

CARROLL GARDENS ABORNING.®

By Lawrence Dial

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Characters

Angelica: Early forties.

Hank: Early thirties.

Lily: Late twenties.

Izzy: Early thirties, Albanian.

Settings

Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn, and the East Village, Manhattan. The present.

Author's notes (should you choose to ignore them):

Ellipses (...) are not necessarily *pauses*, however, certainly shorter in duration. There's something about them that trails off... ...Or begins.

Thens (Then.) do not necessarily create a *pause*, but can, and usually shift the current thought.

Pauses (Pause.) are longer than *thens* (Then.), and don't always shift the current thought.

And a *beat* (Beat.) can be shorter or longer than all three, depending upon the understanding of the *beat*.

I haven't written any suggestive punctuation for overlapping (ie. //), but it is suggested you do so. *Please*.

*Also, I believe both Izzy and Lily, love them dearly, and suggest for the most dramatic reality possible, you do as well.

Your children are not your children.

They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

-Kahlil Gibran

Kids suck.

-Mama Fratelli, Goonies.

ACT I

Scene 1.

CARROLL GARDENS, Brooklyn. A late night in August. ANGELICA & HANK's bottom floor apartment of a brownstone.

The sound of a breast pump, loud and monotonous.

(ANGELICA, despondent, stands in the living room holding the active motor of the pump, contemplating it, but not pumping. She rubs her sore breasts...)

(Then, she notices something in the couch. She digs into it... Deeper, and retrieves a set of house keys.)

ANGELICA

Dammit Hank...

(The front door buzzer rings *loudly*. ANGELICA jumps.)

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

(Pointedly.) ...*Nevermind*. That's you. Waking up our daughter.

(ANGELICA turns off the pump, and exits the front door. Footsteps, then lock turning, a sudden muted verbal exchange, *louder* footsteps, and LILY, late twenties, enters looking nauseous.)

LILY

I'm sorry, I *so* sorry. I know, *don't ring the bell*. Of course I remember *now*—!

(ANGELICA reenters hastily and aggressively *shushes* LILY.)

ANGELICA

Shhh!!!

(They both freeze and listen. Then with a sigh, ANGELICA delicately shuts the front door behind them.)

LILY

(Hushed.) I think I'm gonna throw up.

ANGELICA

You remember where the bathroom is?

LILY

Yeah. Just gimme a second...

(LILY tries not to throw up. ANGELICA moves off momentarily, then returns with a glass of water and some Peppermint tea bags.)

LILY

Thank you. I'm so sorry for coming here.

ANGELICA

You wake her I'm sending her home with you.

LILY

Fine by me.

ANGELICA

You say that now, but we're potty training.

LILY

I'm *always* saying that. Any time you want me to babysit; I wish you'd let me at least once.

(ANGELICA takes LILY in.)

ANGELICA

I thought you were Hank. He forgot his keys. Are you alright? (LILY nods.) What are you doing around *here*? (*This neighborhood at this time.*)

LILY

Yeah, I was. I'm sorry, I walked over the bridge earlier, and.

ANGELICA

That's a long walk.

LILY

Yeah... (Misspeaking.) I started totally crying that trout thing wrapped in ham. At Buttermilk?

ANGELICA

...Crying?

LILY

I meant. *Craving*. (ANGELICA nods understanding.) It sounded really good at the time...

ANGELICA

That's how it goes.

LILY

I thought this was only suppose to happen in the mornings?

ANGELICA

It's almost morning.

LILY

(Emphatically.) I'm *sorry* it's so late...

(ANGELICA waves this off.)

ANGELICA

You're not reading the books we gave you, huh?

LILY

No, yeah. I mean I was. Going to actually.

ANGELICA

It's like the first chapter.

LILY

Izzy read some of them. Before he left for Albania. But I think they scared him.

ANGELICA

Peppermint tea. It'll help.

LILY

I'd love some.

ANGELICA

When you get home.

(ANGELICA hands LILY the tea bags.)

LILY

Right. (Then.) Okay. I think, I think I'm okay now.

ANGELICA

You sure? You can stay longer if...?

(ANGELICA makes her way to the front door. LILY starts to exit, stops.)

LILY

—You get the casseroles? You got them, right?

ANGELICA

You dropped them off, remember?

LILY

Yeah, I mean where they any good? Like at all?

ANGELICA

Delicious. Thank you.

LILY

I overcooked them, I know. I think your oven—*my* oven. It's off. The temperature? That ever happen to you?

ANGELICA

That oven does that. When we lived there. It's an easy fix.

LILY

It is? I wouldn't even know.

ANGELICA

There's screws on the back of the temperature knob? One way for hotter, other way for colder. Buy yourself an oven thermometer.

LILY

God, how do you *know* all this stuff? You're like the best mom I ever met. I swear, Angelica.

(There's a moment of sharing something understood between them after the word *mom* is mentioned.)

(LILY looks away embarrassed, ANGELICA tenses up, expecting now what's to follow....)

LILY

(Formally.) I realize that we're not very close. You and me.

ANGELICA

(Here it comes...) That's okay—.

LILY

And you probably don't even really like me that much.

ANGELICA

(Wearily.) Of course I like you, Lily, it's just—.

LILY

But only because Izzy and Hank are friends and you sorta have to. —And that's okay! It's like what do they say? Happenstance? It's makes shitty bed fellows or something? —Not that we're in bed! Or you're shitty!

(LILY covers her mouth to shut up.)

ANGELICA

(Stolidly.) It's misery, actually. And Lily, before—.

LILY

(Empathetically, off the word *misery*.) Oh Angelica...! This is not the way I meant it to come out—.

ANGELICA

(This is what she was waiting for since LILY came inside.) *No*. That's okay. Everyone's been asking me *all month*. Constantly. How am I? How am I doing? Every relative, every friend. People I haven't talked to in years. And... I'm *okay*. I'm doing okay. Trust me.

LILY

I wanted to come over earlier—.

ANGELICA

I know. Don't—it's alright.

LILY

(Growing in volume.) Just to make sure you're.

ANGELICA

I'm fine.

LILY

To be a friend, to try to be. But then *Izzy* said not to, and...!

ANGELICA

(Sharply.) *Stop it*. (Pause, then pleadingly.) I'm okay here. I'm fine, Lily. Thank you. For asking.

LILY

...I'll go. I shouldn't have come.

ANGELICA

That's okay. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to tell you...

LILY

No, that's fine. You're right, I should. (A conscious double entendre for her.) Stop it.

ANGELICA

Hey. I like you Lily. I do. I promise you.

LILY

Oh, I know you do. (Managing a rueful smile.) Of course you do.

ANGELICA

Next time don't ring the buzzer, alright?

LILY

I'm so sorry...

ANGELICA

It's *okay*. We're right by the subway. You felt sick. It's happens.

LILY

Yeah...

ANGELICA

Call me next time...

LILY

Okay...

ANGELICA

Or send me a text message.

(LILY freezes, tenses up with emotion. ANGELICA notices, then LILY exits suddenly for the bathroom, slamming the door.)

ANGELICA

(Wincing.) *Fuck.*

(ANGELICA goes to the bathroom door.)

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

Lily? You okay? Are you sick?

(ANGELICA tries the door knob; it's locked. Maybe she hears crying from the other side.)

ANGELICA

Hey. I had it bad with Cassy. Any kind of meat. Just the smell of it. I had it even worse the second—. (Stops herself. Pause.) Lily it's my first day back at work tomorrow. I need to get some sleep. Are you okay? Can you make a sound or something...?

(The door cracks and a cell phone peeks out. ANGELICA reluctantly takes it.)

LILY

(Through the crack.) Read the text. From Izzy.

(LILY shuts the door. ANGELICA scrolls through the phone.)

ANGELICA

Hey, *come out*. (Looking, then.) What is this? Izzy sent you these? Come on.

LILY

(Inside.) *Read it*.

(ANGELICA begins to read. At first nothing surprising...)

ANGELICA

(Sitting up.) ...Oh *god*.

(LILY exits the bathroom.)

LILY

I know right? I'm gonna go now. But can you believe the jerk sent me *that* over text? From Albania?

ANGELICA

...He's not sure if he's *staying*? What's he mean? Albania or America?

LILY

Ah *jeez*, you haven't even *gotten* to it yet.

(LILY takes the phone and scrolls down to a point, hands it back to ANGELICA.)

LILY

Read *that*.

ANGELICA

(Reads.) ...Twenty thousand dollars? For what?

LILY

What do you think for what? It's right *there*. ...He's offering me that to abort it. So...
(Shrugging, welling up with emotion.) I should go, it's late. I'm sorry.

ANGELICA

Lily, it's okay—.

LILY

And you know, just to say it to someone? I already feel like *so* much better, thank you. Because I started walking, then I had dinner, *then* I saw a shitty movie... And I was gonna go home really. I swear I didn't mean to come here—.

ANGELICA

Lily, sit down.

(Obediently, she does. ANGELICA scrolls through the phone for answers.)

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

What did he say after this? Did he give you a reason?

LILY

I tried to call him and talk to him. But he wouldn't answer. And then I got mad, and. Had his number blocked from my phone?

ANGELICA

When did he send you these?

LILY

A week ago almost? The day after he got to Albania?

ANGELICA

A *week*? *Jesus*, and you've been...? Why didn't you—.

LILY

I didn't want to because of everything you're going through, and—.

ANGELICA

You should have said something to someone.

LILY

I don't know anyone else I could tell this stuff too. Everyone I know works in the restaurant with Izzy

ANGELICA

You have other friends.

LILY

Who? You know how you can date someone, and then like four years later you're all like, *hey where'd all my friends go?*

ANGELICA

Try being married with a three year old.

LILY

This wasn't an accident, I want you to know. This was something he wanted. He decided without even talking, without even *asking* me.

ANGELICA

You guys didn't even *talk* about it?

LILY

No, it was like he just started *trying*. And then I was all like, *okay*, I guess we're *trying* now.

ANGELICA

Hank told me you guys had been planning it.

LILY

After *that* we planned it. *Then* we decided we wanted to do it.

ANGELICA

That's not planning; that's improvising.

LILY

We were gonna get married, and move into an apartment together. ...But then it just like *happened*. I guess I'm like super duper fertile or something? Not that you wanna *know* that, but. It must have happened like the first time he tried?

ANGELICA

It can... When's he come back?

LILY

Today—he's suppose to come back *tonight*. And I couldn't just sit around and *wait* for him, you know? To see *if*?

ANGELICA

See if what?

LILY

If he'd show up at my place. He's got keys. He could be there right now. Sitting on my couch. I had to get out of there. I'm sorry, I didn't know who or where else to go to.

ANGELICA

No, you're—it's okay.

LILY

I'm stupid.

ANGELICA

No, you're not. Don't say that.

LILY

I should have done all that stuff first though, you know? The stuff normal parents do *before* they have a baby?

ANGELICA

It doesn't sound like he gave you much of a choice, right?

LILY

He didn't! It's like, we had talked about it, like. But it was just like *talking*. I know we weren't making any decisions then. He knew that. Like hey, we could take a vacation to *Guam* or something. Or what if we bought a dog? I mean, you don't just go out then and *buy* a dog, do you?

ANGELICA

No you don't. Unless it's really cute. (Then.) I'm kidding.

LILY

I wasn't even sure if anyone would believe me...

ANGELICA

What's not to believe?

LILY

You know, everyone loves Izzy. They think he's like this really nice guy at the restaurant. Even Hank. And he *is*, I guess. To everyone.

ANGELICA

He certainly seems like it.

LILY

But he's not to me. Or maybe to girls he dates? I don't know. I can't tell if what he's done is just in my head? Or just...

ANGELICA

What he's *done*?

LILY

I don't know, forget it.

ANGELICA

No, hold on.

LILY

Really, forget it.

ANGELICA

No, Lily? I'm sorry, but. *Has* he done something?

LILY

Like what?

ANGELICA

Like *to* you? Something. I don't know... Something abusive?

LILY

What? Like hitting me? *No*, no way. (Then.) It's not exactly that. I don't think.

ANGELICA

What is it then? *Exactly*.

LILY

I don't know. I can't tell.

ANGELICA

Yes you can.

LILY

No, I mean. I can't tell what it is that he's done. Or not done. Or if he's done it *to* me or is it just in my head? Or has he done something *to* my head? I don't know!

ANGELICA

(Hushing her.) Okay..! Keep it down...

(ANGELICA's cell phone nearby rings.)

ANGELICA

Dammit Hank... (She turns her back, and answers sharply.) Hey. Yes, I'm up. Yes, in the couch. *Call* don't ring when you—. (Pause.) I'm fine. (Pause. Coldly.) No, I'm *fine*.

(ANGELICA hangs up, takes a deep breath. LILY has moved closer to the front door in preparation to leave.)

ANGELICA

(Turning to LILY.) Hank's in a cab coming over the Manhattan.

LILY

Oh...!

(LILY's hand covers her mouth; two round, wet circles are centered on each of ANGELICA's breasts, expanding slowly.)

LILY (CONT'D)

(Turning away.) You're um leaking. I think.

ANGELICA

Ah fuck... Can you—?

LILY

Yes! Stay here!

(LILY grabs a roll of paper towels from the kitchen.)

ANGELICA

(Generally.) Of course I'm leaking. You leak *everywhere*... I ran out of pads this morning.

(LILY tears off a few sheets of paper towel and hands them quietly to ANGELICA, who stuffs them into her bra.)

LILY

Here.

(LILY watches ANGELICA quizzically.)

LILY

(Cautiously.) Why does it do that if...?

ANGELICA

(Off LILY's look, explaining.) After the baby's born your body. It doesn't know the difference.

LILY

(Getting it.) Oh my god...

ANGELICA

Yeah... (Rueful.) Fun, right?

(LILY seems to have lost two shades of color, frightened.
A moment passes.)

LILY

(Beat.) There's like a lot of stuff, huh? Like pregnant stuff? That happens? To your *body*.

