesn't have any weight on it.

SHERRY

I'm just so glad you're ok.

(CONTINUED)

ALLEN

Well, I may be 62, but I have the heart of a twenty-year-old.

SHERRY

(Attempting a joke)
Who in particular?

A beat.

MACK

Mom, I don't mean to be nosy, but why exactly weren't you at the hospital?

SHERRY

Well, dad was being taken care of.

MACK

By me. I had to drive from Boulder.

ALLEN

I told your mother not to come. She doesn't like hospitals. TJ took care of me, he's a very responsible boy when he needs to be.

SHERRY

And where are Jenna and TJ? Are they on their way?

MACK

Jenna drove TJ to an open mic.

SHERRY

Really? Who gave her permission to do that?

ALLEN

Me. They are cousins after all. About time they got to know each other. I think it's good that Jenna has someone in the family she can relate to.

SHERRY

Yes. Relate to. Well, I'm afraid that they might be relating in a way that's not appropriate

ALLEN

I'm afraid I don't know what you mean.

SHERRY

I mean earlier today, when I was calling Jenna from her room, it seemed like they were about to...

MACK

Screw?

(CONTINUED)

SHERRY

Yes, I think.

Allen is looking in the fridge, pulls out an empty orange juice container.

ALLEN

Looks like we're out of orange juice. And nobody bothered to throw the container away.

He throws the container away.

ALLEN(CONT.)

You're probably just imagining things. Not everyone is lusting after everyone like you imagine them to be.

SHERRY

You're right.

ALLEN

If it happens again, well, then we'll talk.

MACK

I wouldn't put it past the bastard, he's a creepy little shit.

SHERRY

Watch your language, he's your cousin.

ALLEN

TJ is a nice boy, and he has a lot of potential. But he didn't grow up with much structure and I think now it's our responsibility, as the only real family he has, to give him some of that structure-- show him the joys of a stable family life.

SHERRY

And, to keep this family "stable", in the future, let's keep those two as far apart as possible.

ALLEN

What's done is done.

(A beat)

I should just go to bed right now. We'll all have better heads in the morning. I'm taking some sick days off work... So there will be plenty of time for us to... talk.

(A beat)

I was thinking we could do a family vacation, while it's still summer. How does Alaska sound?

(A beat)

I'll be in bed.

(CONTINUED)

SHERRY

Don't wait up for me.

Allen begins to exit. Then:

ALLEN

Mackenzie, do you know where the hydrocodone is? Just in case I wake up in the middle of the night.

MACK

Here you go.

ALLEN

Thanks, sweetie. And what ever happened to that Merlot?

SHERRY

I got rid of it.

ALLEN

Good. That's good.

Allen exits.

SHERRY

Whose guitar is that? TJ's? You said he's at a music open mic?

MACK

Maybe he'll just take a female audience member onto the stage and strum her labia.

SHERRY

Mack that's vulgar. That's very, very vulgar.

MACK

He's probably strumming Jenna right now. His cousin. That's beyond disgusting, I can't even. Yuch. It makes me want to throw up or hit something or choke him.

SHERRY

Don't say that, deep down, you know, he's just confused.

MACK

Mom, you can't be serious.

SHERRY

I see him from a different perspective. He's more like a child to me.

MACK

Do you remember Holly?

SHERRY

Your girlfriend. Was she blond?

MACK

No. Anyway, she left me because basically she wanted to fool around with some dude in her band. Well, I didn't remember his name, but I remembered his stupid face. And you know what, it's TJ. TJ. My cousin. I can't believe it. This guy that fucks everything that moves, this stoner douchebag, he's my cousin. If I see him even look at Jenna, he's going down.

SHERRY

Mack, don't--

MACK

Hey, why'd you let me take self-defense for all those years if I can't use it?

SHERRY

Just don't hit anybody too hard. (A beat.) There's a bit of Merlot left. Want some?

MACK

Sure, I guess. Got to get rid of it, right?

Sherry takes the wine out from its hiding place.

Car sounds and headlights again.

MACK

Well, speak of Prince Incest himself.

SHERRY

Mack, remember he's your cousin. And deep down he's just a sweet kid who probably had a hard time growing up. And when I said it seemed that they were... it seemed that way, it just seemed that way.

The door opens. It's JENNA. Alone. She holds a note. She stands in the frame for a moment, silent.

