How I Got Pluto-5/27

by

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 Cast of Characters

HARX-Average, nerdish, horribly sentimental, earnest---

BETSY-Beauty, charming, graceful-female—

MARILYN- Outspoken, mega movie star-female –

DAVEY- Small, nervous-male—

SCOTTY-Big, kind, country, very blue collar-male-

DOUG-Wiry, smooth operator-male-

JEANNIE-Nice, deferential-female-

ERIC-Ancient hippy, earnest, stoner-male—

KEITH- Homosexual, a little defensive-male—

OZ-Evangelical, showman, bully-male—

BOB-In charge, good guy, the class president-male

DEBORAH-Willowy, wary, strong-female-

JIMMY- Small, perhaps a little over weight-male-

PEGGY- Small, pleasant. Jimmy’s wife.-female-

LIEN-Young, Asian-female (20 years old)- No lines

RICHARD- Boogier- no lines

9 men, 5 women- speaking

All but LIEN are 57 or 58 years old (or should be able to play that age). All are Caucasian but LIEN as well.

Place

An upscale party hall patio

Time

July 2, 2010

ACT I Scene 1 I-i-1

Setting: *The patio area outside of an upscale partyhouse/dance hall venue. Perhaps even a country club. Up center there are double doors that open into the dancing, main ballroom area offstage. There are four sets of nice metal patio furniture spread across the stage. One is far down right, two are centered on either side of the door, and the final is down left. There are several sconces that will be lit later to help indicate evening lighting.*

 \_\_\_\_doors\_\_\_\_

 2 3

1 4 *The two on the side are out of the main light but must occasionally be subtly illuminated when action occurs there. Song “Come Together” comes up with lights up*

At Rise: *Sunset at a 40th high school reunion. Back double doors are open and light pours in, maybe even a mirror ball. At the downright table sits a barely lit woman, smoking in the dark. MARILYN --Table number #1--, Down left--at table number #4-- sit DAVEY, DOUG and SCOTTY—SCOTTY is upstage at the table in the corner. HARX is sitting at Table #3 nursing a drink. The back doors are open.:. RICHARD enters and briefly boogies around the stage by himself. RICHARD exits as BETSY enters*

 *( Lights cross faintly to table #3)*

 *(“Come Together” goes out when she enters and closes the UC door.* BETSY is immaculate. High school A-list and is still, beautiful, classy and demure. Smiling. HARX is nervous and rarely still and does not sit until the final monologue of this scene)

 BETSY

Well. How are you?

 (They embrace)

 HARX (Nervous)

My gosh, it’s so good to see you. I’d hoped you would make it. BETSY

I didn’t think I was going to, but I did. HARX

I heard about your brother passing recently. I’m so sorry.

 BETSY

Thank you.

 HARX

Have you been here in town since the funeral?

 BETSY

No, I went back home for a week. I had already bought the plane ticket for this weekend and I had things to do in Denver.

 (BETSY sits at TABLE #3)

 I-i-2

 BETSY(cont)

I can’t believe we’ve been out of here for 40 years.

 HARX (Sitting at TABLE #3, grinning and staring)

My gosh. I am so glad you made it.

 BETSY

I kept planning on coming back for the other reunions. But something always got in the way. “This time for sure” I said. Annie Bradford passed right after the last one and I decided I needed to see my old friends again before I lost any more or before they lost me.

 HARX

 So…can I get you a drink or something?

 BETSY HARX

No. I’m fine. Who else is here? How long have you been in town? Have you

 Seen anybody else?

 (Both laugh politely)

 BETSY

Couple hours…you’re the first. I just stepped in the door. I said “Hi” to Becky and Bob. Got my little name tag at the check in desk.

 HARX

That’s where I saw you were coming. (Pointing to TABLE#4) I think that’s Davey Willis over there with Scotty and Doug.

 BETSY (Indicating TABLE #1)

Who’s that in the corner over there?

 HARX

I don’t know…I didn’t even see anyone when I came in (Leans toward TABLE #1 squinting) Ohhh my Gosh!

 BETSY

Is that…?

 HARX

That might be.

 BETSY (Whispers)

That’s Marilyn. I never thought *she* would show up to one of these. Has she ever come before?

 HARX

No…no. I certainly didn’t know she was coming this time either.

 BETSY

You remember that time she got up in that crabapple tree by the back entrance to the high school? Way up at the top and she started peltin’ people?

 HARX

Yeah. She was a nut!

 BETSY

High school and she’s climbing trees. I was in miniskirts and bouffants. Not her. She didn’t care. That must be what it takes to make it big in the world. She never cared a bit.

 (An uncomfortable silence)

 HARX

So…uhm…tell me about things for you in the last forty years.

 I-i-3

 BETSY

I’m divorced. I did get two terrific kids out of the marriage though. You?

 HARX

No. Scared to death of women.

 BETSY

Maybe you were just shy.

 HARX

Nooo. It’s not just shy. Terrified. (Silence) Nice night out.

 BETSY

Beautiful. Well…(She starts to rise)

 HARX

(Blurting out) My gosh. I’m talkin’ about the weather to the prettiest girl in our class. I told you. I wasn’t any good with girls. I could never have gotten up enough courage to call girls… are you kidding?. Man! I tried to…all the time. Call ‘em, I mean. Actually though, once I tried to call you up on the phone to ask *you* to one of the dances. I had *file cards* all written out and laid over my bed with what I thought would be perfect responses. I never called, though. I mean, I called but I always hung up when it started ringing. Actually, I did that a lot.

 BETSY (Pretending to be angry)

That was you? My whole family thought the phone was busted. Daddy went out and got a new telephone. He honestly thought there was a short in the ringer.

 HARX

M’sorry.

 (A moment)

 BETSY (Cautiously)

I remember you. You were the little boy with the yo-yo that lit up. Was that about sixth grade maybe? (Sensuously) Duncan Butterfly, right? You made that thing jump all over. I was swooning.

 HARX

No, no that wasn’t me.

 BETSY

Squirt gun guy at the pool in the summer, then?

 HARX

No, that definitely wasn’t me. Mom wouldn’t let me take swimming lessons because she was afraid I’d catch polio. I didn’t swim until I was 20.

 BETSY (Painfully embarrassed)

 I’m sorry…I don’t (Whispering) I don’t know who you are.

 HARX

OH…Oh I’m sorry…You don’t remember…Well I…I…I…I…I …I mean I just…in my head…of course you don’t. I mean…look at you…you’re Betsy and uh… (nothing)

(BETSY just smiles at him. He still hasn’t introduced himself)

. MARILYN (From out of the darkness)

I think you should take her now and just kiss the living hell right out of her.