ANGELICA

(Uneasy.) Read the books, Lily. You'll be fine.

LILY

I tried. They're sorta. Completely. Fucking. Terrifying.

ANGELICA

Talk to your mother about it.

LILY

She did it all at home. In the backyard. In a field. On all fours. She makes it sound like this magical *boat* ride or. Some nature expedition. *Smoke a joint*. On my way to the hospital? That was her advice.

ANGELICA

Don't do that.

LILY

(Growing more frantic.) And then I talked with Martina in the office?

ANGELICA

Don't talk to her.

LILY

I thought she heard me wrong, and was describing one of them *horror* movie plots? Everything she was saying. Mucus plugs, cervixes *enlarging*. Something about turning over the placenta— And I just don't know—I don't know if I can fucking do this. What if something happens? Something like what happened to—.

ANGELICA

(Cutting her off sharply.) *Lily*.

(ANGELICA pulls away, affected, has a quick moment with it, then makes a visible effort to leave it behind.)

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

You're going to be *fine*. I promise you.

LILY

...Should I do it? Just tell me what you think please. —Should I have this baby?

ANGELICA

You know what I think. You wouldn't have come here if you didn't.

LILY

(Doleful.) ...Will you be there?

ANGELICA

I don't think I can, honey. I'm sorry. (Then.) You're going to be alright. And your baby's going to be fine. You don't have to figure everything out all at once; you get nine months—.

LILY

Seven and a half. (Beat.) Oh god. I'm really stupid, coming here with this.

ANGELICA

No, hey. I'm glad you did.

LILY

I'm gonna go.

ANGELICA

You don't have to. (Equivocally.) I mean, if you...

LILY

No, I. *Thank you.* But I have to talk to him I think. I do.

ANGELICA

Yes, I think you should. And *tell* him.

LILY

Don't tell Hank, okay? They're best friends, it'll screw up their friendship.

ANGELICA

Why do you care? Izzy should have thought of that before—.

LILY

They have to work together—.

ANGELICA

You have to work with Izzy too.

LILY

But I'm up in the office counting invoices—we never even see each other.

ANGELICA

This is going to come out. You can't—.

LILY

It might not. It might—I don't know.

ANGELICA

Lily, Hank's my husband, I sort of have to tell him.

LILY

Just as a friend to me. Be my friend.

ANGELICA

I *am* your friend.

LILY

I know. And that's all I wanted. Just to say it to someone? So someone else knows *besides* me? Because I don't know, it could still...

ANGELICA

What?

LILY

Work out? I don't know! But don't tell him.

ANGELICA

Work out?

LILY

He could come back and say that he's sorry—.

ANGELICA

It might be better if he didn't come back.

LILY

That he made a mistake. Or he's better now—I don't know! But he could be sitting there right now on my couch thinking that. And if Hank knows then—.

ANGELICA

Lily—!

LILY

I don't wanna mess that chance up. He deserves at least a second chance. (Pleading.) Oh god! Just wait! *Please!*

ANGELICA

Okay, okay! Keep it down. Cassy's—

(LILY hugs ANGELICA, who is momentarily stunned.)

LILY

Thank you! You're my friend, thank you. (Deeply.) I'm so sorry.

(LILY exits out the front door. ANGELICA is frozen by the contact.)

LILY (CONT'D)

(Off.) I'll come by tomorrow after I get off work! We'll talk! *Bye bye!*

(The sound of the building front door unlocking, opening, then shutting. A faint smile begins to creep across ANGELICA's face... Then dies aborning, when the sound of a three year-old crying is heard from the other room.)

Scene 2.

The following day. Early afternoon. HANK enters from the bedroom door, and quietly shuts it behind him. He stops and listens. Satisfied, he opens a laptop computer and sets it on the couch. He pulls something up on the internet, drops his pants, and begins to masturbate. Keys in the front door. HANK scrambles to pull up his pants, and in doing so knocks over a cup of coffee nearby. ANGELICA enters with numerous grocery bags. HANK focuses on the computer.

HANK

(Without looking.) ...*Hey!*

ANGELICA

Hey.

HANK

Home early? Everything go...?

ANGELICA

...Smells like cat shit in here.

(ANGELICA wrangles the bags into the kitchen.)

HANK

I was gonna change that. Uh. How was work? (Confused.) Grocery shopping?

(ANGELICA reenters the living room and sits. She adjusts her sore breasts, collapses onto the couch.)

ANGELICA

...She's down? How long?

HANK

Just, yeah. Just now.

ANGELICA

(The groceries.) I'm going to let you put those away...

HANK

One sec.

(HANK tries to busy himself on the computer while his erection recedes. ANGELICA looks askance at him, then trudges back into the kitchen.)

HANK (CONT'D)

I said I'd do it!

ANGELICA

(Off.) There's ice cream.

HANK

Okay. *Sorry*. (Then.) Thought we weren't buying ice cream anymore? Your diet—*our* diets?

ANGELICA

(Reenters.) It's fine. You can do the rest...

HANK

How was it today, back with Helen?

(ANGELICA steps in the coffee on the floor.)

HANK (CONT'D)

Cassy. She knocked it.

ANGELICA

And you just left it?

HANK

Her nap. I was gonna do it after. *Sorry*. Trying to keep her on schedule.

ANGELICA

You can deviate for thirty seconds to clean up a mess, Hank. That's not what I meant by being consistent.

HANK

I know, I just forgot. I'll get it in a second...

ANGELICA

Seriously, don't bother.

HANK

No, fine.

(HANK awkwardly rises from the couch, away from ANGELICA, his belt unbuckled. He exits into the kitchen.)

HANK

(Off.) ...Paper towels?

ANGELICA

Where did *you* put them?

HANK

(Off.) I didn't put them anywhere.

ANGELICA

Neither did I...

(ANGELICA sees the paper towels in the living room where LILY left them from the night before.)

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

Hank...

HANK

(Reenters.) I didn't put them out here.

(ANGELICA starts to clean up the mess.)

ANGELICA

I didn't either, so.

HANK

(Watching.) I can do that.

ANGELICA

It's fine. (Then realizes.) Oh, it must have been Lily.

HANK

Lily? You and *Lily* hung out? ...Why didn't you tell me?

(ANGELICA glares at him.)

HANK (CONT'D)

...I'm sorry, okay? That I said I didn't want to talk last night? I'm just. I'm grumpy when I get home on Fridays. You know that. (Pause, no response.) Come on, how was work? (No response.) Hey, I'm sorry.

ANGELICA

Don't be. It's fine. (Then.) Just whenever you come home from work from now on, you let me know if you want me to talk or not.

HANK

It was one in the morning. I spend all day with Cassy, and then my whole night *talking* to people? I was surprised you were up.

ANGELICA

More like annoyed.

HANK

No, that's. I was not annoyed. I just. It's not usual. It's *unusual*. It's usually my chill time.

ANGELICA

(Patiently.) You just let me know when it's okay to talk, alright?

(A moment passes. HANK notices his belt buckle and buckles it.)

HANK

(Beat.) So last night, after we've spent an entire month talking about it, after I'd just worked a ten hour shift? You wanted to talk *more* about it? Even though we know nothing new, we know nothing else? We're like *fucking* gerbils in one of those... Gerbil whatever thingys? (No response.) ...And now you're mad at me. You're gonna do the cold shoulder thing for like a *week* now. Great.

ANGELICA

I'm not mad.

HANK

You're furious. Admit it.

ANGELICA

No, I'm not. *Really*. (Pause.) You just let me know when it's okay to—

HANK

TALK! It's okay! It's fucking *okay*! Talk! (No response.) *Talk*. Please.

ANGELICA

(Glowering.) You're going to wake Cassy.

(She got him; he knows it. He changes gears slightly.)

HANK

...You don't have to do that, you know? Be stubborn and sarcastic?

ANGELICA

Were you masturbating? When I came in? That's what you were doing, right?

HANK

No. I was checking my email.

ANGELICA

Your belt? I mean, *I don't care*. I mean, I know that you do.

HANK

Well I wasn't. I was scratching my—.

ANGELICA

Just don't use the kitchen towels anymore.

HANK

I'm not...! *Jesus*... What is this?

ANGELICA

I told you I don't care. Jerk it off as much as you want. Whenever you want—don't mind me. Just don't *stain* the towels.

HANK

(Hurt.) Why are we talking about this?

ANGELICA

...I don't understand how you even can.

HANK

How I can what? *Jerk it off*? Like technically? Physically? ...*Conceptually*, Angelica?

ANGELICA

No. Emotionally. Psycho-*fucking*-logically, Hank.

HANK

Well I wasn't. And even if I was. Just because I'm *horny*—.

ANGELICA

Forget it. Change the subject.

HANK

You brought it up—and just so you know? These two things, they don't have to be exclusive—

ANGELICA

Change it.

HANK

—Of one another. Just because I'm horny it has nothing to do with you losing—*us*, I mean, losing—.

ANGELICA

(Desperately.) Change the subject *please!*

HANK

(Abruptly, wanting to get away from that slip up.) —Did you have fun with Lily?

ANGELICA

(After a moment.) *What.*

HANK

(Mechanically.) ...*Fun.* Did you have it? You and Lily.

(HANK escapes into the kitchen. We can hear or maybe see him aggressively putting away the groceries. He speaks out of sight or peaks his head in occasionally. A moment.)

(ANGELICA's been deeply moved by HANK's slip of the word *You* and its unintentional implication.)

ANGELICA

(The pretense of conversationally.) ...Um. Yeah. I mean, no. I don't know.

HANK

(Feigning jocularly.) Yes, no, *I don't know?* ...You guys should hang more often.

ANGELICA

(Pause.) No, Hank. She's... I don't know how to say it.

HANK

I hope you were nice. (Feigning concern, trying to move in any direction *other* than what was almost implied.) Hey. She's getting worse Izzy says.

ANGELICA

Worse than what?

HANK

How she gets worked up, her anxiety? Izzy's gotta tell her *Just relax. Everyone likes you, Lily.* That Fourth of July? I'd completely forgotten how we met her. Izzy was talking last night about it and I remembered that mess.

ANGELICA

(Thrown.) You saw Izzy? *Last night?*

(HANK enters the living room holding an odd shaped vegetable.)

HANK

Just for a minute. He came by the restaurant and we had a drink. A small one. It was really quick, I swear.

ANGELICA

How's he... *Like?* I mean, he's back now, right?

HANK

Good, yeah. He's like *relieved* I think. Going home *finally* after seven years. It's like, I tried to think of it, like if I graduated college right? Or you did. And we moved to New York?

ANGELICA

That's exactly what we did.

HANK

But then didn't go home for seven years. And home was *Albania?* —What's this?

(HANK holds out the vegetable.)

ANGELICA

Romaseco. Italian cauliflower. —He was happy?

HANK

He seemed light. There was a lightness to him. We talked about the baby—*his* baby. About him being a dad. Maybe renting a place in like Long Beach or somewhere? A beach house. Or going down to Indiana to my parents this Christmas maybe. Lily's got family in Louisville so it's sort of convenient—.

ANGELICA

Okay, look. You have to promise not to say anything to Izzy. Because I promised Lily.

HANK

Promised her what?

ANGELICA

Not to tell you.

HANK

I'm your husband—.

ANGELICA

I know. But she doesn't understand that. So you can't tell Izzy she told me and I told you.

HANK

(*What?*) You know I promise—what difference does it make?

ANGELICA

She said to me... That Izzy sort of um. Freaked out about the baby when he was in Albania. (Hesitantly.) ...And he told her he'd give her like twenty thousand dollars to get rid of it.

HANK

...Like *abort* it? (A nod.) She *said* that?

ANGELICA

He sent her text messages saying that.

HANK

Like what'd they say? Why?

ANGELICA

They didn't say why.

HANK

I just saw him last night—.

ANGELICA

I know; I read them.

(They both can't help smile, enjoying the scandal, but for different reasons.)

HANK

(Beat.) *Wow*.

ANGELICA

Yeah....

HANK

(Concerned.) I mean, she must be really losing it if?

ANGELICA

If what?

HANK

If she's making up shit because she's so scared? (A look.) You don't really think Izzy—.

ANGELICA

You think she made it up?

HANK

I just saw him last night, Angelica.

ANGELICA

So she somehow sends herself fake text messages...?

HANK

Look, I don't know. And that's sucks to say out loud, but.

ANGELICA

Hank, they're real.

HANK

Izzy and I had a conversation last night about *perineal massage*.

ANGELICA

Wonderful.

HANK

We've been talking about him having this baby for months now. She's freaking out is what it is. Pregnancy hormones or something...?

ANGELICA

Lily said some other things too...

HANK

What other things?

ANGELICA

Stuff you don't want to hear because you're just going to say it's some pregnancy *hormone*.

HANK

Stop acting like you're not gonna tell me because I know you are.

ANGELICA

(He's right.) ...Lily, sort of hinted at. Made *references* to me, that seemed very credible—.

HANK

References to what?

ANGELICA

That she. That Izzy. May be abusive.

HANK

She made references to. That Izzy *abused* her?

ANGELICA

Credible, I think.

HANK

Credible—what does that mean? Credible references?

ANGELICA

Chill-lax.

HANK

Well stop using words like that, that don't mean anything.

ANGELICA

Like *credible*? Or *references*?

HANK

Like you're the abuse *detective* and can spot an act of abuse from two hundred yards. This is Izzy we're talking about.

ANGELICA

I should have known not to tell you...

HANK

No, I'm sorry. I'm glad you told me. That she told you. *Not* to tell me. All this. But Lily very clearly needs some sort of help here, Angelica.

ANGELICA

Yeah, she needs *help* getting out of an abusive relationship.

HANK

Look, we don't know what, the *details*, you know? What they are exactly? Behind closed doors? Things get exaggerated, and. It's a private relationship.