SHERRY(CONT.)

Hi, sweetie. Where's your cousin?

JENNA

Who, TJ? Oh, he's, um, I don't know where he is.

JENNA cries, or something like it.

MACK

Did he try to touch you?

JENNA

Yes. No. He didn't. He's, he's gone.

MACK

Where did he go?

SHERRY

Tell us what happened.

JENNA

Well, we went to the Mercury, The Mercury Cafe, and he played his guitar, it was so beautiful. And he sang this song, about the lightning and everything, and I don't know what it meant, but it was really really beautiful. And then, after that, he said he was going to the bathroom. And he took such a long time. And since he has this sickness I thought maybe that's what he went to the bathroom for. And I'm really worried about him, so I go in and look for him, in the men's room. And he wasn't there and he's just gone, and I looked everywhere for him, I drove around and I kept driving, and I waited until it was 9:45 because that was when, that was when our lives first kissed. And then it was 9:46, and there was no. Coincidence.

SHERRY

It's ok, sweetie, he'll come back.

JENNA

No, no, I don't think so. He's gone back to where he came from.

MACK

Boulder?

JENNA

Another world.

SHERRY

Sh... Looks like you need some sleep.

MACK

What are you holding there.

MACK takes the note, SHERRY takes it from MACK.

SHERRY

What is this? Did TJ write this?

JENNA

It was in the bathroom. He was gone and it was all there was. And it was all...

MACK

What does it say?

SHERRY

(reading)

Dear Allen, Sherry, Mackenzie and Jenna... Thank you so much for your hospitality today and last night. Mr. Kemble, you have two incredible daughters and a truly amazing wife.

(aside)

Flatterer.

(reading)

There were quite a few energy disturbances this morning. I take the blame. I was vibrating a high-level energy and I guess the fabric of your household wasn't ready yet.

MACK

What's that supposed to mean?

SHERRY

It's an expression.

(back to reading)

And so, my journey takes me somewhere else right now. Don't look for me, though you may find me again soon. Jenna, stay young and beautiful. Mack, sorry again about Holly. Sherry, I hope you fill the emptiness.

(aside)

Emptiness? Where does he get this from?

(reading)

And George,

(aside)

Who's George?

(reading)

And George, if you are able to let go of your fear and your guilt, you will have an even more divine transition into living the present moment. Love, your son, TJ.

(done reading)

Who's George?

MACK

Dad's drug-addict bisexual brother.

SHERRY

What?

(CONTINUED)

MACK

Dad's drug-addict bisexual brother.

SHERRY

Since when did Allen have a bi-sexual brother? He told you this?

MACK

Yeah. I had just come out of the closet. And you were, you know, still trying to set me up with boys. He told me about his drug-addict bisexual brother.

JENNA

No. George is Dad. George left when TJ was a kid and he changed his name and he's been lying to us. That's what TJ told me. TJ's gone.

SHERRY

(calling)

Allen! Allen! Could you come here for a moment, dear? Allen!

(A beat)

Girls. I am going to go have a talk with your father. Please do not disturb us.

MACK

Let me see that letter.

Mack takes the letter and reads it softly to herself. Meanwhile, TJ appears on the back porch. He looks for his bowl and baggie, finds it. He sees the people inside the house, scampers away.

JENNA

Was that--

MACK

What?

JENNA

(heading toward the patio.)

I saw him. He's reaching out for me. TJ.

MACK

Jenna? Where are you going?

JENNA

Outside. I'll be right back.

JENNA wanders outside and offstage.

(CONTINUED)

MACK

Jenna, you're gonna get wet. It's raining. Jenna! I'm not gonna chase after you!

MACK goes to the wine, pours some.

SHERRY

Mack, are you drinking the wine?

MACK

Well, you said I could.

SHERRY

I thought we could drink it *together*. Nevermind.

MACK

So? What did Dad say?

SHERRY

Nothing. He was asleep. Dead asleep. And snoring.

MACK

You didn't wake him up?

SHERRY

No. Not worth it. I decided I like him better when he's asleep. Why should I wake him up, so he can lie again? He obviously has too much fear and guilt to be honest in the present. At least that's what that letter says. And plus, we already know the truth. I mean, I think it's pretty obvious. I mean, it was obvious the first time I looked at TJ's face. Hell, it was obvious when I married your father, and all the secrets...

MACK

What's obvious?