 BETSY(Smiling)

Hi, Marilyn.

 I-i-4

 MARILYN

Hi Betsy… (In an alluring voice) Hi, Harmon.

 BETSY

Harmon?

 HARX

Hello Marilyn…North…Miss North. (To BETSY) She’s really very nice in person isn’t she?

 MARILYN (Snorting)

Oh, for God’s sake.

 BETSY

Oh, God. Harmon, I’m so sorry. I don’t recognize anybody anymore.

 HARX

(Fumbling around under his sweater) I’m sorry. I had my nametag hidden.

 BETSY

(Reading) Harx. What happened?

 HARX

What?

 BETSY

I didn’t recognize anything about you..

 HARX

Yeah, I used to look like Jerry Lewis. No more white socks.

BETSY

You let the hems on your pants down and…

 HARX

And I got rid of the buck teeth too. (A moment) But I still got the horned rim glasses.

 BETSY

Well, you look well.

 HARX

Thank you. (Not sarcastically) I’ve matured a little…I guess I would in forty years …

 BETSY

Harmon Harx, (shaking her head) My…My word…how are you?

 HARX

Good. Very good, now. You know the first time I saw you? Mrs. Perry’s class. I was in there. In fifth grade when you moved in.

 BETSY

 (Another awkward moment.. nodding) Ahh..

 HARX

( A moment) You still have no idea who…

 BETSY

(Interrupting) No, not a clue. Harmon Harx ?... (Trying to remember, finally, shakes her head)

 HARX

Marx. Harmon Marx…I was..named after a baseball player.

 BETSY

Ah.

 HARX

Harmon Killebrew. He was pretty famous. You follow baseball?

 I-i-5

 BETSY

No…not like I should.

 HARX

Well, I was the morning announcement guy in high school. Over the loudspeaker and I sold candy and ice cream at lunchtime behind the counter…

 BETSY

No...

 HARX (Turns away)

Sorry …

 BETSY

(Silence…in desperation) I saw lightening bugs last night after I got in. Not a bunch; they didn't fill the sky like they used to. Just a couple. Remember when we were very young, catching them and squishing their lit-up tails into faces on maple leaves and then waving the weird happy face things around in the darkness?

 HARX

Yeah! Dogs ran around loose in the neighborhood and one time "Rebel", the dog next door, saw my little leaf and he freaked. Just blew his mind. Barkin’ and snapping at it. Looking back, I can’t say that I blame him. If you think about it, that was a hellish thing to do to a bug...

 BETSY

I miss this time of the summer from back then. Cicadas at twilight. Free from school and carefree. But there was respect. Respect of moms and dads, policemen, the neighbors and their lawns and bees. Bees all over the clover.

HARX

We still went through barefooted and somebody in the gang always had a swollen, stung foot, though.

 BETSY

But , mom and dad are gone, the bees are gone, we don't respect the policemen, and we don't know the neighbors. What we *have* got is the internet! I think I'm gonna go say hello to the neighbors in person tomorrow. If I don't come back online for awhile, one of them probably shot me. Happy Fourth of July. (Looks at HARX intently trying to figure something out)

 HARX

(After a moment) What?

 BETSY

(Looks at him in the eyes) Where did you go to college?

 HARX

What?

 BETSY

You *do* look like somebody I should know. (Trying to remember) Marx…Marx…

 HARX

I stayed in town and went to State. Stayed at Sig Ep . Sigma Phi Epsilon...frat house.

 BETSY (Realizing)

You *were* a good kisser.

 I-i-6

 MARILYN (From the dark again)

Told ya.

 HARX

Again, probably thinking of somebody else. Mom wouldn’t let me start on that either until I was 20…

 BETSY

No…it was you. Eddie. Sig Ep was my sorority’s brother fraternity. We had a buncha dances and mixers together. You went by Eddie in college, didn’t you?

 HARX

(Quietly) Yeah..

 BETSY

We went out a couple of times.

 HARX

Yeah.

 BETSY

I had no idea you were somebody named “Harmon” from high school….There were 700 kids in our graduating class, but still. (Suddenly hugging him) HOW ARE YOU! Why didn’t I know this…? I had no idea you went to my high school.

 HARX

I wasn’t real proud of being a geek. Kind of wanted to change everything and forget about high school. Assume a new identity. I always wanted to ask you, do you think we could have…I mean why didn’t things go anywhere?

 BETSY

Between me and you….?

 HARX

Yeah.

 BETSY

Guess I never really thought about it.

 HARX

Oh, okay.

 BETSY

No I didn’t mean it like that. I... I jus’ I just never really recognized…that potential in…us.

 HARX

I had a crush on you. I thought maybe you knew.

 BETSY

Well, in my own defense, girls weren’t supposed to do the asking back then, remember?

 HARX

They’ve always let guys know, though.

 BETSY

I don’t…. honestly know, then, why it never went beyond those couple of dates. I had a great time with you. You were very funny and sweet as I remember. There was one session we steamed up the windshield in your car pretty good.

 HARX (Nodding)

I remember. If I would have been persistent you think you might have fallen for me?

 I-i-7

 BETSY

Well, sure. Maybe.

 HARX

I don’t think so.

 BETSY

I don’t know why not.

 HARX (Out of nowhere)

Have you ever loved anybody?

 (The mood turns awkward again)

 BETSY

Uhh…I don’t know…I guess sort of.

 HARX

No please, I’m sorry.

 BETSY

That’s okay.

 HARX

I’m cool. I mean…40 years…I’m not going to do anything to you. I guess I kind of “went in for the kill”. M’sorry. Ever since I heard your brother died, I knew you’d be in town for that and the reunion and I’ve been planning and anticipating talking to you again. Don’t worry, I’m not a stalker or anything.

 BETSY (Smiling)

 You were in high school. What’s changed?

 HARX

I did kind of pop out of places at you, didn’t I? I just liked you.

 BETS

Alarming, ghastly young man.

 HARX

M’sorry

 BETSY (Smiling)

Every girl needs a creep.

 HARX

You can tell when you are loved by somebody, y’know.

 BETSY

Have you ever even *heard* of flirting?

 MARILYN

Or foreplay?

 BETSY

Marilyn! Can *I* do this?

 MARILYN

Suit yourself. I’d’ve had the hook out and the scales off by now, though.

 HARX (Oblivious)

What?

 I-i-8

 BETSY

Nothing. How can you tell?