ANGELICA

Only someone *abusive* would send someone *text* messages offering money to abort their baby. And if I see Izzy? I'm gonna tell him that. To his *face*!

HANK

Steven Seagal, will you relax? You said you weren't even sure about it.

ANGELICA

I never said that.

HANK

You said Lily said a couple things that you weren't positive about, but *maybe*...

ANGELICA

I said Lily made credible reference to—.

HANK

Right, fine. Credible references. *Okay*. But there's something else here, you know? Maybe she gets another phone or—.

ANGELICA

Oh come on!

HANK

Yeah, and sends messages and then changes the contact name to Izzy.

ANGELICA

Are you kidding me? This is anxiety we're talking about. Not *crazytown*. Why would she do that?

HANK

Because she's lonely? And having a baby? She's not married and it's scary. She looks up to you I think.

ANGELICA

Do you understand how hard it is for a girl who takes a step like this, to admit that she's been abused—.

HANK

Maybe. *Maybe* she has been. It's not for sure.

ANGELICA

That she *believes* she's being abused then? And then no one believes her?

HANK

Fine. She believes it. And we can believe that she believes it. But that doesn't mean that she has. And you didn't even like Lily until five minutes ago. You've always said that she *annoys* you.

ANGELICA

I never said that.

HANK

You said you think she's whiny, insecure, and a drag—which she is.

ANGELICA

Maybe she's insecure because she's been in an abusive relationship ever since we've known her!

HANK

Izzy's *literally* the nicest guy I know! He got me my job. He's babysat for Cassy—we've trusted him with our daughter!

(Cassy can be heard crying/hollering in the other room.
They both freeze. A moment.)

ANGELICA

(Beat.) When she go down?

HANK

Shit. Right when you walked in.

ANGELICA

It's only been half an hour?

HANK

Yeah well, she doesn't normally hear her parents arguing about *dumb* shit out here.

ANGELICA

What does she normally hear? Her father masturbating?

HANK

Why are you home so early?

ANGELICA

Are you annoyed? Am I invading your *chill time*, Hank?

HANK

(Retaliating.) No, *chill-lax*. I'm just wondering, *crazytown*...

(HANK goes to the door, starts turning the knob.
ANGELICA removes the breast pump from the black bag,
and begins to assemble it.)

ANGELICA

Well, I quit. (Then.) So maybe I am crazy. Or maybe it's just my *hormones*.

HANK

(Stopped, not sure if he caught it.) Quit what?

(Cassy cries.)

ANGELICA

I don't want to be someone's personal assistant anymore.

HANK

You quit your job? With Helen?

ANGELICA

That's right.

HANK

When? Today? Just like that?

ANGELICA

Pretty much exactly like that. *I quit*.

(Cassy cries.)

HANK

...I mean. Why? And without even, you know? *Talking* to me about it?

ANGELICA

Don't make me feel bad about this. You can pick up some extra shifts at the restaurant—.

HANK

Because that's exactly what I want to do with the rest of my life—wait tables in a restaurant!

ANGELICA

What do you want? I thought you'd be happy about this? Now I can stay home with Cassy, and you can—.

HANK

Wait, *stay at home*?

ANGELICA

—Can go do whatever the hell it is *you* decide you want. You've been bitching at me for three years about your stand up and never having the time to do it, write it, *whatever*. Now you can.

HANK

No, I *can't*, okay? Because I'll be waiting tables *seven* nights a week to pay for this apartment.

ANGELICA

Now you know how I felt.

HANK

You were working within your career field. Helen's the city's preeminent practitioner of Mayo Fascist release—as you've told me on *numerous* occasions. Waiting tables has nothing to do with what I want!

ANGELICA

Myo *Fascial* release. She's not a goddam Nazi. And I'm a nine-to-five glorified fucking coffee *Sherpa*. While I'm hustling lattes in Chelsea six days a week, you're pushing Cassy on a swing in Carroll Park. I want to be there once and a while as my daughter grows up.

HANK

Then we *talk* about it. We sit down and we discuss things. The same way we decided that you were going to be the one who worked during the day. You fought for that, I gave it to you—.

ANGELICA

You *gave* it to me?

HANK

I agreed—we agreed on it. Yes. By talking.

ANGELICA

You were a part-time *waiter* performing stand-up once a week for Tuesday night drunks. How the hell could we afford this neighborhood, this apartment on that?

HANK

Apparently, the same way we're gonna do it now!

ANGELICA

Don't shout at me.

HANK

You just gave up our primary income. Our insurance! Without even talking to me. And even if no matter what I say has any impact on you, even if you tune me out completely—!

ANGELICA

If you're *shouting* at me I will.

HANK

I still want to say it to you, Ang. I want to be there when the fucking decision is made.

ANGELICA

I want some time off. I want a break.

HANK

An entire month at home, thirty *days* wasn't enough time off?

ANGELICA

NO IT WASN'T! WAS IT FOR YOU?! (Beat.) ...I'm sorry if this is something that's easy for you?

HANK

It's not.

ANGELICA

To move on from? That you're annoyed I'm still...

HANK

That's not what I'm saying.

ANGELICA

But I am reminded of it. *Constantly*.

(Cassy cries. ANGELICA removes one of her breasts from her bra, and begins to pump milk from it. The pump is audible and monotonous. HANK realizes now why she was putting it together.)

HANK

What are you doing?

ANGELICA

Are you going to go get her? Or should I?

HANK

(Horrified.) When did you start doing *that*?

ANGELICA

I'm taking some of the pressure off. They hurt.

HANK

It's gonna make it worse, Angelica. How long have you been doing this?

(Cassy cries.)

ANGELICA

The doctor said it was fine if I had to.

HANK

No she didn't. It's not *fine*. Your body thinks it's feeding him. That he's *alive*!

ANGELICA

Don't tell me what my body thinks please.

(HANK pauses for a moment... Then turns suddenly and reaches for the breast pump.)

HANK (CONT'D)

Give it here.

ANGELICA

No.

HANK

Give it. It's not right.

ANGELICA

It's not your choice.

HANK

I want it. I'm serious.

ANGELICA

This is fine. It's fine that I'm doing this.

HANK

Two to three weeks! I looked it up!

ANGELICA

I don't care!

HANK

You can't do this! You have to STOP!

ANGELICA

NO!

(HANK overpowers her and wrestles it away. ANGELICA collapses; Cassy cries. HANK takes a moment, not sure

that he wants it now that he has it. He drops the pump and exits out the front door.)

Scene 3.

EAST VILLAGE, Manhattan. The Restaurant. Lights are up bright, chairs on the tables, closing time. HANK sits counting money, putting twenties into stacks of thousands. IZZY (early-thirties) counts restaurant check totals using a printing calculator. IZZY speaks good English, but with an Eastern European/ Albanian accent. Mexican music can be heard off, distantly in another part of the restaurant. HANK is mid-explanation:

HANK

...You know I'm like *the wife*, right? She goes out makes the money. I watch Cassy. I clean the apartment. Dishes. Recycling. Litter box for a cat I never see. Groceries... Like the maintenance, you know? That's been my life for the like last two and half years.

IZZY

(Without looking.) ...Yes.

HANK

And it's fine. I do it. She works. Hardly notices I do it. I do it some *more*. I find a new appreciation for my mother. ...But I've learned to love this, you know? Watching Cassy.

IZZY

...Yes.

HANK

You and Lily, it probably won't be the same because she's in the office and you make more money down here, right?

IZZY

I do not do those things. (Pause, adding.) Maintenance? I hire someone. I pay her fifty a week. You want her number? Gustavo's wife.

HANK

Gustavo the kitchen prep? He's married?

IZZY

He has got two kids, amigo.

HANK

Jesus, dude's like *seventeen*. (Beat. Counting money, then.) What gets me... There's all this like feminist crap too, you know? Books around the apartment. (Mispronouncing.) Anais Nin. And other chick writers, you know? It was like her goddam *minor* in college, if you can believe

it. And Angelica, I'm like *Come on, man. Look around.* You're into all this feminist crap, women's liberation stuff. Or used to be. And here I am, in this sorta role reversal I guess, and. It's like she has no idea what I'm feeling sometimes. (Then.) I mean, her cat's name is *Lilith* for Christ sake.

IZZY

...Uh huh. You do not like this cat?

HANK

I hate this cat. But, no. Think of our situation. And me being thirty-one. And her being forty. Did you know that? She's forty-two?

IZZY

(Didn't know this, impressed.) She looks very good for her being forty-two.

HANK

Yeah, right? It was like this big thing when we dated. For two years and she wouldn't tell me her age; I didn't care. But she's had roughly ten more years of life to live is my point. She was forty when Cassy was born; I was twenty-nine.

(They count/add in silence for a beat or two. IZZY stops.)

IZZY

But you wanted it, right? Cassy?

HANK

(Boastfully.) Man, beyond wanting it. I *made* it happen. I willed this entire thing into existence, you know? I mean, I knew two years before we got married that I was going marry Angelica so we could have Cassy. (Then, unbelieving.) It's kinda fucked up if you think about it. That I *planned* it? Like she didn't have a choice?

IZZY

(Back to adding.) I remember the reception here. Before you started working. We met?

HANK

(Correcting.) Rehearsal dinner. Yeah. All our relatives in that back room. It was fun. (Encouragingly.) Hey that could be you coming up here, you know? Fly your parents from Albania? (No response.) I mean, if you wanted. Not that you have to be married to have a kid. There's no like, *right way* or anything.

IZZY

(Stops again.) You always knew then?

HANK

(Carefully.) *Sorta* I knew. It's just how things happen. You deal with it because that's what you do, right? Because I mean, what else are you gonna do? *Not* deal with it?

IZZY

Your life like this. You the *wife*. You wanted *that*?

HANK

Um. She had the better job, and it's nights here, so... (Shrugs.) I knew time was running out for her to have a baby because of her age. Now or never, I mean. Sink or swim. I knew that.

IZZY

And you chose swimming?

HANK

... I think so.

(They both count money again.)

HANK (CONT'D)

(To himself.) ...forty-eight, forty-nine, fifty, fifty-one—*fuck*. (To IZZY.) I keep counting different numbers. First I'm twenty under, then twenty over.

IZZY

(Delayed. Adding.) ...Have another Peroni.

HANK

Right. Get me to shut up. (Considers.) You want one? What are you drinking?

IZZY

(Delayed.) ...I'm drinking Raki.

HANK

The hell's *Raki*?

IZZY

Like Albanian grappa? You want have some. My grandfather made it.

HANK

(Impressed.) Really?

(IZZY pours HANK three fingers worth, and refills his own glass.)

HANK (CONT'D)

What do you do like? Just *shoot* it?

IZZY

...Yes. Just like shoot it. *Uno dos tres*.

(Out of the corner of his eye, IZZY watches HANK down the liquor—he doesn't shoot his. HANK gags at first, then coughs and sputters, while IZZY nearly falls out of his seat laughing.)

HANK

Thas fucking terrible! You suppose to shoot that?

IZZY

No. You suppose to sip it. See? *Sip*. I said it was like grappa, idiot.

HANK

Fuck you, man. That tastes like hairspray.

IZZY

It is good right? That's how my grandfather taught me how to drink. He told me shoot it too.

HANK

Yeah, laugh it up fuzball...

IZZY

So did he. (Reflectively.) This is all there was for while. No beer, no wine... *Gazour*.

HANK

Gazour.

(They vaguely toast the air, and on that, IZZY hits the total button on the calculator. It prints, and he looks at the number.)

HANK

You go first. My number's probably not right. I'm getting drunk I think.

IZZY

(The number.) I got seven thousand five hundred and thirty eight.

HANK

Shit...

IZZY

How much are we off? I will count them again.

HANK

No, that's what I got too.

IZZY

Good then. You drop it, I lock it, we get the hell out of here. Maybe Lily's still up when I get to her apartment...

(IZZY moves off for a moment. The music stops. HANK stares out abstracted. IZZY reenters.)

IZZY

You okay? That Raki hit you hard, huh?

(IZZY begins separating piles of cash for their tips.)

HANK

What? Yeah... Hey, you wanna get a drink somewhere?

IZZY

I got brunch tomorrow.

HANK

You want me to I'll work for you?

IZZY

That is okay.

HANK

I mean, you got any extra shifts I can pick up?

IZZY

Probably maybe.

HANK

Angelica has. *And I.* We decided to sorta switch roles for a little bit. So she'll be home with Cassy more now. And I'll be working. Full time. Try it out. It was my idea.

IZZY

Oh this is good, right? Because you was saying. Why you brought it up now I see.

HANK

Yeah, yeah. It's nice and. Told her to do some the house stuff for a change. And I can.

IZZY

She can be the wife and maintain.

HANK

Right. And I can. Give me a break. From Cassy.

IZZY

(Offering.) You can do your stand up you did. Before Cassy. Standing up, right? You were very good.

HANK

(Sadly.) *Wow...* I haven't even thought about being funny in years.

(IZZY hands HANK a pile of cash, his tips for the night.)

IZZY

Come on, papa. Time to take home the bacon.

(IZZY moves to get the lights. HANK doesn't move.)

HANK

(Beat.) Hey. I don't hate her cat. It was only a month ago we lost the baby, you know? This is to give her a break.

(IZZY pours both of them more Raki. They are ready to go, everything's finished, but they stay for one last drink.)

IZZY

You are a good husband.

HANK

Albania's different then here, right? Men and women?

IZZY

Very different...

(They sip their Raki...)

HANK

(Then, self-reflective.) You ever notice how you can talk about a thing? And it can make it worse? Talking about it? Especially if you've already talked about it so much, you've exhausted *every* possibility, that there's no point in ever talking about it again...

IZZY

(Trying to follow.) ...I think I know what you are talking of.

HANK

Yes. I know you do. That's what I mean. *You* don't talk about things. You don't have to. Because *you know*. I admire that.

IZZY

(Beat.) Wait. What do I know?

HANK

It's just rhetorical, man. Anything. Forget it.