SHERRY

TJ is your brother.

MACK

No.

SHERRY

Your father screwed some bimbo, maybe even married her, then he ran away, and he married me, and he didn't think it was important to mention any of it. It's just humiliating is what it is. How little respect can you possibly... Who left the door open?

MACK

Jenna. She ran out.

SHERRY

And you didn't... stop her? Or at least close the door.

She closes it.

MACK

Should we go after her?

SHERRY

No. She probably just needed some time alone. What with TJ leaving. Maybe we should send out a missing persons alert.

MACK

For TJ?

SHERRY

Didn't you say your little friend Holly knows him? Maybe we could call her, see if she's heard something.

MACK

First of all, no. Second of all, are you actually considering letting him back into our house?

SHERRY

He's a confused child, Mack. And he's probably your brother.

MACK

You're right. He is a child, a twenty-something-year-old child. And maybe he's my brother, maybe. How do we know he's my brother? Because of what he himself wrote in that letter. So, we don't trust Dad but we trust a complete stranger? (A beat.) Ok. Let's just try and be logical for second. What do we know? What do we actually know? We know that he ran into Dad last night, and now Dad says he's our cousin, and now he's staying here. That's all we know. So what if... Oh, that sneaky little shithead. Here's what he did. He was bumming around in Boulder, playing in Holly's band and one day he hears me talking to Holly about Dad's secret brother George. Fuck. I talk too much. Fuck.

SHERRY

So?

(CONTINUED)

MACK

So he found out about Dad's secret siblings, and then because he's a bum, because all he really does with his time is breathing and fucking, so maybe when Holly broke up with him, for, you know, doing nothing but breathing and fucking and maybe eating and shitting, well, then he needed a place to stay, and fuck and eat and shit, so he looked up Dad in the phonebook, found out he's kind of rich, or, you know, well-off, and now he's blackmailing him somehow.

SHERRY

That sounds awfully complicated.

MACK

Not any more complicated than Dad having some long-lost love-child.

SHERRY

So your father would let a complete stranger stay in the house just so we don't find out about what exactly?

MACK

You're right, it could be even worse than blackmail. It could be, it could be a hostage situation, I don't know. Maybe he actually found Dad's brother and he's locked him up. Ok, that's a little much. He's probably too lazy to do that, but something awful.

SHERRY

He looks so much like Allen.

MACK

Who, TJ? That's just luck. Or, maybe that's how he works... he finds people he looks like, and finds a way to make them think he's family, and then he can do whatever the fuck he wants, because you know, he's family.

SHERRY

So why did he leave?

MACK

I don't know. Maybe he met somebody to fuck at the open mic.

SHERRY

Then why the letter?

MACK

I don't know. I don't know everything about his douchebag brain. All I'm saying is, don't trust him.

SHERRY

Oh shit.

MACK

What?

SHERRY

I completely forgot to take my Zoloft this morning.

Sherry finds her pill, swallows it with wine. Mack goes to the back porch.

MACK

I don't see Jenna anywhere. God, she was so weird. Did you notice how weird she was? TJ really messed with her head. Fucker. Wait a second. Give me that wine bottle. I need something to smash his face with.

Mack pours the last of the wine, grips the bottle.

SHERRY

What are you talking about?

MACK

He's out there. He took Jenna. He wrote this letter to... confuse us-- to lead her on. And now she's out there, and it's surprise attack time. She'll be the next hostage, or dead fucking body. Fuck. If I don't come back in 15 minutes, call the police.

SHERRY

Mackenzie, calm down.

Mack storms offstage into the backyard.

SHERRY(CONT.)

Jenna is just having alone time.

Sherry swallows what's left in the wine glasses.

SHERRY(CONT.)

(calling)

Allen, are you awake?

(A beat)

George?

No response. Sherry looks back at the letter. On the back Jenna has drawn a gory human heart with one webbed wing getting hit by lightning.

SHERRY(CONT.)

A little weird but creative.

Still holding the letter, Sherry notices the guitar-case, goes over to it, opens it. Guitar in her lap, she plucks a few strings. Guitar still in her lap, she goes into Goddess pose.

A large FLASH of lightning followed by a BOOM of thunder. Sherry startles, Allen, offstage, yells himself awake.

SHERRY(CONT.)

Allen?

ALLEN

(offstage)

Sherry?