 (BETSY is not really listening, she studies HARX’S face during the following speech)

 HARX

Each other’s eyes are always laughing. Past doesn’t matter. It doesn’t matter what everybody thinks of the person you’re with. As long as your eyes say “I understand you…I care about you.”

 BETSY(Softly)

I *do* remember “Harmon”. You had those Roy Clark, NASCAR, muttonchops sideburns.

HARX

Those weren’t my fault. Everybody had those.

 BETSY

Pointy ones. And you had big, brown eyes and a nice little smile. I *did* notice you in high school. HARX

Thank you

 BETSY (A little surprised)

I kinda really did. Notice you, notice you.

 HARX

But I wasn’t one of the cool guys.

 BETSY

Good for you. We just didn’t run with the same crowds.

 HARX

Nope. That’s for sure.

 BETSY

Too bad.

 HARX

Yeah.

 BETSY

Did you see that in your wife’s eyes?

 HARX

Oh…I never married.

 BETSY

I thought I’d heard from a sorority quarterly or sister or something that “Eddie” had a family.

 HARX

We never officially married, though. We had a son. He’s gone now.

 BETSY

I’m so sorry.

 HARX

Well, he wanted to be in the army. He went to Iraq. You see somebody there in front of you one minute the next day they’re gone. BETSY

Is your wife here tonight?

 I-i-9

 HARX

No, no she’s gone now too. She had… drugs’n stuff. And her heart went out. BETSY

Oh...

 HARX

What about you?

 BETSY

Well…you know I dated Ted Hale off and on a lot. And we finally got married in 1975.

 HARX

Yes, I knew.

 BETSY

We got divorced.

 HARX

Mm-hm.

 BETSY

Not a nice man as it turned out.

 (HARX stares at her, BETSY smiles)

What are you looking at?

 HARX

I was thinking about when I first saw you.

 BETSY

Miss Perry’s class?

 HARX

Yeah. Fifth grade. When you got introduced on your first day.

 BETSY

I was so nervous.

 HARX

You came in and I saw your face. It was like…when you first see a painting or something. And it was the one time that you see art and for some reason, this time, you get it…you get it right off the bat, y’know? You see the painting and you immediately can see the emotion and the intent and how the artist must have felt. Every stroke and every effort. Every vision and the story behind each of them. And you look at it and it (Gasps in a quick breath) takes your breath away.

Your eyes well up, you choke back a little, and you can’t talk over the kind of emotion in your throat. I saw your face and I cried. Tears…in my eyes. Fifth grade. I didn’t even know your name.

(They do not take their eyes from each others eyes)

 BETSY

Ohhh…

 HARX

No really… I think you…might have been…kind of the love of my life.

 BETSY (Amazed, speechless)

Ohh…

 I-i-10

 HARX

Ever since.

 BETSY

My…

 HARX

Yeah.

 BETSY

You probably shouldn’t have waited so long to say all of this. Because I’m pretty sure I would have given you a couple more dates.

HARX

(Eyes are not locked anymore)Yeah. I’ve thought about telling you this the next time I saw you every day. Kind of why I’m flying at you right now. Cause I know I lose my nerve and if I don’t do it now, I won’t do it tomorrow. And I’ll be waiting until..

 BETSY

I just don’t know what to say.

 HARX (Very earnestly)

Thank you.

 BETSY

 Why are you thanking me?

 HARX

Well, I don’t know what else to do. I’ve been dreaming of you for 40 years and it always stops right about now.

 BETSY

You dream about me? What do I say in the dreams?

 HARX

Well sometimes you rush into my arms and tell me you have been thinking about me too every night. And sometimes you kind of laugh and turn away and run off giggling. Sometimes you just ..poof.. disappear.

 BETSY

Hmh.

 HARX

Sometimes you get mad. And start hitting me on the head with a shoe. And then I’m sad because I don’t ever see you again and I hate myself for telling you in the first place.

 BETSY

No, well. I won’t hit you.

 HARX

And sometimes you just stand there and very gracefully smile and take my arm. And then we go marching in this strange parade that’s going on right outside the door.

 BETSY (Whispering)

That’s nice.

 HARX (He rises and takes her hand)

Don’t wake me up. Okay? It’s really kind of a good one this time.

 BETSY (Smiles…puts her hand in his)

Yes. It is. Isn’t it?

 I-i-11

 *(BETSY AND HARX EXIT up center as the lights cross fade to down left. The Beatles “Long and Winding Road” comes up when they open the door and stays up until the lights come up on DAVEY, DOUG AND SCOTTY still sitting at TABLE #4. Music out)*

DOUG

We get a bad rap.

 DAVEY

About what?

 DOUG

Our age. Generation. For everything.

 DAVEY (Drunk)

How d’ya figure?

 DOUG (Drunk)

We got blamed for screwin’ everything up. Our generation did.

 DAVEY

But we *did s*crew it up.

 DOUG

No. Now listen. (Intensely) Listen to me. You listenin’?

 DAVEY

Yep. Nope.

DOUG

Listen. We didn’t have any instruction. We didn’t get the rules. Things never happened before since we of our age have been in charge. And they blamed us for everything goin’ south. Rampant divorce rates…for example

 DAVEY

True. Rampant.

 DOUG

Public high school was new for our generation. Drugs were everywhere and that was new. We were losers in a war for the first time during our generation. We were the first ones who lost a war.

 DAVEY

Yeah.

 DOUG

And AIDS, that was new. Gay people suddenly everywhere. And women! They wanted to be equal. Abortions every day. They just *ran* out of the kitchens where they were told they belonged. And religion got really shitty. Used to go to church and at least learn to be nice and the golden rule. Once a week we little kids practiced being grownups. Respecting people. You know? Now all the preachers want is your money and to sell politics. That all happened in our generation and they

 I-i-12

 DOUG (CONT.)

blame *us* for messin’ up the world. But we didn’t have no instruction manuals on how to fix things right, you know?

 DAVEY
I know it was... you know…You’re really, really smart when you’ve been drinking.

 DOUG
I KNOW, RIGHT? I’m a complete dumbass when I’m sober.

 DAVEY

I KNOW!

 DOUG

There is…considerable befuddlement in the state of our world today. It has such an inexplicably dark disposition. I always fear, now. (Suddenly to DAVEY) You think she’ll come tonight?

 DAVEY

Who? Deb? She can if she wants to. Part of me kinda hopes she does.

 DOUG

We always thought you two would be together forever. What happened?

DAVEY.

A few months after I got over there she sent a letter sayin’, “I’m knocked up and the kid is yours”.

 DOUG

Yeah?