IZZY

Remind me again what *rhetorical*...

HANK

Like *in general*. Like with anything. It can make it worse. The talking.

IZZY

...Are you talking about Lily coming over and talking with Angelica last night?

(This *wasn't* what HANK was talking about.)

HANK

What? No, no.

IZZY

I am not following then.

HANK

Yes, but. I mean, that *kind of thing*, but. That's not why I was, why I'm saying it. Bringing that up. I'm not.

IZZY

We can talk about it if you want. Angelica and Lily.

HANK

No, that's fine. I didn't even know that you *knew* that they'd talked.

IZZY

I told Lily your loss, it was none of her business. I *told* her that. Your grieving has no part in anybody's lives unless you want it to be.

HANK

No, that's fine. It's, that's not it really. Not that there is an *it*, but. Hey, I *like* Lily. I think she's really sweet. I'm happy for you. I was talking about Angelica? And losing the baby. Us talking about that.

IZZY

...*Fuckingshit*. I told her. She gets into everything. The two of you should not have to be dealing with her *fuckingshit* now. I'm sorry that she upset you, man.

HANK

No, that's. She didn't.

IZZY

Nobody likes me, she says. Well maybe it is nobody likes you Lily because you don't believe them when they say *we like you*.

HANK

Yeah, I mean that's what I was saying to Angelica, too, but. I—we like Lily. A lot.

IZZY

Tell Angelica I'm sorry Lily has upset her. In fact, I will call her tomorrow myself in person.

HANK

No, it's fine. She didn't upset anyone.

IZZY

Of course she did. It is why you brought it up. I will talk to Lily tonight. No problem. She won't do it again. Then I will talk to Angelica tomorrow and apologize.

HANK

No, I mean. *Look*. (Pause.) Lily did say some things about you, you should maybe know. And I don't care about them. It's none of my business really, but. I promised Angelica I wouldn't tell you that Lily told her that Angelica promised Lily not to tell me. Is all.

IZZY

(Deadpan.) English is my fourth language.

HANK

Listen, I wasn't there; I don't *care*. If it's an anxiety thing. Harmless. It's just Angelica's—

IZZY

What did she say, Hank?

HANK

That you... You wanted to give her money, a lot of money. To get rid of the kid. (A look.) I shouldn't have brought this up—didn't mean to. Because it's so... It's not my business. But you're my friend. And *I'd* wanna know.

(A moment passes, HANK studies IZZY.)

HANK

We don't have to talk about it. It's okay. We can go home, forget it. I'll handle—*talk* to Angelica. And you don't have to even tell Lily that I told you.

IZZY

...Please understand. I did not really know what I should do. And my father. And my brothers and my uncles in Albania?

HANK

Uh huh.

IZZY

They thought the messages was good idea at the time. Understand it is *very* different there. A man says a thing to a woman and she does it. It is the way we are. It is not considered, the way it is considered here.

HANK

So you. You *did* send the text messages?

IZZY

Don't think I'm some *fucking shit* because of this, some no cultured Serb.

HANK

No way, man. I just. I don't even know what a Serbinian is, but. Why would you send that to her?

(This is very difficult for IZZY to admit.)

IZZY

(Embarrassed.) ...Lily. (Then.) Lily's on drugs. She's been using lots of drugs a lot. Lately.

HANK

Like. Okay. Like what? Pot?

IZZY

She has done some cocaine. There has been some pot, and. Pills mostly. I thought maybe she was not using when we decided to have a. The baby. But then I found some more pills, and.

HANK

(Not sure what to say.) Oh man.

IZZY

And Lily's not a bad person as well I can promise you. Please believe it.

HANK

(Trying to catch up.) Well, I'm sure—.

IZZY

It has been a struggle for a long time with her. And I've helped her with it. Meetings and anonymously.

HANK

I've never even seen Lily drink I don't think.

IZZY

She's not suppose to. Because of her addictions. And for a long time she did very well with them. But now? Sometimes I think she is... (Vague indecipherable gesture.) You know?

HANK

What?

IZZY

Not right. Maybe even crazy, I'm talking. Maybe. (Then.) Sometimes she thinks the lights, they do things. Like they are brighter or darker. She comes into the rooms and accuses me of turning them up. Or turning them down. And when I tell her. No, this is your head. This is the drugs maybe. Why would I do that? She flips out. And I take her over to the light switch, and I show her. They don't even have the switch. The what-do-you-say-it? The dimmer.

HANK

There's not even a dimmer?

IZZY

Yes! This is what I am talking of. *Pills.*

HANK

Why would she...? (Occurs to him.) She must be really *messed* up then, huh?

IZZY

Yes. ...And sometimes she hits me also too, you know?

HANK

She *hits* you?

IZZY

Ah I mean, it is a girl hit I'm talking. What is that? *Nada.* But it is frustrating. And I want to tell her. I could hit you back. I could fucking end you. But I would never do that. It is only the frustration, you understand?

HANK

Right. Of course, hey.

IZZY

In Albania, it is... It is not like this. It is different. Women and men.

HANK

(Gently.) So what are you, is she? Are *you* guys going to do? If you, you know. Don't mind me.

IZZY

Lily has agreed. Monday. We are going together to have it taken care of.

HANK

This Monday?

IZZY

We talked last night when I got home. And decided then today it was for the best... (Beat.) I'm very sorry, Hank.

HANK

No, it's okay. I mean, for what? Come on, man. *I'm* the one who's sorry.

IZZY

But I know we talked about our kids playing together? And renting a beach on the house...

HANK

Beach house.

IZZY

And Christmas in Indiana, and.

HANK

(Remembering.) Yeah... That was *last night*. You could've talked to me, Iz. Told me?

IZZY

I did not want to burden you. (A look.) Your baby? I was thinking. You should not be burdened by me and Lily's silly problems.

HANK

Okay... (Beat.) I mean, *yeah*. Losing the baby fucking sucks... And I would never wish that on anyone. Including myself. Which it happened to, but. I mean, you're my friend, man.

IZZY

You have to believe me. I wanted them.

HANK

(Continuing.) Fucking *burden* me. I'm here for that.

IZZY

(Continuing.) All those things with our kids? And I still do want them. And I thought Lily wanted them as well. Understand, I have done *everything* I can for her. If she keeps the baby she will use drugs. This I am sure of.

HANK

Some help then? Isn't there? This is New York. There's gotta be like—.

IZZY

If the baby is born and there is something wrong? Born sickly? It would be my fault.

HANK

Angelica and me. Could talk to her—there's social workers. Could help Lily.

IZZY

She would not agree. Even if she conceded to the drugs it in the first place. Which she would not.

HANK

Then... *Fuck it.* We get a lawyer or. A judge or somebody. Get her admitted into some sort of social services—.

IZZY

A *lawyer*? I'm here on a green card it took me five years to qualify. She is from Kentucky, the crossroads of America.

HANK

Izzy, let me *help* you. I'll talk to her. Angelica and me.

IZZY

No, do *not* do that. Please. This is what is best.

HANK

For who? (No response.) You can't let her. Make this decision for you?

IZZY

She's not. It was my idea.

HANK

You're being forced into it though. It's not a decision if you can't do anything else.

IZZY

That is right, I cannot.

HANK

No, what I mean is—.

IZZY

(Curt.) I understand what you mean, please, but there is nothing to do.

HANK

(Pushing.) I can help you. If you let me.

IZZY

Promise me you will not.

HANK
That's. I'm... I'm not sure that I can, man. I'm. *Sorry*.

IZZY
You have too.

HANK
I *can't*. I see my friend being forced into doing something—.

IZZY
I am not.

HANK
And another friend who's got a problem—.

IZZY
She is not your friend.

HANK
But I want to help both of you!

IZZY
PROMISE ME YOU WILL NOT!

(IZZY walks a few paces off fuming, takes a big drink of the Raki.)

IZZY (CONT'D)
...*fuckingshit*.

HANK
(Cooling off.) Hey, man. 'S cool...

(IZZY comes back, approaching HANK, vying for the promise.)

IZZY
If you respect me.

HANK
Do *you* wanna have this kid?

IZZY

If you were me? A mother you not married to? Who does not want it enough *not* to do drugs? (Beat.) You are a good friend, my friend. (Laughs slightly.) I am truly sorry our lives cannot follow each other's.

(IZZY pours two shots from the plastic water bottle. Sets one before HANK.)

IZZY (CONT'D)

Raki is a drink for every need. Is what we say. When Albania was under communism... This was all there was. For *many* needs. You cannot refuse.

(Both IZZY and HANK drink the shots, looking at one another. HANK coughs slightly.)

IZZY

I will get the lights.

(IZZY moves off, leaving HANK alone. A moment or two passes, and then the lights in the restaurant dim slowly, leaving HANK alone in the darkness.)

END OF ACT I

ACT II

Scene 1.

EAST VILLAGE, Manhattan. About three and a half years earlier. HANK and ANGELICA's studio apartment, its entirety easily able to fit inside the living room of their future CARROLL GARDEN'S home. HANK's on the phone. ANGELICA hovers anxiously nearby, biting her nails.

HANK

It's ringing... Ringing. *Ring*ing...

ANGELICA

(Hopeful.) Maybe they're not home?

HANK

It's Sunday. And the fourth. And this is their cell phone.

ANGELICA

Hang up. Let's wait a few more days.

HANK

I don't know where they'd—*Hey mom?* Fuck. Voicemail.

ANGELICA

Hang up, don't leave a message.

HANK

(Quickly.) Hey mom dad guess what we're having a *baby!*

ANGELICA

No, don't!

HANK

Just kidding. She's still... You should hear this. Her voicemail intro. She's explaining it like no one's ever done this before—. (Leaving a message.) Hey, mom. Dad. Um. This is Hank. Your oldest, most courageous progeny, calling from the largest city in the...

ANGELICA

Hang up. Hang—.

(ANGELICA tries to go for the phone. HANK evades.)

HANK

Call me back when you get a second! I have something to tell you!

(HANK hangs up. Looks in a little tchotchke tin for a joint.)

ANGELICA

I can't believe we're doing this.

HANK

Let's call your mother now. This is exciting.

ANGELICA

I'll call her later.

HANK

We have to tell somebody today. What's her number? Even Louise can't be grumpy about a new baby.

ANGELICA

You might be surprised. No, I'll call her tomorrow. Hey, we're not like your family. Louise and me.

(HANK opens a window, and lights the joint.)

HANK

Yeah, you call her by her first name? *Weird.*

ANGELICA

She's going to ask me is if it was an accident.

HANK

You're thirty-nine; It wasn't an accident. (A look.) It did happen *faster* than we expected...

ANGELICA

One Shot Wonder over here.

HANK

(Proudly.) What can I say? My dudes are potent.

ANGELICA

(Concerning the joint.) Yeah, how exactly did that happen?

(Out of habit, ANGELICA reaches for the joint. HANK teasingly slaps her hand away.)

ANGELICA

Oh, shit! I keep forgetting. I already hate being pregnant.

HANK

It's going to be so cool once you start getting all big.

ANGELICA

I can already feel myself getting fatter...

HANK

I'm excited. You should read these books I'm reading. The stuff that's going on inside you?

ANGELICA

(Then.) You know, pot probably doesn't really matter, if you think about it? Gus' wedding two months ago? I got *tanked*. Before we had any idea.

HANK

Ah, our baby's going to be born with two heads!

ANGELICA

Yeah, so that's what I'm saying. (The joint.)

HANK

If you want to, go ahead. I won't like. (Smokes.) Totally *judge* you.

ANGELICA

(Considers, then.) Nah. All this blood work they're doing? Every time I go they stick me with something.

HANK

You'd probably get really paranoid about it too like you do, anyway.

ANGELICA

What are you talking about? I never get paranoid. *You're* the one who gets paranoid.

HANK

What? Who's paranoid? Where? Not *me*. I'm. Not. (Looks at her, swallows.) What?

ANGELICA

You're hilarious.

(HANK snubs out the joint and moves seductively towards her.)

HANK

Hilariously sexy. And you're gorgeous. Let me see it.

ANGELICA

I don't feel gorgeous. Hey!

(HANK lifts her dress to look at her barely showing stomach, puts his ear to it.)

HANK

Don't be insecure, it's bad for the baby.

ANGELICA

I'm not insecure. Just feeling... Sort of out of place. It's weird. How I feel. I don't know. (Then.) And horny.

(HANK speaks to her stomach.)

HANK

Hey. You in there. What's up? (Listens.) Oh yeah? No way. For real? (Mock aghast.) *Getthefuckoutthere*. She *did*? That's totally fucked up.

ANGELICA

That's the pastrami sandwich I had for lunch.

HANK

He says he wants to be named Dalton.

ANGELICA

You're high.

HANK

Or Chevy.

ANGELICA

I like your mother's name, Cassandra.

HANK

That's a girl's name. He'd get beat up. What about Chance? Or Chase? Or Chewbacca! Dude, seriously. If you knew a guy named *Chewbacca*? You'd already have like three kids. (A look.) You're horny? For real?

(ANGELICA bites her lower lip.)

HANK (CONT'D)

(Looks at his imaginary watch.) I think we got a few minutes before the fireworks.

ANGELICA

Oh if you think you can squeeze it in.

HANK

I'm sure I can squeeze —.

ANGELICA

Shut up.

(He attacks her. She squeals. Plays hard to get. He stops abruptly.)

HANK

Oh, but shit. Wait. Wait. What if I get you pregnant? *Again*. (They kiss some more...) See, all I had to do was *mention* Chewbacca—.

ANGELICA

Shut up and kiss me.

(They make-out like a recently married couple. HANK puts his hand under her dress.)

HANK

...You know you're different, right? Down *here*?

ANGELICA

(Curious.) My tits are bigger.

HANK

I noticed that, but. No, you're like totally swollen.

ANGELICA

(Coy.) Shut up.