Allen plods onstage half asleep, frightened.

ALLEN(CONT.)

Is everything alright?

SHERRY

Everything's fine, there was thunder.

ALLEN

You're right, there was. I'm just a little confused. Whose guitar is that?

SHERRY

Your son's.

(A long beat)

It's your son TJ's guitar. George.

ALLEN

I'm sorry, but I keep getting the feeling that I'm dreaming.

SHERRY

You're awake. You're probably just out of it from the medication.

ALLEN

Good, because I thought you called me...

SHERRY

Thought I called you what?

ALLEN

Nevermind. So how are you? Quite a day, right? Getting hit by lightning out of the blue, that's

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALLEN (cont'd)
something to tell the grandkids. What's that piece of paper you have?

SHERRY
A letter from TJ. He says he's gone.

ALLEN
Gone?

SHERRY
On a journey, not coming back.

ALLEN
Not coming back. That's probably. Easier. (*A beat.*)
If I had been a better father...

SHERRY
To who?

ALLEN
To everyone. You and the girls. If I was better man all around.

SHERRY
You're a wonderful provider.

ALLEN
But I've made too many mistakes.

SHERRY
What kind of mistakes?

ALLEN
Mistakes.

SHERRY
What mistakes?

ALLEN
Mistakes. Please just.

SHERRY
I don't see why you can't tell me. You knocked up some girl and then you left. Why don't you just tell me? Speak! Say something!

ALLEN
Yes. You're right. I'm sorry. I'm sorry I didn't say it and I'm sorry it happened. I was weak.

SHERRY

Well, we're all weak sometimes. I forgive you. Just be honest from now on.

ALLEN

I will, things will get easier, TJ gone. It was good to see him, but I have to say, I'm glad he's gone. Can I see that letter?

SHERRY

He's your son.

ALLEN

Yes.

SHERRY

And you left him.

ALLEN

Yes.

SHERRY

And that's why you drank.

ALLEN

Yes. And that's why I quit too.

SHERRY

And that's why you don't like remembering.

ALLEN

Right. Where's that Merlot?

SHERRY

I disposed of it.

ALLEN

I smell it on you.

SHERRY

Yes, I drank it. I'm sorry, we can't all be puritans all the time.

ALLEN

Drinking. Drinking. It starts with drinking, then...

SHERRY

What? Sex? God forbid that!

ALLEN

You remember Christmas, don't you? Do you want to go through that again?

(CONTINUED)

SHERRY

No. That was... very frightening. You're right, I'm sorry.

ALLEN

I'm the one who should be sorry. And I'm going to keep being sorry, because, well, there's nothing else to do about it.

SHERRY

Who's George?

ALLEN

Who?

SHERRY

George.

ALLEN

He's my brother. Did Mackenzie tell you about this?

SHERRY

Yes. George, your brother. A drug-addict and a bisexual.

ALLEN

That's right. He's out of control. Keep in mind, honey, I was only an alcoholic. He was out-of-control. I had to stop talking to him because, he did some awful, terrible things. I obviously couldn't turn him in to the law, he's family. But still. I haven't spoken to him for a long time, I assume that he's-- Who left the door open? It's getting cold in here.

SHERRY

Mackenzie. She and Jenna, they went out.

ALLEN

That's nice. To a party of some kind?

A FLASH of thunder and BOOM of lightning. TJ appears, wet. Allen is startled, disconcerted.

SHERRY

TJ?

TJ

Sorry to disturb you, Mr. and Mrs. Kemble. I remembered last minute that I left my guitar here.

(CONTINUED)

SHERRY

TJ, come in. You're wet, let me get you a towel.

Sherry exits briefly.

TJ

Thank you so much. Are you ok, George?

ALLEN

Yes, I'm fine.

Sherry returns with a towel.

TJ

Thank you so much, Sherry.

SHERRY

No trouble.

He puts the guitar back in its case.

SHERRY(CONT.)

You're not leaving now, are you? At least wait until it stops raining. We'll get you something to eat. And maybe set up the couch for you.

TJ

I suppose I could consider staying one more night, that is if it's ok with Mr. Kemble.

A beat.

ALLEN

You're a pothead, aren't you?

TJ

Yes, I'm sorry. Do I smell?

ALLEN

You've been smoking tonight?

TJ

Yes, is that a problem?