 DAVEY

Sucked.

 DOUG

The whole time you were in Nam she was with a college guy back home?

 DAVEY

Some grad assistant for the music department. That just gutted me when I found out. I thought we were so close.

 DOUG

I do not abide faithlessness well. DAVEY

Then she got an abortion while I was still overseas. Didn’t tell me. I didn’t even know what an abortion *was*, back then. She dumped me in a letter. Then after I got stateside she showed up one day at my parent’s front door sayin’ the guy left her and wanted to talk about getting back together. She was almost on her knees. I looked at her and she might as well have been trying to sell me encyclopedias. There was nothing there.

 DOUG

I don’t know man.

 DAVEY

I just closed the door.

 I-i-13 DOUG(Not listening)

Yeah.

 DAVEY

Y’see after she’d left, I moved in with my parents and I got a job and started hanging out at bars and stuff. Got in my own zone. Never heard from her again until years later. I’d see her different places around town off and on for years. She came to mom’s funeral and when she showed up there, *then* I went after her. Just let her have it. Twenty some years later and issues have a while to ferment, you know? I jus’ lit her up.

 DOUG

My ex wasn’t any better.

 DAVEY

Man, this night is gonna be depressing, isn’t it?

 DOUG

You’re making me *more* melancholy and I was already suicidal. I just came here to drown for free. You know, if it’s any consolation, I always thought our whole class was socially retarded.

(DOUG Gets up and goes to the doorway. A long moment while he looks in the other room and steadies himself on the doorway).

 SCOTTY

I was in the 1st cavalry for a while. Central highlands.

 DAVEY

You guys caught some shit, didn’t you? Where were you?

 SCOTT

Dak Pek. Most of the bad stuff was before I got there. I was supply anyway.

 (DOUG waves to MARILYN indicates offer to grab a beer for her)

 DOUG (To SCOTTY and DAVEY)

You guys want another beer?

 DAVEY

Yeah, whatever’s easy.

 (DOUG EXITS..NO Music…crowd chatter.)

 SCOTTY

There was this one girl. She was a Montangard. Did laundry for me and my guys. French Vietnamese girl. Just the prettiest little thing. Just a doll. I was a big ol’ Dumbo.. But for some reason, she warmed on to me.

 (SCOTTY takes a picture from his wallet, shows it to DAVEY)

 DAVEY

She’s beautiful, Scotty.

 I-i-14 SCOTTY

We were together for almost six months until I got shipped home. I guess I didn’t appreciate. She was there with me; then she was gone. When I got home, I was lost. I read months later how the company where I was collapsed and everyone was getting out all the way to Tuy Hoa. Route one, along the coast. All those refugees and no exodus cover. I was scared she was among them. I couldn’t get away from the dreams and how she cried out to me in there. So I sold my car then and everything I had. I hitched to Alaska, got a gig on a tanker to Tokyo. Then I got on another black market ship that took me back into…

 DAVEY

You went back? You went back into Vietnam as a civilian?

 SCOTTY

When I got to Tuy Hoa the plan was to hire a couple of mercenaries to take me back up the river while the rest of the world was buggin’ out comin’ down. When I was in Viet Nam the first time as an enlisted man, I never saw no action. I didn’t do no combat at all. I was in supply. But when I came back after her as a civilian, the third night out we was attacked. They weren’t Cong or NV. They was a buncha kids tryin’ to steal our shit and they got caught. It was so dark. It all got confused and uh….I…They kept comin’ back at us and I killed one of ‘em, with my hands. The next morning we got to her village. They moved it up closer the Ho Chi Minh trail to support the final assault on Saigon. They did that. They’d Shanghai a whole village and turned them people into slaves. The guys I hired wanted their money and I give it to them and when they left my 22 year old white ass was in probably the most dangerous spot on the face of the earth that it could be in. I’m not kiddin’. I was standin’ there in the teeth of a dragon. I was a visitor in hell. I was dumber than hell too. I went on up after her. I climbed through brush and

over mountains. I moved at dusk and dawn. Once, I didn’t move for three hours I thought I’d heard something else moved behind me. Finally, I come up on this rise and I looked over and saw this beautiful valley and people down there workin’ in the fields…in the rice. And honest to God (Right to DAVEY) I think I see her. Even from up there and from the back I KNOW it’s her. I start to go down out of the cover and then all of a sudden I’m on my knees again. I’m on my knees and there’s a click of a rifle bolt to back of my head.

 DAVEY (Whispering)

Jesus.

 SCOTTY

He’s talking all kinds of Vietnamese jibberish and he’s just really mad at me. But I recognize his voice. (Back to DAVEY) Can you believe that? I turned around and by the grace of God it’s her brother, Benjamin. His face fell and he grabbed me and held me on the ground.

“What are you doing here?” he said.

 “I came back, I told Lien I’d come back for her.”

“Are you insane?! Do you know what they would do if they saw you? They would shoot you and me and her and everybody else and burn everything down.”

“Can I see her?”

“No!”

“Just for a moment?”

“No! Go home, Scotty. There is still a war going on here”.

 I-i-15

 SCOTTY (CONT)

 (A moment) So I sat there. After giving up everything I had in the world in order to get there I just sat there. After coming 8700 miles by myself. I sat there and I watched her. After killing that little boy. I sat there and I watched her…from 25 yards away.

 “Benjamin,” I said to him. “Does she talk about me at all? Does she ever remember me at all?” “Always” he said. “And you are so lucky. Because you will live the rest of your life knowing that a woman absolutely…utterly loved you.” (Sadly, with irony) I’m lucky. So lucky.

 (*Lights cross to up center),* DOUG enters holding six beer bottles, props the door open, sets some of the beers down (*“Candles in the Rain” starting with “We all caught the same disease, we all sang the same songs of peace* comes up.. by Melanie*)* …takes one to TABLE #1 to Marilyn.)

 BOB (On Microphone)

Ladies and gentleman. I have a request from Jackie and Jeffrey:

 DOUG (Laughing)

I gotta a request right here, Buddy.

 BOB (At the doorway)

We have a request from our senior prom king and queen to play their favorite song from our graduating year. (Waves at a few people) Eric!!! How are you. Guys listen!! Turn off the music would ya? Eric and his wife…? (*Music out)*

 (DOUG returns for the other beers, waits and listens with the door open)

 ERIC (Off)

Angela!

 BOB

All the way from …

 ERIC (Loudly)

Mars. Fucking Mars man. I been livin’ on Mars for forty years with Angela Jenero.