HANK

I'm serious. It's intense. It's like super vagina. Like it needs its own theme music.

ANGELICA

Okay, mister comedian.

(HANK starts to undo his belt, ANGELICA drops her underwear when the door buzzer buzzes. They freeze.)

ANGELICA

Who the fuck is that?

HANK

I don't know, I. (Shrugs.) Delivery?

ANGELICA

Don't answer it.

(A moment passes, then HANK's phone rings.)

HANK (CONT'D)

(Looks.) ...Oh shit. It's Izzy.

ANGELICA

Your boss?

HANK

He's not like my *boss*. He's just. I invited him. I forgot.

(The phone continues to ring.)

ANGELICA

You invited him? Don't answer it.

HANK

I invited him over to watch fireworks, yeah. I have to.

(HANK gets up, answers his phone.)

ANGELICA

Why? *Hank*—.

HANK

(Into phone.) Hey, man. Yeah, come up.

(HANK hangs up the phone and presses the door buzzer.)

HANK

Like two *weeks* ago. I mentioned it to him after Tuesday Night open mic—I was drunk. He lives in Astoria. He doesn't have any friends. I didn't think he'd actually remember.

ANGELICA

This is the manager?

HANK

You met him like *five* times, Ang.

ANGELICA

No, I remember. Slavic. Hardly speaks English; never uses contractions.

HANK

(Correcting.) Eastern European. He speaks fine. We've been working on it. He's actually a really fascinating dude.

ANGELICA

Yippie?

HANK

The fireworks last like half an hour, then you can pretend to get sick or something. We'll kick him out and then get naked. I'll make Wookie sounds! (He does.)

ANGELICA

You're stoned. (Then.) Wait. You didn't tell him did you?

HANK

Tell him? Tell him what? Oh my god, do you think he *knows*?

ANGELICA

Shut up.

HANK

No, I didn't tell him. We said we'd wait until our parents knew.

(There's a tentative knock at the door.)

HANK (CONT'D)

Wait. *You* didn't tell him did you?

(She gives him the finger, and opens the door. IZZY stands there alone with bouquet of flowers.)

HANK

Izzy! (More Wookie sounds.)

IZZY

Hello.

HANK

We're so happy to see you! Guess what?

(HANK awkwardly hugs IZZY.)

IZZY

Ah thank you... What?

HANK

Are you ready for the most amazing fireworks extravaganza show thingy of all time?

IZZY

Ah yes?

HANK

Good! Because these fireworks are going to. (Flexing bicep, a Russian accent.) *Crush you.*

IZZY

Ah Rocky four. You fucking asshole. (To ANGELICA.) I keep telling him, I am not Russian, but he does not believe in me.

ANGELICA

(Amicably.) Hi, Izzy how are you?

(IZZY gives ANGELICA the flowers.)

IZZY

Congratulations. (Pause. A look.) For your? New *job*?

ANGELICA

Thank you very much.

IZZY

It's not appropriate to give flowers on occasion of new job?

HANK

Completely appropriate.

ANGELICA

They're beautiful. What are they? Lilys?

IZZY

Are they? This is interesting, um. (Looks to HANK.) What's the word when two things happen, and? Same time. But only...?

HANK

Uh. I don't know. Simultaneous orgasms?

ANGELICA

(To HANK.) How would you know?

IZZY

Fuckingshit, I'll just show you. (Formally.) Is it okay for me to invite a somebody here?

HANK

Yeah, yeah. Sure, man. I mean, you have a somebody you want to call, have come over?

(IZZY opens the front door, and steps outside. We hear him talking to someone.)

ANGELICA

Oh my god, is there a somebody...?

HANK

Somebody there is...

(IZZY is now standing in the doorway with LILY, who looks somehow meeker than before.)

IZZY

Ah, this is Lily. I met her at the restaurant, brunch today.

HANK

Izzy you—. (To LILY.) Hi! How are you? (To IZZY.) You didn't have to keep her outside.

IZZY

Ah is not me. She didn't want to... She was very...

ANGELICA

Hi, I'm Angelica. You're more than welcome to come in. This is my husband, Hank.

IZZY

(To HANK.) What's the word? Intruder?

ANGELICA

Intrude. And she's not in any way. Please come in.

(LILY nods slightly, which leaves the room feeling awkward. She stares at the ground.)

HANK

(Beat.) Cool, man. It's like a party...

IZZY

Hank, I have to tell you... I'm very...

ANGELICA

I'm gonna get a vase for these, um, lilies.

HANK

(Figures it out.) *Coincidence.* That's it. (To ANGELICA.) *Coincidental* orgasms is what we like to call them, right honey?

ANGELICA

Shut up.

HANK

Okay. (To IZZY.) What's up, dude? (As in *what were you saying?*)

(ANGELICA steps away from the group, but not too far, since already with four people, it's a crowded apartment.)

IZZY

Um, yes. (A little lost in the language.) I am very excited also for these... The fireworks.

HANK

I can't believe you've been in New York, what? Three years? And you've never seen...? (To LILY, trying to engage and include her.) I mean, right?

(LILY nods bashfully.)

IZZY

No, I was always at the restaurant.

HANK

I mean, it's sorta like. A New York thing that you have to do. Like the Empire State Building, or. The Staten Island Ferry? (To LILY.) Wouldn't you say?

IZZY

I have not done many of them things as well.

HANK

What? Izzy! Man, there's. Look, there's a few things, right? That you just *have* to do. A shitty hotdog in Central Park. A brisk January stroll over the Brooklyn Bridge—.

ANGELICA

Yeah, no way I'm doing *that* again.

HANK

Hey, you *loved* it. I gave you jewelry. Show the ring.

ANGELICA

Barely worth it, it was so goddam cold. Does anybody want something to drink?

IZZY

I will have a whatever, Angelica. Please.

HANK

Me too babe. (To IZZY.) You work too much, is the problem. I noticed this. (To LILY.) It's disgusting how much this guy works. (To IZZY.) You gotta take some time off, man. Spend some time with the ladies. (To LILY.) I'm sorry, I don't know if you're dating or not. But if not? You *should*. This guy is awesome.

(ANGELICA is looking in the fridge.)

ANGELICA

Hank...

HANK

I'm just kidding. I kid. (To LILY.) But seriously, I'm not. He's *awesome*.

ANGELICA

Hank. We don't really have anything. Drink drink wise.

HANK

We don't?

ANGELICA

Yeah, it's almost like we had no idea anyone was coming over.

HANK

Yeah, stupid us. But I think there's some beer in the back.

ANGELICA

No there's not...

HANK

(Sing song.) I can see it from here.

ANGELICA

There's two Red Stripes and they're both empty. I think you drank them Wednesday and put them back in the fridge for some completely obvious reason.

HANK

Okay. I'm an idiot. (To IZZY.) Well. Looks like we go on a beer run? Come on. I'll give you a tour of Avenue D.

ANGELICA

Wait, you're—.

HANK

(To IZZY.) If you look close enough you can literally see gentrification colliding into the projects.

(LILY timidly approaches IZZY on his way out.)

ANGELICA

Hank.

HANK

Need anything, babe? (A look.) Come on, I'll be right back. I'll get you something. Any *cravings?*

ANGELICA

(Her game face.) ...A bottle of tequila?

HANK

Now we're talking!

IZZY

(To LILY.) You stay here.

HANK

(To LILY.) Daisy, there's some ah. Some *pot*, half a joint? Or something. Over in the thingy. Help yourself.

LILY

(Clearly besotted by HANK.) Thanks, Hank.

HANK

(To IZZY, ignoring LILY.) And they're off!

IZZY

Off they are!

(HANK and IZZY exit. ANGELICA looks at LILY.)

ANGELICA

(Beat.) Sorry. He called you Daisy? My husband's. Annoying when he's stoned.

LILY

They're both flowers.

(ANGELICA, not knowing what to say, finds some vitamins on a shelf, while LILY meanders to the window with the tchotchke tin and the pot. ANGELICA pours herself a glass of water, and LILY fiddles with the joint.)

ANGELICA

Go ahead. It's fine, if you want. I'm okay.

(LILY smokes and ANGELICA downs the vitamins.)

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

(Because she has water.) You want some water? (LILY shakes her head.) Or something to *eat*?

LILY

No, thank you.

ANGELICA

You came from the restaurant? You met Izzy there? (LILY nods.) You live around here? You an East Village-er?

(LILY shakes her head, smokes.)

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

Good for you. (Beat.) Just so you know, so you don't like get your hopes up. Our roof's like not really the best. The projects across the street, they sort of block the view? And it's kind of a shitty roof access too. You have to go up the fire escape, and. Someone will usually, from the avenue, tell you your ass is dope or *you so fine girl*. Which is... A bonus. I guess.

LILY

I've never seen them.

ANGELICA

Oh, well. They're *great*. You'll love them.

LILY

I'm scared of heights.

ANGELICA

(*Okay...*) Like I said. They're no big deal. You can probably see them fine from the window.

LILY

(Pause.) I just moved here.

ANGELICA

Oh yeah? To the city? From Brooklyn?

LILY

Kentucky.

ANGELICA

No wonder you're scared of heights. Just kidding; Hank's from Indiana. When'd you move?

LILY

Yesterday. We drove up. My boyfriend Dale. From Louisville.

ANGELICA

You moved here yesterday?

LILY

Such a cliché, right?

ANGELICA

No. Just. (Then.) It does explain it.

LILY

What?

ANGELICA

The slight, sort of. Totally freaked out look in your eyes.

LILY

(Suddenly more paranoid than usual.) Do I, you think I look like...?

ANGELICA

I'm kidding, again. I mean it's okay. I should have recognized it, because. I had the *exact* same look when I moved here.

(LILY puts out the joint, and makes a conscious effort to smile and not look freaked out. It has the opposite effect.)

LILY

I'm not. You know? Freaked out. (Clears throat.) I mean, *I am*. But in a good way.

ANGELICA

I'm sure you're going to be fine. And, it would be completely understandable even if you were. (Then.) Does your boyfriend, Dale Jr., live in the city or...?

LILY

We broke up. He decided he didn't want to live here. And I decided I didn't want to go back with him. It's actually. It's fine. It's actually a good thing.

ANGELICA

Sure, I'm. Sure.

LILY

I think I was just dating him because I knew he was moving here.

ANGELICA

Okay. You'll, you know. Find another roommate then. Split the rent? People do it all the time.

LILY

We were going to stay with this drummer friend of his? On St. Michaels?

ANGELICA

Marks.

LILY

But then we got there...

ANGELICA

Oh no.

LILY

And his drummer friend was sort of already staying with Dale's bass guitar friend? And then they got into a fight about it...

ANGELICA

...You don't have a place to stay.

LILY

I'll find something. I not really worried about it. *At all*, actually. I have money. I have like five hundred dollars.

ANGELICA

I have a feeling that that's not as much as you think it is. (Then.) I mean, where's all your stuff?

(LILY points to a slightly oversized backpack she set down near the door.)

LILY

Izzy said I could stay at his place in Astoria for tonight. (Then.) He's a nice guy, right?

ANGELICA

Far as I know.

(ANGELICA puts back the bottle of vitamins.)

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

(Not sure how to take any of this.) Um. Okay. Listen. I should tell you—.

LILY

I know. And I'm not, you know? Completely...

ANGELICA

I'm sure, but—.

LILY

Unaware of like. *What* I am. This big walking cliché, that's gonna get some drug habit and become a hooker in Times Square. I get it.

ANGELICA

Okay, they don't really hang in Times Square anymore.

LILY

I'll be fine.

ANGELICA

My advice: Go buy a *bus* ticket—.

LILY

(Cornered.) I'm not leaving.

ANGELICA

Hey, I'm not saying you have to. Or anything. It's just. This city can be... I mean, you have no idea. Okay? What you're doing—.

LILY

I *get* it. I do. (Then.) I mean, *I am* freaked out actually. But in a good way, you know? Friday, I was working in a Dairy Queen in Louisville. *Tonight...* (Determined.) I'm *going* to watch the New York Fireworks on somebody's roof.

ANGELICA

That you just met. You don't even know me. Is my point, is all. Not everyone's like me, and. There's a lot of things that. They can go *wrong*. You don't have a job? Or an apartment?

LILY

(Over.) Okay. Alright. (Then.) Please stop trying to talk me out of this. It was really *hard* for me to get here.

ANGELICA

I'm only saying you might want a *plan*, in case you end up with no money, no place to stay—.

LILY

(Sharply.) I'm not going back. *Sorry!*

ANGELICA

(Backs off.) I mean, *hey*. Do what you want. I'm not *trying* to talk you out of anything.

(LILY lights the joint again and stares outside. A moment.)

LILY

(Beat.) Congratulations, by the way.

ANGELICA

For what? Being an aggressive, overly concerned host?

LILY

You're having a baby, right? ...That's so cool. I wish I was born here. This city's amazing.

ANGELICA

Why do you...?

LILY

Those are prenatal vitamins you just took, right? I kind of had this like anemia thing for a while? Had to take those for the iron in them. How far along are you?

ANGELICA

Um. A couple months. I mean, *weeks*. (Then.) I'm not sure I'm going to keep it though.

LILY

Really? Then why take vitamins?

ANGELICA

Just in case I guess?

(LILY considers this.)

LILY

I don't think I could be like a mom right now either. Some day for sure. I definitely want to. But right now? I feel like I would definitely suck big at it, you know?

ANGELICA

...I know how you feel.

LILY

I'm only like twenty-four? Ten more years, and then I think I'll be ready. How old are you? *Sorry*, I shouldn't ask that.

ANGELICA

No, I mean that's okay. I'm like. *Thirty*. Thirty-five. *Ish*.

LILY

Oh, well then that's perfect. You probably don't want to wait too much longer.

ANGELICA

Yeah, well, I just got this new job, and. It's sort of my dream job. Almost. Like I'm assisting the person who's working my dream job.