ALLEN

My brother George smoked pot. When we were younger. Before he did all that other stuff. Cocaine. Heroin even. Just once. Not because of any force of will, he just couldn't find any more of it.

(CONTINUED)

TJ
Did you ever smoke pot, Mr. Kemble?

ALLEN
Well, it was a different time. Some.

SHERRY
I haven't.

TJ
Really?

SHERRY
No, really I haven't. It's one of those things I'll never get to do.

TJ
Why's that?

SHERRY
Well, that's something you do when you're young.

TJ takes out his bowl, puts in fresh weed from his baggie, lights it.

SHERRY(CONT.)
What are you doing?

TJ
Empty your lungs, get ready to breath in.

TJ takes a hit, then breathes it into Sherry's mouth.

ALLEN
What's going on?

TJ
You want some, Dad?

ALLEN
No thank you.

TJ
Alright, but can I kiss you?

ALLEN
No thank you.

TJ
On your cheek.

ALLEN

No thank you.

TJ

Can I kiss your wife? She wants to be kissed.

SHERRY

No, I...

TJ

Your wife is an amazing woman, George. And she hasn't made love in six months, did you know that?

ALLEN

Yes.

TJ

It might seem a little "weird," but under the circumstances, I wonder if you might consider letting the natural thing happen. The natural and divine thing. The only thing that keeps it from happening is fear.

ALLEN

What natural and divine thing?

TJ

You know, the release. The physical, emotional, spiritual release. It's on the verge, let's let it.

ALLEN

Yes, go ahead, release.

TJ and Sherry kiss for quite a while.

TJ

Are you ok, George?

ALLEN

I'm fine.

TJ

Would you like a kiss, too?

ALLEN

No.

TJ

Are you sure?

A long pause. Then TJ kisses Allen.

(CONTINUED)

TJ(CONT.)

See, that wasn't so bad. Nothing's bad, really. There's just things we're afraid of, that's all.

ALLEN

I suppose so.

TJ

I forgive you.

ALLEN

No you don't.

TJ

Yes I do.

ALLEN

No.

TJ

George, Dad. It happened because it happened. Let yourself live in the present, it's all you have.

ALLEN

No. It was wrong.

TJ

There is no wrong.

ALLEN

It was animal.

TJ

We are animals. Incredible, amazing animals.

ALLEN

Not me, I'm something else. Even lower.

TJ

I forgive you. Do you forgive him, Sherry?

SHERRY

Allen, George, I forgive you.

A long beat.

ALLEN

Go. Fuck my wife. That's what you want. Go into my bedroom and fuck my wife. Please.

(CONTINUED)

TJ

George, I'm just trying to help all of us release.

ALLEN

Go! Fuck everything! Release everything! Just do it already!

TJ takes Sherry by the hand and leads her to the master bedroom.

TJ

If you change your mind and want to join us, please do. We love you George. You can let go of your guilt and your fear if you wish.

TJ and Sherry exit. A beat.

ALLEN

Can nobody close the goddamn door?

Allen closes the back door. He examines himself in the glass reflection.

ALLEN(CONT.)

George. George Kemble. (A beat.) You have something on your face. And on your neck.

He takes off his shirt, and removes the bandages to reveal the full extent of the burns. The pattern that the lightning left on his back looks not unlike a webbed wing.

ALLEN(CONT.)

And on your shoulder and on your back. You're half dead, aren't you? God meant to kill you. God meant to kill you today. You're thirsty.

He goes into the kitchen, he finds the empty wine glass, smells it. He looks for the bottle, in the trashcan, in the cupboard.

ALLEN(CONT.)

Fine. Water. Just water.

He takes a pitcher of water of from the fridge, pours it into the wine glass. Due to the residue, the liquid is pale pink.

ALLEN(CONT.)

And a drop or two of wine at the bottom. A little wine never hurt.

He downs the whole glass. He sees his reflection in the front window.

(CONTINUED)

ALLEN(CONT.)

You again. You look so old. So many reflections. So many windows. So much glass. Look at you, you're drinking again. You're talking to yourself.

He goes to the pipe, lights, takes a hit.

ALLEN(CONT.)

Maybe if you just told them, maybe if you just said it out loud. Then you could rel-- Then you could stop. Then they could all stop. Yes. Stop.

A beat.

ALLEN(CONT.)