 BOB

Well…maybe you two extraterrestrials…

 (DOUG crosses to TABLE #1 with the other beers)

 ERIC

Don’t you damned dare. We ain’t dancin’.

 BOB

…can have the next special request dance.

 ERIC

You put her within five foot of somebody and tell her to dance, she’ll put you inna hospital.

 BOB

Nope. Too late. Seriously…where from?

 ERIC

Woodrow, Alaska.

 I-i-16

 DOUG

Same difference.

 ERIC

Damn right. Mars—-Alaska…Tell me about it.

 BOB

 Next one is yours. Hit it! (EXITS)

 ERIC (EXITS behind BOB)

Keith….Fifi!!!

(*Far down right lights come up a little on MARILYN AT TABLE #1. Song: “All Right now” comes up a little.* RICHARD busts in dancing wildly, boogies quickly to all tables, picks up DOUG, who starts a conga line and then they exits.. JEANNIE Enters, closes the doors, the music goes out. She sees MARILYN and crosses to her)

 JEANNIE

My golly, how are you?! Marilyn North. (Points to herself) Jeannie Pricer…Do you remember me? I was Jeannie Goforth. Good gravy. Thee Marilyn North movie star sitting all by herself.

 MARILYN

Oh please. Don’t wet your knickers, Jeannie. (Smiles. Hugs) We played clarinets in band right next to each other for three years. Sit down.

 JEANNIE

What are you doing out here sitting here all alone?

 MARILYN

Getting’ a smoke. Want one?

 JEANNIE

No, no. Thank you

 MARILYN

Its undeniable that I am singlehandedly keeping RJ Reynolds in business these days.

 JEANNIE

Good gosh. Not as good a turnout as I’d hoped.

 MARILYN

I don’t think it’s too bad considering I thought we’d all be dead by fifty.

 JEANNIE

I was surprised to hear about Bobbie Hathaway.

 MARILYN

I don’t remember him.

 JEANNIE

Her…she hadda heart attack scuba diving in Florida. Three weeks ago. And then Howie Gerber died too.

 MARILYN

Don’t remember him either.

 I-i-17

 JEANNIE

And now both Donald and Daniel Rozier are gone.

 MARILYN

The twins? Yeah, I remember Dan Rozier. Cutie…we went out once or twice. What happened to him?

 JEANNIE

A plane he was on crashed in Scotland. Years ago.

 MARILYN

I didn’t know that.

 JEANNIE

This your first time back, huh?

 MARILYN (Off in thought about Don)

Hmh…. (To herself) Just gone now? (Takes a sip of beer) So, what’s your story?

 JEANNIE

Well, I had a boy and a girl.

 MARILYN

Kids…? And somebody banged you twice? Good girl.

 JEANNIE

A boy and a girl. Jeremy and Danielle.

 MARILYN

Did you marry somebody in our class?

 JEANNIE

No no. He’s from Minnesota. He stayed there. We have 5 grand children

 MARILYN

Oh, my God. Are you opening up that cell phone to show me pictures? Oh, God you are.

 JEANNIE

Just look.

 MARILYN

Those are your grandchildren? They’re hideous.

 JEANNIE

Oh, that’s the picture of the whippets. They have whippets.

 MARILYN (Looks again)

THOSE are your grandkids? They’re hideous too.

 JEANNIE

I know. They’re just as nasty as they look. One of them made fun of my little moustache one time when I was sick. He made fun of it on Facebook and when I told him Gramma didn’t like that he told me not to get so “butt hurt” over it. Nine years old. I told my daughter and she shrugged like she didn’t know what to do.

 MARILYN

That’s exactly why I don’t breed.

 JEANNIE

Our parents would have ripped our arms off and beaten us over the head with them if we’d have talked to our grandparents like that.

 I-i-18

 MARILYN

Hell, yeah. My grandfather would have hit me with a shovel and buried me in the back yard. JEANNIE

Kids suck.

 (TARRENCE/aka OZ opens the doors and stands, Moves toward MARILYN. *The doors are left open no music*) MARILYN

I’ve never even considered...(Sighs) Ohhhh… flame my ass. He’s actually coming over this time.

 JEANNIE (Turns around in her chair)

Who? What?

 MARILYN

Oz. He’s been gapin’ at me since I got here. He and his people have been trying to squeeze me into some property scheme of some kind for months.

 JEANNIE

Should I leave?

 MARILYN

Stay put. You’re good.

 OZ (Crosses to TABLE #1)

Hello Marilynn Keller North. If I may?

MARILYN

Knock yourself out.

 JEANNIE (Starting to get up)

Well I just wanted to stop by and say…

 MARILYN (To JEANNIE)

Sit. Stay (MARILYN frowns, shakes her head to tell her not to leave. Jeannie re-sits.) So, what’s up Tarrence?

 OZ (Sits)

Please, call me Oz. Please. Well, first of all, let me say, I really have to screw up my courage to talk to a big star like this. As you all probably know, my people have been trying to get in touch with you all about an opportunity that might benefit both of us.

 MARILYN

Yeah, I heard. I was busy.

 OZ

Perhaps, if I could take just a moment of this time, in a relaxed atmosphere, without our being confined to a formalized business situation…

 MARILYN

Just talk.

 OZ

Now I have admired your creative art for years and I wonder if you’ve ever considered…if you might consider… I’ll be upfront. A token that would support our ministries? But it will benefit *you too*! Now I know this seems abrupt, but I have been trying get in touch with you for forever it seems and this opportunity may not be available for much longer. I’ll cut right to it. We are both celebrities locally and you are an astute business woman. That is obvious. Well, let me

 I-i-19

 OZ (CONT.)

preface all this by telling you what has happened to me since our high school days. You have heard of our great Ministry of God to the Worlds?

 MARILYN

Christian Taliban. Right.

 OZ (Oblivious to the last comment)

We are headquartered in Paducah, Kentucky and are affiliated with PZ ministries in Austin, Texas that reaches an audience of several million people every Sunday morning and Monday, Wednesday and Friday for on air Bible study.

 MARILYN

You sound like Colonel Sanders.

 OZ

I began this ministry shortly after my sophomore year in college when Jesus visited me in my bed one night and told me (Into an evangelical cadence) “Mend your ways and heal thyself” so

that I could be whole again in his spirit and tend to the sorrows and healings of those around me. From that time nearly 38 years ago, we’ve saved more souls than stars in His glorious firmament and have just begun to do His work in this great country of ours and…

 MARILYN

So, God saved you huh? I always wondered what happened. Cause I remember you from junior high school and you were nothing but an ugly assed beast fucker back then.