LILY

It would probably mess up my career too. Not that I have one yet. But I will. My dream job? I want to work for like a record label? I'm going to be like the girl who goes out and hears like new bands play, you know?

ANGELICA

This is a good neighborhood for that.

LILY

And like, I really got a good ear for it I think? Like I hear stuff. And I know when something's good. (Beat.) Do you want some of this? I'm kinda smoking all of it.

(LILY offers the joint to ANGELICA, who hesitates.)

LILY (CONT'D)

I'm sure pot's not that bad. My parents were these like total wanna be hippies ten years after the fact. Toured with the Dead until it was like *sad*. And I turned out okay.

(LILY makes a *spaz* face, and it catches ANGELICA off guard. She laughs, and takes the joint.)

ANGELICA

Sure.

(ANGELICA looks at it, then smokes.)

LILY

(Beat. Stoned.) I think you'd make a good mom. Not that you need me to tell you that. Or I'm gonna like *convince* you.

(ANGELICA smokes and watches LILY closely.)

LILY (CONT'D)

I don't know... You don't want me to end up dead. That's like a mom. Right?

ANGELICA

(Contemplative.) ...Louise. My mother? She's a nudist.

LILY

Right on.

ANGELICA

She's also a bitch. Which is a weird combination. (Then.) I almost went yesterday to, you know? Have it taken care of? But I chickened out on the subway. I don't know why I'm telling you that—I probably shouldn't. In fact, don't tell *anyone* that.

(ANGELICA snubs out the joint.)

LILY

I won't. I, no way. I promise, I mean. (Pause.) What I think? If you wanna know? Not that I'm like super smart or anything? (ANGELICA nods.) Okay. You got a great apartment. Your husband... He's like really *nice*. It's sort of completely obvious that he's in absolute and total love with me. *You*, I mean. (ANGELICA nods.) And if I had him? Everything you got? *And I* was thirty-five?

ANGELICA

Ish.

LILY

(Shrugging.) And yeah, the job thing, but. A job's a job, right? That's why they call it a *job*. (Dreamily.) A baby is like... A *baby*. The reason for it, the job, I mean. And I think I'd rather stay at home with a baby any day.

ANGELICA

Not me.

(The first sounds of fireworks exploding outside draws away LILY's attention. Stoned, she giggles with pleasure.)

LILY (CONT'D)

That's amazing! They're so loud!

(More fireworks, ANGELICA flinches.)

LILY (CONT'D)

I wanna go to the roof. I'm *gonna* go to the roof. Hey, let's go to the roof!

(LILY exits out the window and up the fire escape.)

ANGELICA

Hey, wait a minute. I thought you—. Please be careful! Please? (Stepping out.) Whoa...

(ANGELICA exits, following behind her.)

(HANK and IZZY enter with beer. More fireworks explode, and continue throughout the rest of the scene. Everyone speaks at a higher volume to accommodate.)

HANK

Tally ho! They're starting!

IZZY

Let's go to the roof!

HANK

Hold on. A bottle opener...

IZZY

...I cannot believe that you are having a baby. I would have brought more than the flowers.

HANK

Yeah, man thanks, but. Remember, keep that to yourself. Don't tell Angelica I told you, I mean.

IZZY

Right, right, of course. It is just very exciting. I am very excited for you! I've always wanted a family. Be the family dad. Raise sons and. Teach them football.

HANK

I *love* that. We do this big super bowl party, I'll invite you this year.

IZZY

It has always been a day dreaming of mine to have a son in the World Cup. Leading the Republic of Albania to victory.

HANK

Oh *that* football. I like the World Cup too. I'd like my son to. Lead the United States of America. To victory, sure.

IZZY

Be careful, my friend. You could have a daughter.

HANK

No way a girl's happening. It's a boy for sure. No doubt about it.

(HANK finds the bottle opener. He pops off two bottle caps, and hands one of the beers to IZZY.)

HANK (CONT'D)

Here. Cheers. I'm glad you came over.

IZZY

In Albania we say *Gazour*. To your baby.

HANK

Gazour.

(They drink competitively.)

HANK (CONT'D)

Thank you for hiring me. And putting up with my terrible waiting skills. Or lack there of. For the last six months.

IZZY

It is nothing. I am glad to know you, Hank. I am very in envious of your life. Some day I would hope to have something like this what you have.

HANK

Hey, that Daisy's not too bad huh? Maybe her, man. You never know.

(IZZY doesn't catch this, as there's a loud explosion of fireworks outside.)

IZZY

What?

HANK

I wanted to tell you thank you, because. Maybe if I didn't have this job, I wouldn't have felt comfortable having a baby right now, so. Here's to you. Thank you.

(The cheers and drink, then interrupted by IZZY's cell phone. He looks at it and answers.)

IZZY

Que paso? Uh huh. Uh huh. *Fuckingshit*. Couple minutes. (Hangs up.)

HANK

(Near the window.) What's up? You coming up?

IZZY

Uh. I am very sorry, Hank. Gustavo is sick, he says. His *what do you says?* His throat?

HANK

And he's waited until *now* to call...?

IZZY

The owner, Michael, his second wife Diana is suppose to eat. He could, might find out no one is there running food. It would be very bad.

HANK

Michael's second wife Diana? Izzy, the fireworks only last an *hour*, man. You're there *all the time*. If he fires you for that he doesn't deserve to have you as an employee.

IZZY

No, you do not understand, okay? This job is very important.

HANK

Don't let Michael walk all over you just because he thinks you can't find another job. You can!

IZZY

I can't. He is sponsoring me for my green card.

HANK

He's taking advantage of you because you're not American, alright? Trust me. Until you tell him you're not going to work seventy hours a fucking week. Seriously. It's *insane*. You're going to burn out.

IZZY

I have a family. In Albania. That they depend on me for the money. What do I have here for the use of my time? Nothing.

HANK

Yourself, man. You have yourself.

IZZY

I am sorry. It is disappointment, but I cannot risk this.

HANK

Okay, okay... (Then.) Then let *me* go. I'll go run food. I've never done it, but I'll figure it out.

IZZY

No, I could not let that be. It is your home. You invited me—thank you.

HANK

I've seen them every year I've been in New York. They're not that big of a deal.

ANGELICA (OFF.)

Hank?

IZZY

Then I am not missing anything.

ANGELICA (OFF.)

Hank!

IZZY

Please, your wife calls for you. Go be with her and your new baby. They should have *your* time.

HANK

... Alright, man. —But drink this beer! Quick.

(HANK pops two new beers, and they both chug their beers again competitively.)

IZZY

...Thank you. Next year.

(They hug, and IZZY exits.)

HANK

(Calling after him.) Well at least walk backwards there! So you can see the fireworks on your way?

IZZY (OFF.)

I will do that, my friend! Congratulations!

(ANGELICA's in the window now.)

ANGELICA

Hank!

HANK

(Peeved.) *What?*

ANGELICA

It's Lily. She won't come down.

HANK

Who?

ANGELICA

Lily. Where's Izzy?

HANK

What do you mean, she won't come down?

ANGELICA

She won't come down off the fire escape. She's scared of heights I think.

HANK

She won't come down?

ANGELICA

No, she's freaking out. She won't go up, she won't go down. She thinks she's going to fall.

(HANK goes to the window and looks up at LILY.)

HANK

Daisy, honey?

ANGELICA

Lily.

HANK

Lily? Can you go up honey?

ANGELICA

No, come *down*.

HANK
Can you go up? Can you move?

ANGELICA
(To HANK.) Tell her to come down, not up.

HANK
She's closer to the top.

ANGELICA
But then what? (To LILY.) Lily, just come down please! You'll be fine.

HANK
No, just go up! You're almost there.

ANGELICA
No, tell her come down. She'll be trapped up there. I can't believe this is happening...

HANK
All she has to do is like one more step. (To LILY.) Lily, can you move one more step up? Just one more step?

ANGELICA
...People are starting to gather down below, Hank.

HANK
Just relax. It's gonna be okay. (To LILY.) Lily? (To ANGELICA.) She's not moving. I gotta go up there.

(HANK starts to get in the window.)

ANGELICA
(Very frightened.) No, don't! She might pull you down!

HANK
What?

ANGELICA
She might drag you down with her.

HANK
Are you stoned? It's a fire escape not a swimming pool.

ANGELICA
She could grab on to you and you could fall down.

HANK

No one's falling down because we're going up!

(HANK steps out onto the fire escape.)

ANGELICA

Be careful!

(ANGELICA is unable to watch.)

Scene 2.

EAST VILLAGE, Manhattan. The Restaurant. The present. Lights are up bright, chairs on the tables, closing. IZZY is drunk. HANK is agitated, trying to count the money and add the checks—the whole close out, by himself.

IZZY

...You have the people skills. You can talk to them. Americans do not trust accents. You should be manager.

HANK

(Wearily.) Izzy... This is an Italian restaurant with Mexican chefs. Don't overthink it. Just add the checks. It's so late...

(HANK nudges a stack of checks in front of IZZY.)

IZZY

That woman tonight. The big one? You talk to her. You fixed it. I thought she was going to eat *me* at one point. I says to myself, *fuckingshit* this fat lady is going to eat me!

(HANK sets down the cash, turns to IZZY.)

HANK

Hopefully she won't yelp about it like she said. What if she does that?

IZZY

(Mock gravely.) Oh no, hopefully no yelping.

HANK

Michael checks that. I heard that he checks it.

IZZY

Every morning.

HANK

(Not the response HANK is looking for.) What the hell happened, Iz? I come in the back and you're yelling, *It's only food. It's only food!* At the top of your lungs?

IZZY

One supper out of her entire life? What is that? And that woman had had many many suppers.

HANK

(Not amused.) She thought you were crazy, okay? The whole table did. I had to lie to them, tell them your aunt had just died, and—

IZZY

Aunt Lenda! No!

HANK

That you were clearly, at least it *looked* like you were—.

IZZY

Ah, I was drunk. Like you, the other night.

(IZZY begins making some half-attempt at sorting the night's checks.)

HANK

Yeah. I wasn't yelling at people, man. And this was *before* you started drinking.

IZZY

I am in a good mood here. I am feeling the relief now. What is the point?

HANK

You didn't seem really, you know. *Relieved* then.

IZZY

It is only food, after all.

HANK

You're saying she took it out of proportion?

IZZY

Look at the size of her, I am sure she takes *most* things out of proportion!

HANK

(Plowing through.) Because it looked like you were... *Distraught*.

IZZY

About a fat lady's Bolognese? (Laughs darkly.) Seven years I been working here! I do not give a *fuckingshit* no more my friend!

HANK

Well I can't cover for you. She writes about it? I'm not lying to Michael. Too many people, busboys, the kitchen, they saw what happened. I cover for you and Michael fires me? Not with Angelica out of work. *Sorry.*

(IZZY begins raucously singing the Albanian national anthem, *Himni I Flamurit*. Or anything really in Albanian.)

IZZY

Rreth flamurit të përbashkuar
Me një dëshir' e një qëllim,
Të gjith' atij duke iu betuar
Të lidhim besën për shpëtim!

You need a drink! *You* are seeming distraught, friend!

HANK

I don't. Forget it. I don't need a drink. I need to go home.

(IZZY pours two sloppy shots of Raki from the plastic water bottle.)

IZZY

Here! Raki. Let's make some toast. To life!

HANK

That's terrible irony you realize...

IZZY

(Continuing.) And it going on! What can you do, Hank? *Gazour!* Like my grandfather taught me!

(IZZY *shoots* his down. HANK does not touch his.)

IZZY (CONT'D)

Please, you cannot refuse.

HANK

Um I sorta just did. Refuse. I'm still hung-over from this shit the other night, so if you don't mind.

IZZY

You cannot. Albanian custom. I will do another with you. Here!

HANK

I don't want it man, seriously, the smell of it, I'm gonna barf.

IZZY

It will help with that. Raki is a drink for every need!

HANK

What I *need* is this money counted, those checks sorted, and the doors locked. Me at home. My *life*, going on.

IZZY

Please, just touch it to your lips. A taste. It is insulting to refuse—.

HANK

It's insulting to push it on someone who doesn't want it, okay? Do your numbers. Or go home. And I'll do them and lock up.

(HANK takes the stack of checks from IZZY, and moves to the printing calculator, begins adding them up.)

IZZY

... You insult me.

HANK

Waking up to Cassy screaming at me at six A.M. the other morning—*hung over*? I can't just get wasted whenever I feel like it. I'm like fucking responsible and shit. When do you have to wake up tomorrow, huh? Who are you responsible for? Other than yourself? Anyone? Or is your entire life only based on your own personal fucking needs? Are you satisfied with that, man? *This* is disrespecting me, okay? (Then.) I'm sorry. *I'm sorry*. I just want to go home.

(HANK continues to add up the checks.)

IZZY

(Beat.) Do you want to talk about it?

HANK

No, forget it.

IZZY

(Then.) It was not, being a parent? Maybe for me? I think about it. I looked at you, at Angelica... You wanted it. You planned it. *Willed it into the existence*, you said. You are parents. Me and Lily? This is not what we are.

(HANK stops adding up the checks.)

HANK

You don't know, you *can't* know that.

IZZY

That I am no longer having a baby? Is that it? Your disrespect?

HANK

No, it's not disrespect. It's. (Then.) You should have done it. Had the baby, I think.

IZZY

A father with a baby mama on drugs?

HANK

Okay, so what? I take Angelica out of the picture for some reason? We divorce or whatever? The best thing in my life is *still* Cassy.

IZZY

She would have taken it, Lily. The baby to Kentucky. That is how it is here. The moms, the judges, they give them the babies. I would end up paying money on a baby I would never see.

HANK

You don't know, Izzy. Maybe you could have worked it out with you and Lily—down the line.

IZZY

As much as you think, I live life, with only my personal fucking needs I am thinking on? I have responsibilities. I have my family back home.

HANK

But you're not there, Izzy. You're not in Albania. You're here. Living alone in an apartment in *Astoria*. Working seventy hours a week for what?