Everyone. All of you. May I have your attention please. I have something I need to say. George Kemble married Kate. George Kemble fucked Kate. George Kemble killed Kate. Did you hear that, because I said it out loud. Yes I did. He married her but he didn't love her, not enough, not the right way, but he married her anyway. He wanted to marry her, he wanted to love her, he wanted to want to make a child with her and he did it. And he drank and he smoked and he snorted and he tied off and he wanted to and he did it. He didn't want to kill her and he didn't want to see her dead but he did it. Because... why? because feeling good, he wanted to keep feeling good, more good, more sex, more good, more women, men. Chris, little Chris. TJ? If George had stayed he would have kept his name: Chris. And George would have killed him and not just Kate because that's what George would do instead of loving because even though George doesn't want to do it he would because, because it feels... No, that's it. Because it feels. Because it feels. Because George feels. And that is why George doesn't. Doesn't anymore.

(to his reflections)

Nothing? You have nothing to say? Any of you? Just looking back at me now, same as before. Silence. Are they fucking? I can't hear. Maybe that's the penance. TJ, fucking my wife. Hell, maybe he's killing her right now. And this house too big to hear any of it. This sprawling palace in Rock Mountain paradise. Let go of guilt, should I? I already have. Innocent people are slaughtered every day and here I am, an unrepentant sinner, a murderer, a murderer is what I am. And I live in beautiful Colorado, in the beautiful neighborhood of Bow Mar, and in my back yard there's a beautiful lake. And God strikes me with lightning, and I live, God strikes me, and I live, He strikes, and I live. And next week, I'm going to take a trip to Alaska!

(CONTINUED)

He heads off stage to the master bedroom.

ALLEN(CONT.)

(offstage)

Get off my bed! Get out! Get your clothes on! You too, Sherry! Get your clothes on and get out! No. Don't you touch me! Touch me again and I'll--

SHERRY

Stop it, both of you. No! Let go of him! Stop it! No! Just stop it! He can't breathe! Both of you stop it! Let go! No! Stop! No!

The actress may ad-lib various exclamations in reaction to the physical struggle. Eventually, the unseen struggle ends, as do Sherry's reactions.

A disturbingly long period of nothing.

Jenna and Mack wander on to the back patio, beg to be let in. Mack holds the wine bottle. Jenna holds a dead frog.

JENNA

He's dead, mom! He's dead! Let us in! He's dead! Mom! Mom! Mom! Where are you?

MACK

Calm down. She probably heard you.

JENNA

MOM!

Sherry enters from the bedroom, disheveled.

SHERRY

Jenna? Mack?

She opens the door.

SHERRY

Let me get you towels.

She leaves to get towels.

MACK

Don't put that frog on the table. Here.

She hands Jenna an empty glass. Jenna puts the frog in the glass, holds the glass.

(CONTINUED)

JENNA

(to the frog)
Wake up, TJ, I love you!

Sherry returns with the towels.

MACK

It's dead, you killed it.

JENNA

No I didn't.

MACK

You have to be careful with frogs, if you squeeze them they'll die.

SHERRY

You caught a frog?

JENNA

No, it's not a frog, it's TJ. You wouldn't understand. Do you have batteries or something? We can bring him back to life.

MACK

You'd probably ruptured his spleen or something.

JENNA

Maybe he needs to be back outside. The lightning will hit him. That's what it is. That's why he sang about the lightning. Crash. Resurrection.

Jenna throws off her towel, goes outside, holds the frog in the glass up to the sky.

MACK

(to Sherry)
She's gone nuts. That TJ kid really fucked with her head. If I ever find that son of a bitch.

JENNA

Could somebody get me something long and metal. A broom?

MACK

That's not safe.

JENNA

I'll get it myself.

Jenna goes into the kitchen, takes a broom. Mack struggles to stop her.

MACK

Mom, help!

SHERRY

Jenna, look at me. Sh... Tell me about this frog.

JENNA

I already told you, it's TJ. I chased after him. And then, and then he disappeared. And then he turned into a frog. He told me he has some weird sickness. He didn't like talking about it. I thought it might be AIDS or something. But it's not. He's cursed. That's why he left, he had to turn into a frog.

SHERRY

A fairy tale.

JENNA

No. Not a fairy tale. Like something that most people might find frightening-- Like transfiguration. You know, transfiguration? Jesus, when he became, something else...

MACK

So, that frog is Jesus?