 JEANNIE (Whispering)

Oh my golly, Marilyn.

 MARILYN

Relax, there won’t be any lightning bolts. Right, Reverend Oz?

 OZ

Of course, not.

 MARILYN

At least not until you get a check. (Silence) You know that’s not gonna happen, right? Cause Hollywood doesn’t give a lot of money to Republicans.

 OZ

Well, if I could have a moment to visit with you. I can be very persuasive.

 (A moment, they stare at one another)

 MARILYN

Free country. Persuade away. (OZ begins to speak and she interrupts again, to JEANNIE) You know this guy’s state representatives in his district have, in the last 8 years, one went to jail for raping a babysitter, one got busted for embezzlement, one crooked Republican bastard got kicked in the nuts by a donkey and died. That one cracks me up. Y’know? The symbolism? And the other guy ran for governor and they loved him so much he got shot at.

 OZ

Those gentlemen were…

 I-i-20

 MARILYN

I’ll bet you voted for all of them, Oz. What kind of company you keepin’? You condone that kind of behavior, do you? (Silence) When you overlook a miserable politician…after a while, I don’t worry about them. I’m starting to wonder what kind of person *you* are. Okay, Beastboy, make me swoon. (Locks her lips.)

 OZ

Exactly! That’s what I was. A beast. But God saved me.

 MARILYN

From what? What I want to know is who saved guys like Jimmy Finnegan and Keith Howard and some of the others you bullied in back in school.

 OZ

(A moment, starts to get up)Oh well maybe this may not have …

 MARILYN

Keith is here somewhere. So’s Jimmy. We oughta get ‘em over here. I’d like to see if they think I should help you out. You used to call Keith, Fifi. Right? (Yells out) Hey Fifi!! (To JEANNIE) Go get him.

OZ (Rising)

That’s quite alright. Don’t trouble yourselves. We can..

 JEANNIE

Oh Marilyn. He’s such a nice…

 MARILYN (To OZ)

Where you going’? Thought you wanted my attention.

 OZ

Of course.

 (OZ Smiles again patiently, sits)

 MARILYN (To JEANNIE)

I talked to him. He *wants* me to bring him over

 JEANNIE

But he’s a very….

 (KEITH appears at the door)

 MARILYN

Keith. Hey Feef…sit down. Join us, wontcha?

 KEITH

 Okay.

 (KEITH closes the door and crosses to the table. Sits. Sullen, a little defiant. Not looking up)

 MARILYN

You remember everybody?

 OZ

Hello…

 I-i-21 KEITH

Keith Howard.

 OZ

Hi…Tarrence Austin Akers. (Extends hand) You can call me Oz. I really don’t remember too much…too many of you. It was such a huuuuuuge class…

 KEITH

I know *your* name.

 (Silence)

 MARILYN

So. Oz . You were just telling us about yourself and your plans for the Christian tomorrow.

 OZ

I was…Well…Keith… We were discussing some exciting potentials and…

 KEITH (Calmly)

You know, I hated you almost all of my life.

 MARILYN

Hmh…who knew?

 OZ

I’m sorry. I can’t imagine what...Are you sure you are speaking to the right...?

KEITH (Sarcastically)

I appreciate the apology. Do you remember anything about what you used to do to me?

 OZ

As I was saying to sister Marilyn here…

 MARILYN

I ain’t your sister, Yacko.

 OZ

( An uncomfortable moment) School days…Such a long time ago. I…just don’t remem…

 KEITH (Quietly, not brave enough to look at OZ)

I don’t understand. When people do things to other people and when they offend those people, why don’t they own what they’ve done? You got your sense of humor at my expense every day. You chased me through the halls and knocked my books away, knocked them down the stairs. Knocked ME down the stairs. You tripped me and pushed me around, took my wallet, took my money out and threw the wallet in the toilet. And then made me out to be the bad guy, because I tried to get a teacher’s help to get you off of me. I “can’t take a little joke”? Everybody laughed because we were running so hard for our lives. Me and the little guys. It wasn’t fair, you were so much bigger than us. You broke a window with my elbow.

 OZ

I was just having a little…

 KEITH (Louder)

What? A little fun?! You ran me… down the middle… of the hallways. Like a head of cattle. Everybody laughed. Every day. Nobody would help me. Every day, you threatened to beat me.

 OZ

I’m sorry if that upset you.

 I-i-22

 KEITH (Angry)

That’s NOT an apology. An apology is “I’m sorry that *I* did something bad to you. I’m sorry *I* said something to you.” But “Sorry, you didn’t like the humiliation” doesn’t work as an apology for me. How do you defend it?

 OZ

What?

 KEITH (truly amazed)

Threatening people, hurting people, stealing, bullying! And then dodging your cowardice by hiding behind religion.

 OZ

I was young. I sinned. This is true.

 KEITH

And then in later years I started seeing where you published books about psychology and Christ. Christ? You? “That can’t be the same guy,” I thought. But it was. And then God gave you a TV show, book deals, and websites. And I listened to your lies on TV and you would ask, and cry and weep and beg for money. Money from the sickly and the foolish and the poor and the hopeless and the old folks trying to buy a last-minute passage into heaven. You’d make them think that YOUR prayers were special. God loved *you* more than the others preachers. (Building anger) And you took their money. And put these old people’s pensions and Social Security checks that they should’ve used on food, on grandchildren, and on medication…you took it and you put it in your OWN pocket, tax free, three inches away from your ASS!!!! But I knew. I already knew from experience what kind of person you really were down inside. (Suddenly looks at him) I hated myself. Because of you. Does your God forgive you for that? Because if he does, I’m disappointed in Him. And I don’t think I want to have anything to do with Him if he’s on your side.

(KEITH EXITS through the doors. *“Didn’t I blow you mind this time” is playing. Music out when KEITH closes the doors*)

 OZ

Wow…that guy.. huh?? Probably needs to see somebody and get some help.

 JEANNIE (Excitedly)

Maybe he should buy one of your psychology books!

 OZ

Maybe he should. You can’t hold on to things for that long. It’s unhealthy.

 MARILYN

*I* have a question.

 OZ (Off of another rant)

(Raising his right hand to the Heavens) The Lord has blessed us with a calling to build an empire for his glorification. We are a shining light…

 MARILYN

Stop that! You want money? Well, the kind of money I suspect you want, forgive me. I need to do this homework. I know what your sons have done in Africa. I know your wife worked in a Playboy bar when you met her. I’ve asked a lot of questions.

 OZ

Maybe I should come back at another time.