IZZY

(Dismissing that.) Albania, America—they are different. This money? It means not the same thing to you and to me.

HANK

Don't give me the whole cultural *whatever*. For five years, I'll buy it. After that, I start to think this guy wants *more* than this. Our conversations, those talks we had? You wanted that baby.

IZZY

(Agreeing.) I did. I thought I did.

HANK

Then what are you doing? You've been here for *seven* years. Don't you want more? Some kind of a *sense*? Made out of it?

IZZY

Out of what?

HANK

Like a... (Not finding another word for it.) A *sense*, man. Like I look at Cassy. And it makes sense to me. This job, this city, our lives—Angelica? The whole struggle of all of it.

IZZY

I am sorry. I am, but. I do not understand what you are feeling. You are angry with me?

HANK

I'm asking you why you're alive, okay? What's your meaning of life?

IZZY

I have. I have my family. Because they are in Albania, and not here? Does not mean—.

HANK

I'm sure they're important to you. But they're a seventeen hour flight away. You have to connect in *Zurich* before you can get home. You left there for the same reason I left Indiana.

IZZY

(Gravely.) I do not think it was for the same reasons, Hank.

HANK

But truth is neither one of us is *ever* moving back. And you know it.

IZZY

(Skeptical.) So without having a baby there is no meaning to my life?

HANK

(Shrugs.) ...Well, it's not Albania, dude. *Sorry* to tell ya'.

IZZY

Fuckingshit... (Then.) What is the meaning to *your* life without a baby?

HANK

What? No, I'm saying I *have* meaning. Because of Cassy.

IZZY

But you talk the shit about your life every night I see you here, Hank.

HANK

What shit? No, I don't.

IZZY

You complain the expensive apartment, the cat, the cleaning, you not doing your stand up?

HANK

Not *every* night.

IZZY

And Angelica? You talk the shit *every* night about her.

HANK

I'm blowing off steam here. Saying that stuff to you so I don't have to say it to her. Sorry, if you took it serious.

IZZY

And *I* am sorry to tell *you*, my friend... It sounds like to me you are in a *zoo*.

HANK

Come again?

IZZY

Trapped in a cage? And you want me to be in that same cage with you. When already, before, you tell me it smells like the monkeys have *shit* in there.

HANK

Monkeys? Hey, I'm not, I'm not like *trapped*. That's not right.

IZZY

(Sympathetically.) You are the wife? You do not want to be the wife anymore? Then *tell* her.

HANK

No, I *want* to be—you're not understanding me. I like staying at home and raising my daughter. I like it a lot, okay? That's my sense. Of purpose. What's *yours*?

IZZY

Then why are you not doing it? This is what you want. To stay at home? Why are you picking up extra shifts?

HANK

Because there are complexities, and. Settlements, negotiations—things *you* can't know without being married, okay? With kids. You can't know what it's like. The roles themselves. Husband and wife? They're not always clear.

IZZY

It sounds very clear to me; why do you not say it to her?

HANK

Well, it's not. Sorry, I can't like *dilute* the language down so you—.

IZZY

It is right there for you to say. *I want to be the wife.* Say it.

HANK

Sorry, it's like not that easy.

IZZY

I want to be the wife!

HANK

You're drunk.

IZZY

That is true, yes. And what is *also* true is that you want to be the wife! Say it to her then!

HANK

Because she almost died, Izzy! How can you even understand a thing like that? What it means? You can't!

IZZY

(Patiently.) Then help me so I can. *Please.*

(HANK takes a brief moment, pulls himself tighter together.)

HANK

(Beat.) There was... This *moment*. Where her heartbeat on the monitor thingy or whatever? It started to match the baby's. The nurse, she looks at the doctor, and. Then at me? This look like... (Then.) You know, with the second kid we doubled down. Is what it feels like. We made a bet? With all our happiness. And we *lost*. (Shrugs.) Only I don't care, you know? Not like Angelica cares. I never even *knew* the baby... But in the hospital I had this thought. Or I don't know, I *prayed* it? I guess? Not sure if that's the right word, I'm not religious. But I definitely *told* someone... That they could have the baby if they left Angelica with me. (Beat.) So, yeah. She can do what she wants, man. Because she's here now, and she almost wasn't. And I would have taken her place in a second if I could. And now I can.

IZZY

(Gently.) But you see? This is not, I do not think, a way I feel about Lily. That kind of love?

HANK

Maybe. Or maybe you never gave it a chance. You think I knew that? How I felt? You can't. You can't know it, man. Not until something like that happens. Not until your baby's born—it's a leap of faith! And not even then! It sneaks up on you, and you turn around one day and you can't remember how you lived so long without loving something so much. ... You gotta have patience, Izzy. To make this stuff work? And you didn't have any. You gave up too early, man.

IZZY

(Hurt.) That is it? You think I gave up?

HANK

I *know* you did. (Then.) You wake up, you come here, every day you do this job? For what? To *kill* the time? I mean, for fucking *what*, man? Why are you still here in America? You wanted to have a family. You almost did! And maybe it was Lily and the drugs. Or maybe it was *you*? The jury's still out between Angelica and me on that one. But either way? I may be the wife. I may be trapped. In this beautiful, life-changing, *monkey* shit-smearred cage? ... But you bitched out.

IZZY

(Desperately.) I tried. You have got to believe me. I tried so hard...

HANK

I don't. I don't believe you. You've convinced me now. You're *not* a parent. *Gazour*.

(HANK shoots down the shot of Raki IZZY had previously set before him. He tries to contain a cough, chokes, pulls it together, smiles *wildly* towards IZZY, and then goes back to counting his piles of thousands. A moment. IZZY is still, but stirs emotionally.)

HANK

(Eyes averted.) Don't cry, man. This is what you wanted. You wanted this. (Shakily himself.) *Don't cry*.

IZZY

...She would talk about you. Lily. After the roof that once? She would talk about you in a way... I knew it was not me. But I thought maybe I could be you. Like you. And I think Lily wanted to be like Angelica. And we looked at you guys... Your family? And thought we could be that. With each other. (Shrugging sadly.) But we can't.

HANK

(Abashed.) ...Let's just get out of here.

(They drift into their places, IZZY now on the printing calculator, HANK sorting the money. They work for at least a minute in silence. They look at each other when the other isn't looking. And when they're done, they know.)

IZZY (CONT'D)

(Intuitively.) Eight thousand seven hundred and fifty-two?

(HANK nods, acknowledging they have the same number. They begin sorting the cash tips and finalizing the close out.)

IZZY (CONT'D)

(Beat.) I changed my mind I think. (Then.) On the subway to Lily's apartment. I think I had changed my mind.

HANK

About the baby?

IZZY

I think that's what happened. I think I thought I thought—*fuckingshit!* *Thought.* I wanted to keep it?

HANK

What are you talking about?

IZZY

...For this moment, I was a father.

HANK

Why? Why didn't you call her? Tell her not to do it?

IZZY

She lied to me and said she would wait. When I got to her apartment she had already left already.

HANK

You could. You could have caught her on the way there. Have you talked to her? Are you sure she's done it? Maybe she hasn't done it yet, Izzy.

IZZY

She has done it.

HANK

How do you know? I mean, have you actually talked to her since? Have you called her?

IZZY

No. ...But she sent me a text message.

(The lights suddenly shut off one by one, until both men exit in the dark alone, in opposite directions.)

Scene 3.

LILY's apartment, which is the same apartment HANK and ANGELICA previously rented in the EAST VILLAGE. Half-packed boxes around. LILY is packing one of them, while ANGELICA pumps milk from her breasts. Once again, the pump is audible and monotonous.

ANGELICA

It's considered food, so anyone can sell it legally. There's like this whole community online. You can buy it, sell it—*trade* it even? My first mother? She gave me the *best* granola. *Bags* of it for every six ounces of milk I give her. That's actually why I came over.

(ANGELICA hands a plastic bag with about five pounds of granola in it to LILY.)

LILY

Whoa... That's a lot of granola.

(ANGELICA finishes pumping, and shuts it off. She unscrews the bottle, and carefully pours the milk into a small clear bag. She puts the bag into a mini cooler.)

ANGELICA

(Pause.) Hank thinks it's weird, but. I mean, I am helping mothers, you know? (Beat.) Sorry if I like stopped by out of the blue.

LILY

Oh, that's okay.

ANGELICA

I tried calling. I mean, not today, but. I tried a bunch. You probably wanted to be...

LILY

(Equivocal.) Yeah...

ANGELICA

(Then, looking around.) You know, you can sublet without packing up all your stuff? There's people that will rent out a furnished apartment for actually more money—.

LILY

I know.

ANGELICA

That's why you pack up the nice stuff and then leave everything else. (Looking around.) Shit, Lily... Half of this furniture was crap Hank and I had in college. You could probably—.

LILY

I know, just. I don't want someone like *living* with all my stuff. (Pause.) Here.

(LILY hands ANGELICA a stack of baby books.)

ANGELICA

Yeah... (Beat.) *Yeah*, I'm not doing too good at this. I guess I don't know... How to be good at it? Or anything *lately*, really. Except. (*Breast milk.*) *Mooo.*

(This awkward cow impression is unsuccessful on LILY.)

LILY

Good at what?

ANGELICA

I want to support you. I'm saying. And the decision you made.

LILY

That's okay. You don't have to um. Be supportive.

ANGELICA

No, but then I get this feeling from the last time I saw you—.

LILY

It's what I wanted, so.

ANGELICA

...That it's *not* what you wanted. Maybe. That it wasn't your decision. You said some things the last time I saw you, and—.

LILY

Please—. (Then.) Will you help me with this box please? I'm not really supposed to exert myself.

ANGELICA

Yeah, of course. *Right*. (Helps her. Beat.) I should have gone home. For a little bit. After the still birth. Not that, you know. They're the *same* things, but.

LILY

Why didn't you?

ANGELICA

...Let's just say, staring at Louise naked for a month. Not as comforting as you'd expect.

LILY

I wanna be away. For a while, I think.

ANGELICA

That's. Understandable. (Then.) What's Izzy going to do? (A look.) Are you guys? Like what's going on? You know? *Between* you.

LILY

I haven't seen him since Sunday morning.

ANGELICA

He didn't go with you to...?

LILY

No, he wanted to. Probably to make sure or something. Like I was really going to do it? But you don't do it there anyways. Under nine weeks they give you pills.

ANGELICA

(Nodding, then cautiously.) When you come back. Are you guys...?

LILY

Come back...? (Gets it.) Oh, I don't. I don't know.

ANGELICA

Lily. You can't get back together with him. You know that, right? (LILY nods benignly.) And you can't keep working there. Not while he's—. Jesus, he's your *boss*.

LILY

He's not my like. Not really he's not.

ANGELICA

Yes he is. And listen, if you want to keep the job, that's fine. That's up to you, but. I have a friend who works for like one of those free magazines? You know, that you can pick up by the subway?

LILY

Oh, that's okay...

ANGELICA

They're based out of Williamsburg—don't hold that against them. But. They have this whole music review section or whatever. And I talked to her—.

LILY

Listen that's. *Thank you.* But I don't need you to do that for me.

ANGELICA

I don't mind, she's a college friend, we go way back—.

LILY

Why do you care?

ANGELICA

(Backing off.) I mean look, hey I...

LILY

Angelica, I'm gonna be fine.

ANGELICA

I'm just worried that you're—.

LILY

It doesn't really matter.

ANGELICA

It doesn't matter that you'll end up working a job, maybe back together with a guy that—.

LILY

That won't happen, okay?

ANGELICA

(Continuing.) No, a guy that made you. To your *baby*, Lily—.

LILY

(Forceful, but not yelling.) IT DOESN'T MATTER. And Izzy didn't do anything to my baby, okay? *I* did. It was my choice.

(LILY takes a deep breath, smiles, looks for benevolence from ANGELICA, who realizes:)

ANGELICA

You're not coming back.

LILY

...I need some time.

ANGELICA

That's why you're packing everything? You're not subletting, you're moving?

LILY

I need to be like. Not *here*. For a while.

ANGELICA

...Okay. Why lie about it?

LILY

Because I didn't want. I *don't* want. Anybody to try to talk me out of it.

ANGELICA

Anybody like... Izzy?

LILY

Anybody like anybody. Like *you*. I'm sorry I came over the other night and dropped all that crap on you, but. I mean, you should understand this.

ANGELICA

Understand *what* exactly?

(LILY is referring to something else here, and lets it go.)

LILY

...You should have gone home too.

ANGELICA

Okay yeah, but. I didn't mean *moving*. Like permanently. Back to Ohio?

LILY

Kentucky.

ANGELICA

I meant, like visiting for a month. And even that was a bad idea.

LILY

Okay, fine. It's a stupid idea. I get it. I'm doing it anyways.

ANGELICA

No, I meant for me. Because of my mother? And they're—*Our* things? Are two totally different things here, okay?

LILY

I know that. You already said that already.

ANGELICA

You *made* your decision—.

LILY

And you didn't have a choice; I did. Thank you for reminding me.

ANGELICA

(Rising. Beat.) Alright, you know what? I'm going.

(ANGELICA begins to gather her stuff...)

LILY

You should understand this. I thought you would understand this more because of Cassy.

ANGELICA

(Not following.) Because of Cassy *what?*

LILY

Because you didn't want her. That's what you said when we first met.

ANGELICA

I never said that.

LILY

You went to a doctor? But then you changed your mind you told me?

ANGELICA

I never went to a doctor.

LILY

And then I told you, you should keep it. You should have the baby. I *told* you that.

ANGELICA

Lily. We had to almost call the fire department because you were so fucking stoned that night. So maybe things aren't *exactly* how you remember them?

LILY

It doesn't matter. It's not like you're ever gonna see me again.

ANGELICA

Yeah. Maybe not. Good luck back in Indiana being. Whatever it was you wanted to be.