JENNA

Maybe. They say he's supposed to come back. Maybe not exactly Jesus, but the same thing happening again. The same story. You're Mother Mary, and Mack is Judas. And Dad is Joseph. No. Dad is God, obviously. He's not a very good one, but he's definitely God. And I'm Mary Magdalene. No, I'm not Mary Magdalene. I'm Mother Mary. Or I'm transfiguring. I was Mary Magdalene, and now I'm Mother Mary. Oh, I get it. I get it. It's ok. That's why he died, so he could come back again. He's my son. I'm pregnant.

MACK

Oh god.

SHERRY

How do you know you're pregnant?

JENNA

Because, we did it. We rushed, both of us, at the same time. Not here, not when you saw. When we were in the hospital, in a closet. It was so fast, but it was worth it because now, now I have...

(referring to the baby in her stomach)

Him.

(CONTINUED)

MACK

So that's why he ran away. Plant his seed and run. He better run. I'm going to Boulder. Maybe Holly does know something. This motherfucking asshole, this motherfucking asshole...

She smashes the broad end of the wine bottle.

MACK

I apologize. That was unnecessary. Seeya.

SHERRY

Will you be back soon?

MACK

I'll be back when I kill him.

SHERRY

Mack. There's something you should know.

MACK

What?

(a beat.)

SHERRY

I talked to your father. It's true. TJ really is your brother.

MACK

So what? In fact, that just makes me hate him more. He screwed his sister? That's unbelievable. He screwed his own sister and then gave her a note and ran away. He's probably halfway to Nevada by now.

Mack leaves.

SHERRY

Call us!

The sound of a car starting, headlights through the window.

Jenna fills frog's glass with water from the pitcher.

SHERRY

Jenna, what are you doing?

JENNA

I'm going to swallow him.

SHERRY

Don't do that. It might be poisonous or something.

Sherry tries to grab the glass and frog from Jenna.

JENNA

Divine poison. If it tastes gross it's probably only because it's too sweet for a human tongue.

SHERRY

Please don't.

JENNA

In the future, people will grow wings, it will all be so beautiful, and their skin will be so thin and vulnerable, they'll be amphibious. Love will sweat off of us like syrup and we'll paint our bodies with it.

SHERRY

Please stop.

JENNA

He tastes sweet, he tastes good. I'm going to taste him now.

SHERRY

Jenna, give that to me.

Sherry and Jenna fight for the frog. Jenna ends up swallowing it. TJ walks in. He is disarranged.

JENNA

TJ.

TJ

Hello Jenna, Mrs. Kemble.

SHERRY

How are you?

TJ

I'm doing pretty well, actually.

JENNA

I brought you back.

TJ

I just came by to pick up my guitar.

JENNA

Are you leaving again? It's raining.

TJ

Sorry.

JENNA

Why?

TJ

Because.

JENNA

Ok. But. I love you. I have your child.

TJ

No.

JENNA

I can feel it transfiguring inside me right now.

TJ

No.

He puts his guitar in his case.

JENNA

Well, before you go, at least play us your song. You know the one about the lightning. As a way to say goodbye.

TJ

Mrs. Kemble?

JENNA

Don't worry, dad won't wake up. He sleeps through anything. Right?

TJ

Mrs. Kemble? Would you like to hear the song?

A beat.

SHERRY

Yes. Please.

TJ

Alright. Here we go...

He vamps on his guitar for a while, and then sings, upbeat:

CHORUS:

(CONTINUED)

Crash by sunny Bow Mar Lake.

Thanks for helping me stay awake.

Big old Zeus, did you make a mistake?

Crash, crash by sunny, sunny Bow Mar Lake.

VERSE 1:

Too sweet, three sweet, four sweet five--

I've got to teach you how to dive.

Draw your breath and feel alive.

Splash, splash by sunny, sunny, Bow Mar Lake.

VERSE 2:

I think I love your wife and kids,

Lovin's just what love forbids,

When the charge is off the grid,

Flash, flash at Sunny, sunny, sunny, sunny Bow Mar Lake.

FINAL CHORUS:

Crash by sunny Bow Mar Lake.

Thanks for helping me stay awake.

Big old Zeus, did you make a mistake?

Crash, crash, crash by sunny, sunny, sunny, sunny, sunny...

He repeats "sunny" many more times. A FLASH and a BOOM. Lights out. End of play.