 I-i-23

 MARILYN

I don’t *want* you to come back. That’s the point. (to JEANNIE) He’s trying to build a huge “Christian Only” condo time share in Belize. If I buy one or partner as a developer, everybody else is in, right?

 OZ

Uhm…

 MARILYN

Just oblivious. What’s your stance on abortion?

 OZ

What’s that got to do with…uh…Our stance is public record; we don’t want abortion. We advocate ultimately rescinding Roe v Wade, but..

 MARILYN

Of course you don’t want abortion. Nobody *wants* it you boob. (Silence) But tell me, you ever done the math?

 OZ

The math?

 MARILYN

200,000 extra abortions a year that now go to term at 10,000 bucks minimum each a year to raise--- That’s a couple billion a year, isn’t it? Somebody has got to pay for them. Whether it’s the government or desolate parents. And by the time they’re 18 you’re looking at about 70 billion extra dollars a year. Don’t look at me like that. I’ve seen the pictures of butchered fetuses. Have you seen the pictures of starving babies?

OZ

I shouldn’t have...

 MARILYN

I know you shouldn’t have… (Back to her rant) You want to bring 200,000 babies *a year* into a world where nobody loves them and nobody wants them into an ungodly world that is already hell before they get here? And then…80 *more* years of unloved, starving, alone and broken. Many become *very* dangerous adults, because nobody wanted them when they were young. Or…do you humanely save them before they’re conscious of the fact that they were much better off wherever they came from before they were created? That’s my side. That’s my stance.

 OZ

Many will find homes and loving families.

 MARILYN

And many, many more will not! We can’t even righteously take care of the kids we *have* now with abortion laws *intact*. What about LGBTQ?

 OZ

LG…?

 MARILYN

Gays, Lesbians. What’s your church say about queers?

 OZ

Well, The Bible says…

 I-i-24

 MARILYN

Oh fuckthatthing! Let me make my position a little clearer.

 (MARILYN gets up, straddles JEANNIE’S lap, sits and kisses her hard on the mouth…over her shoulder to OZ. Bats her eyes)

How you gonna sell *that* to Bubba and Cletis back in Paducah? Huh? You still want money from a filthy, degenerate like me?

 (OZ hesitates, a loud condescending laugh. Almost hissing)

 OZ

Well, I’ll let you two ladies alone to finish this then. If you’ll excuse me for a moment. God bless. (Stands, half sneering) I’ll pray for the both of you. (EXITS)

 MARILYN

Don’t you dare.

 (MARILYN rises, sits in her own chair…JEANNIE has not taken her eyes off of her since the kiss)

 JEANNIE

I’d follow you anywhere, right now.

 MARILYN

What a complete mook.

 JEANNIE (Touching her own mouth)

I didn’t know you were a lesbian.

 MARILYN

Neither did I. I probably should have somebody take look at that. Tell me more about your husband. Show me more pictures. He looks delicious.

 (*LIGHTS. Blackout covered by Song “American Woman”)*

 I-ii-25

 SCENE 2

Setting: *(The same, 2 hours later. The set is a little darker)*

At Rise: (RICHARD dances through again with his hands up in the air. A few people can be seen dancing inside. MARILYN can be seen in the shadows of TABLE #1, but JEANNIE is gone. SCOTTY AND DAVEY are both out cold at table #4. PEGGY AND JIMMY enter shortly. *Music “American Woman” out when they close the door behind them.* Holding hands, PEGGY AND JIMMY sit at TABLE #2. He is comforting her)

 JIMMY

Are you okay?

 PEGGY

I’m so sorry. I embarrassed you.

 JIMMY

Of course not.

 PEGGY

I can’t imagine what they must think.

 JIMMY

They must think you a beautiful, wonderful person, just like I do.

 PEGGY

I was so nervous. It was like something was in the air telling me “You don’t belong here, you don’t belong here.” (A moment) My chest started to flutter and I got so light-headed. Thank you for coming outside with me, sweetie.

 JIMMY

Sh-sh-sh.

 (DOUG enters and crosses to them with a glass of water)

 DOUG

Peggy? Here you go. You feeling better?

 PEGGY

Thank you so much, Doug.

 JIMMY

Thank you.

 DOUG

Sure, anytime.

 JIMMY

She has a condition where her heart has an extra beat. Flutters sometimes when she gets stressed.

 DOUG (Nodding in understanding)

Ah.

 JIMMY

Lot of people in one place. She doesn’t really know any of them. She gets a little nervous .

 I-ii-26

 DOUG

Heck, I don’t even remember three fourths of these jokers, myself. Didn’t just get old…some of them downright morphed into other critters. Did you see Ellen Madison?

 JIMMY

Yeah. (Aside to Peggy) The one in the Orange muumuu.

 PEGGY

She looks like she might not be feeling well.

 DOUG

She put on some weight.

 JIMMY

Maybe a little.

 DOUG

Little? (Leans in confidentially) She’s a Thanksgiving Day Parade balloon.

 PEGGY

I used to love watching the Macy’s parade.

 DOUG

Yeah…I always liked Thanksgiving time better than Christmas. Food was sooo good. And the football. All my big brothers came home on Thanksgiving. That’s because all their wives made them go to *their* families’ houses for Christmas. Mom and I got stuck together.

 JIMMY

Stuck?

 DOUG

Mom’s still alive. 88 years old. Still living alone at home.

 JIMMY

That’s pretty good.

 DOUG

Yep. She drives me crazy sometimes. Always told me someday the shoe would be on the other foot and I’d be the one worrying about her.

 JIMMY

Both my parents have passed. Within four months of each other. I miss ‘em. I sure didn’t appreciate them when they were still around. There one minute, gone the next. Moms and Dads can always straighten things out. It really is good to see you again, Doug.

 DOUG

You too, buddy. So, how have things been going?

 JIMMY

Well, we get our share of challenges like everybody else.

 DOUG

I didn’t know that you owned Charter House Restaurant.

 JIMMY

Yessir…My family has owned it since 1962.

 DOUG

The restaurant across from the school? I never knew that.

 JIMMY

Yessir.

 I-ii-27

 DOUG

I applied for a job there running the dishwasher and cleaning up once.

 JIMMY

Is that a fact?

 DOUG

That was an “A” league job, mister. $1.04 cents an hour. That’s big money to a thirteen- year -old back then. Damn near grass cutting wages for a high school kid.

 JIMMY

Dad liked to keep the responsible ones around. “Pay them a little bit more and they’ll treat the kitchen like home.”