LILY

Thanks. I will. (Then.) Good luck being happy.

(ANGELICA stops, thrown by this. LILY trembles, her voice quivering.)

ANGELICA

I'm happy.

LILY

You should have kept your promise.

ANGELICA

What promise? (Searching... Then.) What, that I told Hank? He's my *wife*.

LILY

You told Hank and Hank told Izzy. And then Izzy felt like everyone knew. How were we suppose to stay together after that?

ANGELICA

Are you trying to say this is somehow *my* fault? (Then.) Why would you *want* to stay together with him?

LILY

I wasn't *trying* to stay together with him...

ANGELICA

What do you think happens when you tell somebody something like that?

LILY

I only wanted to keep him around.

ANGELICA

(Missing it.) What was I supposed to do? Sit back, and not *try* to help you? What kind of person would I have been? And why did you want to tell me all of it, anyway? So that we could be *friends*? That we'd bond in our misery?

LILY

(Befuddled.) Yeah. I don't know.

ANGELICA

...No, you know what Lily? You had your choice, and you made your decision. At least be thankful you had that.

LILY

It was my choice. But maybe you didn't leave me with much of one.

ANGELICA

...And now I think that's probably a good thing. Because you don't deserve to be a mother.

(ANGELICA's losing control; tries to exit.)

LILY

Do you even realize how much you have? Because honestly, Angelica? Honest to god? You're the most miserable, ungrateful person I've ever met. And since we're never gonna see each other again? I'm just gonna tell you that.

ANGELICA

(Recovering slightly.) Hey, I'm sorry. If I did something? Or made you feel like—.

LILY

How could you make me feel?

ANGELICA

But I'm happy. As much as I can be.

LILY

(Over.) Other than completely and like totally... *Inadequate*.

ANGELICA

(Starting to understand this.) Oh Lily...

LILY

(Over.) Yeah, an easy decision, right? Keep the baby? I want it, so why not? Easy for *you*. When you have everything.

ANGELICA

I don't have everything, Lily. And it wasn't an easy decision for me.

LILY

An amazing apartment with like *adult* furniture in like the best school district in the city. You've got like a *real* job. A *career*. With insurance, and. And Cassy—! Oh *Jesus*, Cassy! She's perfect. I've never seen a kid so terribly perfect. And I mean that Angelica...

ANGELICA

I know it can seem all perfect—.

LILY

And Hank! Somehow—I have no idea how. But somehow, you found like the most greatest, sweetest guy on the entire planet. And then you convinced him to *marry* you. And have your children!

ANGELICA

(This idea souring in her.) Alright *stop*, Lily. I don't have everything.

LILY

And I know it feels that way to you. And I'm sure that if your baby had been born? Whatever you were going to name him—.

ANGELICA

(Warningly.) He was born.

LILY

He would have been perfect too. Like a diamond inside a diamond or something? —Oh *god*, I don't know, but—.

ANGELICA

That's right. You don't know. Anything about it, okay? No one *knows*. Because there wasn't a *problem*? Some perfect or imperfect *thing* in him. There wasn't anything. They had no clue what was wrong with him. I still don't know—I'll *never* know. (Then.) You think I'm miserable? I'll tell you what. I'm *beyond* fucking misery, okay? Because that's what happens after seven months they tell you your baby's dead. And you still have to give *birth* to it.

LILY

(Mewling.) I'm sorry! I am! ...But still if I thought, for like one second. One second. That there was a way to like *take* all that from you? And to like make it mine? I *would*.

ANGELICA

Don't say that. You don't know what it's like...

LILY

I'd steal your whole entire life. Even your misery.

(This is the worst of the realizations for LILY, the most truthful. ANGELICA's torn between leaving and staying.)

ANGELICA

(Beat.) Ah Jesus, Lily... I sorry I came over. I was just trying to help, you know?

LILY

You've known me for four years. You told me to buy a ticket and get out of here. *Now* you want to be my friend all the sudden?

ANGELICA

(Simply.) Yeah. I do.

LILY

You need to help yourself, Angelica. (Then.) Don't forget your *milk*.

ANGELICA

(Pause.) It's all I got. (Desperately.) You know? It's the only thing that's left of him. And if it helps people? And maybe if there's something... A way of something good? To come out of this? (Beat.) You're young, Lily. You're... (Unable to find a better, more accurate or reassuring way to say it.) You're really young.

(ANGELICA exits, leaving behind her mini cooler of breast milk and her pump. LILY moves to a light switch and slowly dims the light in the apartment.)

Scene 4.

The bedroom of HANK and ANGELICA's apartment. Very late at night. Outside, the sound of rain. Two French doors, open, lead to the living room. A second door, opposite, leads to CASSY's bedroom, shut. ANGELICA is in bed reading from a pile of baby books. HANK is still in work clothes, and *going-out* stuff. Drenched, he dismantles. He smokes a joint, pensively.

ANGELICA

Izzy quit?

HANK

Yeah. I mean, got fired. Or it's sort of both really, actually. I guess.

ANGELICA

What happened?

HANK

(Bemused.) ...I don't know. He didn't show up for work tonight. And then. Michael came by. Said some stuff. How he was letting him go, but. I think maybe he'd already told Michael? He was quitting or? I tried calling him. But his phone keeps going to this *number you have dialed, no longer in service* thing... (Then.) I think he might have gone back to Albania.

ANGELICA

You're kidding. (No response.) What did Michael say? Hank. (No response.) *Stoner?*

HANK

(Humorless.) He wants to make me manager.

ANGELICA

...Are you going to do it? (No response.) *Hank.*

HANK

(Irascible.) I don't know, alright?

(HANK extinguishes the joint.)

ANGELICA

Is that what you told him?

HANK

—Why don't we know more parents?

ANGELICA

(Sensing his distress.) ...I don't know.

HANK

Qe live in this fucking neighborhood—we're surrounded by kids and parents. And we don't know any of them.

ANGELICA

We've only lived here a couple—.

HANK

It doesn't matter. I don't like them. They're all snobs, I think. I know more Jamaican nannies than I know parents. My *best* friends are Jamaican nannies. (Then.) It's Jamaican me crazy mon!

(ANGELICA laughs exaggeratedly at the bad joke. HANK smiles wearily.)

HANK (CONT'D)

(Then.) I'm fucking lonely.

ANGELICA

(Softly.) ...Me too.

HANK

(Beat. Growing more desperate.) I mean, they like *imploded*. The two of them?

ANGELICA

(Sadly.) Yeah.

HANK

Is that why people get divorced you think? They get married, have kids, and then... Just implode? All at once like that? Like a crappy soufflé. And not just their relationship—they're *lives*.

ANGELICA

I don't know.

HANK

Like why are we even in New York, you know? I thought that today. Like why are we here? It's not like I'm ever gonna to be a comedian, you know? (Deeply sad.) I understand that.

ANGELICA

Hank...

HANK

I'm a restaurant manager. ...So why put up with all this crap?

ANGELICA

(Quietly.) Because we love the city.

HANK

When we used to live in it, right?

ANGELICA

We're still close.

HANK

When we used to go out more. See bands play. Get drunk on Tuesdays... (Mostly to himself.)
When we actually used to *know* each other...

ANGELICA

(Ibid.) We're still close. (HANK looks at her.) Only a few train stops away.

(HANK pulls off his jeans and belt, and drops them on the hard floor.)

ANGELICA

Shhh.

(HANK glowers intensely at ANGELICA. For a moment he looks as if he might break apart. Fully undressed, he stands in the middle of the room, only wearing a pair of child-like, super-hero underwear. He lets it go.)

HANK

These got small. I got fat.

ANGELICA

You look. Better than me. My ass is... *Out of control.*

HANK

(No enthusiasm behind it.) Out of control and awesome. (Observing.) You're not pumping.

(ANGELICA doesn't respond. HANK climbs onto the bed above the sheets.)

HANK (CONT'D)

Baby books?

ANGELICA

Lily gave them back to me. (Pause.) So what are you going to do? About Michael.

(HANK disparages this, *as if he has a choice.* ANGELICA goes back to reading. A moment. Then HANK rolls on top

of her. In missionary position he cradles her, burying his head into her pillow.)

ANGELICA

...Hank? Um Hank? (A moment.) *Hey.*

HANK

(Into the pillow.) *Yah?*

ANGELICA

Yeah. I'm trying to read...?

(HANK rolls off her, lays there. Maybe he's been weeping, but ANGELICA doesn't notice.)

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

(Apologizing.) It's just this section is. It's really um. I'm almost done...

HANK

That's okay. (Beat.) I haven't done that in a while. You know? Laid on you? Like put my weight, I mean. Because you were pregnant, and. I hadn't done it in a while is all.

(Silence. ANGELICA reads. HANK sits up in the bed. He steps out, and begins to clean the room. Picking up ANGELICA's clothes, horse toys, taking bed-side water glasses into the kitchen etc.)

ANGELICA

What are you doing?

HANK

Just gonna. Put some of this stuff away.

ANGELICA

Now? (Pause.) Honey, I'll do it in the morning.

HANK

No, I wanna do it now. I like, you know. Waking up to a clean apartment. In the morning.

(ANGELICA reads for another moment, then:)

ANGELICA

You know I want to, right? But I can't? I mean, it still hurts when I pee.

HANK

It wasn't trying to. Have sex with you. I wanted to lay on you is all.

ANGELICA

My breasts, they hurt though. And I threw away my pump.

HANK

—It's fine. (Pointedly.) Go back to *reading*.

ANGELICA

(Beat.) You don't have to do all that, really. I was going to do it in the—.

HANK

No, you weren't.

ANGELICA

What?

HANK

I said *no* you weren't. (Then.) It's okay. You don't have to pretend like you were going to clean something you're not.

(ANGELICA shuts the book, and steps out of bed. She begins quietly cleaning alongside HANK. Hank watches her. A moment passes.)

HANK (CONT'D)

Stop. You don't have to do it.

ANGELICA

You clearly want me to clean right now, so I'm going to clean right now.

HANK

That's not. I don't want you to do it.

ANGELICA

You do. You're pissed at me.

HANK

I just wanted to clean a little before I got in bed. I like a clean apartment in the morning.

ANGELICA

Well, I'm doing it now, so.

HANK

Well, I got dibs on this room, so? Why don't you get back in bed? Try and *read* your answer.

ANGELICA

My answer to *what*?

HANK

What else? *Why*. Why him? Why our baby? ...It's not gonna be in a fucking book, okay?

(Momentarily slammed by this.)

ANGELICA

I know that. I do. (Then.) That's not what I was reading. I was just seeing. What my chances are.

(ANGELICA begins to clean again.)

HANK

Hey stop. *Stop*.

ANGELICA

No, you want me to clean something so I'm going to. What should I clean?

HANK

Nothing. Get back in bed.

ANGELICA

(Firmly.) I'm cleaning *something*. Tell me what now.

HANK

Fine. Go clean the cat shit out of the litter box.

(ANGELICA exits the room for a moment. She comes back.)

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

It's already clean. The cat shit? It's already cleaned out.

HANK

I already did it yesterday. I forgot.

ANGELICA

You did that on purpose.

HANK

No I didn't.

ANGELICA

(Breaking.) YES YOU DID!

HANK
Whoa! Keep it down.

ANGELICA
You got something to say, then say it.

HANK
I don't have *anything* to say to you.

ANGELICA
You don't think I do enough? I don't clean enough?

HANK
You do plenty.

ANGELICA
You think I don't do anything at work. I sit around eating Bom Boms while you're such a fucking *martyr* here at home with Cassy?

HANK
What? I don't even know what a Bom Bom is.

ANGELICA
Admit it!

HANK
Admit what? You quit work! What's it matter what you used to do there?

ANGELICA
That you did that on purpose! So I'd see the clean cat box and I'd be ashamed.

HANK
Of course not!

ANGELICA
You want me to be ashamed! You know I'm not supposed to be around cat feces when I'm pregnant. You know I can't do it.

HANK
You're not pregnant anymore.

ANGELICA
(Beat.) So you did do it on purpose.

HANK

No, yes. I don't know. It doesn't matter. I just wanted to clean something.

ANGELICA

Why!

HANK

Because I miss it!

ANGELICA

(Then.) You hate my cat. You've always hated my cat.

(ANGELICA exits the bedroom.)

(The sounds of doors opening, first the apartment, then the building's to the outside. The rain grows audibly louder. After a moment, the sound of doors shutting, and ANGELICA reenters, damped by rain.)

HANK (CONT'D)

Where'd you go?

ANGELICA

You don't have to worry about the cat anymore.

HANK

What did you...? (Realizing.) Fuck, Angelica...

(HANK wraps a blanket around himself, and exits the bedroom. The storm outside grows audibly louder still, now punctuated with *thuds* and *thumps*.)

(Cassy cries out, awoken. ANGELICA moves towards her, but catches a glimpse of herself in a mirror on the wall. She inspects her body, her breasts, stomach etc. She begins to undress, tugging at her clothing, until she stands before the mirror completely nude.)

(HANK reenters silently, red whelps speckled across his body. He watches her for a moment.)

HANK

I can't find her. I don't know where she went. It's... *Hailing*. (Beat.) Chances of what?

(ANGELICA doesn't answer, but then HANK knows.)

ANGELICA

It was my fault.

(Cassy cries out. *Mommy...*)

HANK

No, it was me. I promised someone. My grandfather. That he could have him. If he left you with me.

ANGELICA

It was me...

(*Daddy...*)

(HANK wraps ANGELICA in the blanket and they take to the ground. He rises to go calm Cassy. ANGELICA pulls him back to her.)

HANK

I'm gonna get Cassy.

ANGELICA

Don't. She'll go back to sleep. Lay down. Put your weight on me.

(HANK lays down on top of ANGELICA.)

(Wrapped in the blanket, clinically, they shed their underwear.)

(They have silent sex while Cassy cries out. Hail falls.)

END OF PLAY