 DOUG

No…I would have liked to have had a job there but there was a long line and I was at the end of it. I did hang out there a lot, though. I sat on those fountain stools and waited until the girls got done playing softball after school. Sometimes I’d get a couple of malts with one of them when they were done practicing. Little bit of a…what do they call it? I was Lurch. Always kind of lurking around the girls.

 JIMMY

Nahhh. You were just a regular kid. I did the same thing.

 PEGGY

He still does.

 DOUG

So, you thinking about selling the place, huh?

 JIMMY

We’re thinking about it.

 DOUG

That’s a shame.

 PEGGY

We’re going to try not to.

 JIMMY

We…got some stuff that’s come up. Always does all at once. And she got her 35 years in at the school and they “asked her to retire” last month. I don’t blame them.

 PEGGY

I do!

 JIMMY

She taught a lot of years up there.

 PEGGY

A lot.

 JIMMY

But, that’s a poor district and I can understand them not wanting to pay a 35-year vet’s salary when they can pay a kid out of college half that amount.

 PEGGY (A little steamed)

I just thought they should have…

 I-ii-28

 JIMMY (Sweetly)

There is no doubt in anybody’s mind that you were invaluable to those kids. But things are about money sometimes. That’s a fact.

 PEGGY

The timing was so bad. We need another year. But instead, my last paycheck will be next month. Everything comes all at once.

 JIMMY

You’ll get a nice pension.

 PEGGY

No health insurance though.

 (Silence)

 JIMMY

I got a little bit of bad news a couple weeks back. Probably should have put those cigarettes down a long time ago, huh?

 DOUG

Oh no, man.

 JIMMY

It’s just a spot. Wish’t heck I was a little closer to 65 though. Get that Medicare goin.’

 DOUG

Dammit, brother I wish there was something I could do.

 JIMMY

Well that’s why I asked Bob. You know, we don’t need that big house either. Just the two of us. I know his brother wanted that plot where the restaurant is to build an office space on a few years back. But these days…With the crash last year. It’s pretty rough on everybody. Maybe something will come up.

 DOUG

I wish I could help or had an answer Jim.

 JIMMY

That’s alright. (to Peggy) Are you okay, now?

 DOUG (To Peggy)

You feelin’ any better?

 PEGGY

Oh yes, I’m fine. Just needed a breath of fresh air.

 DOUG

You wanna lose your breath again? You boogie?

 PEGGY

Oh, I don’t know.

 JIMMY

I’ll be good. You kids run along.

 PEGGY

(To Jim) You stay here, then. I’ll go teach this guy some of my moves…

 I-ii-29

 (DOUG AND PEGGY exit. “*Fire and Rain” by James Taylor is playing.* A moment. JIMMY Rises and crosses to the door, DAVEY drunkenly but quietly struggles to his feet.)

 JIMMY

Davey? How are you? Hey, you okay?

 DAVEY

Hey Jim. I’m fine, buddy. Just caught a little snooze.

 JIMMY

Can I help you with anything?

 DAVEY

Caught a little bro-napsky.

 JIMMY

Is Scotty Ok?

 DAVEY

He’s the okayest guy I have ever met in my life. Just all…okay. All-American All Okay.

 (DAVEY walks about halfway to the door)

 JIMMY

You coming back inside?

 DAVEY (Stops)

Maybe not. I need to take some deep breathing breaths out here…first.

 JIMMY

Well…come inside. I want you to meet my wife.

 DAVEY

I always liked you, Jim.

 JIMMY

You’re a good guy too, Davey.

 DAVEY

We could have been buddies, y’know. It just… You weren’t…

 JIMMY

Yeah…I know. (Smiles and EXITS)

 *(Song: “Fire and Rain” is still playing* when JIMMY opens the door to leave and again when DEBORAH opens the door. DAVEY staggers slowly down left. Doesn’t smile. Mysteriously turns around before the door opens again. He is met by DEBORAH. Immediate *tension.* *Music out when she enters)*

DEBORAH

Hi Davey.

DAVEY

Well... Look what jumped the fence. How are you…what are you doing here?

 I-ii-30

 DEBORAH

It’s my reunion too, y’know.

 DAVEY

Sure. Sure it is. I’m glad you came.

 DEBORAH

Yeah. (Smile)

 DAVEY

I was just gonna get another beer would you like me to…?

 DEBORAH (Handing him a beer)

I saw you out here...I brought you one.

 DAVEY

Thanks…

 DEBORAH

Invite me to sit down?

 DAVEY

Sure.

 They sit at TABLE #3)

 I assume you brought Gary with you.

 DEBORAH

I did.

 DAVEY

 You okay?

 DEBORAH

Really good. My oldest son was married in June. Finally. Hard to believe I have a 33 -year -old baby.

 DAVEY

Wow.

 DEBORAH

Yup.

 DAVEY

You look good.

 DEBORAH

I *am* well. Stressed a lot of the time, but good over all.

 DAVEY

I hear you. Still in Orlando? Real estate down there has been good to you, I’d guess.

 DEBORAH

Very good. yeah. Disney World. It’s all pricey, though.

 DAVEY

I thought about calling you and seeing what it would take to get into that stuff.

 DEBORAH

Real estate colleges are all over the place these days.

 I-ii-31

 DAVEY

Then I decided to go back and teach. Learn how to babysit other peoples’ kids. Kind of ironic, huh? “Other peoples” kids.

 DEBORAH (Warily)

Yeah.

 DAVEY

This and I tell the kids I teach that I invented weed. And I drink too much of this stuff

(Silence) Sorry. I’m a bit obnoxious right now. Pretty loathsome, huh?

 DEBORAH

No, you’re fine.

 DAVEY

I suppose that’s the best its gonna get. “Not loathsome”. I used to be in better shape. God, *you* look unearthly healthy. Completely glorious, y’know, I quit smoking cigarettes and my smeller and taster came back and I forgot how good everything was. So, I figured if I could smell and taste everything I might as well eat it. And I did. Everything.

 DEBORAH

Yeah. Gary put on a few pounds too.

 DAVEY (Quietly, sharply)

I couldn’t care less about your husband.

 (Silence)

I’m real glad you came. Kind of hoped you would. When was the last time we saw each other?

 DEBORAH

Oh well…maybe when I was in town when your mother died.

 DAVEY

Yeah…it probably was. She always liked you.

 DEBORAH

I liked her too.

 DAVEY

Hell of a cook

 DEBORAH

I know…

 DAVEY

I know…

 DEBORAH

Are you seeing anyone these days?

 DAVEY (Sarcastically)

No, nobody…you?

 DEBORAH

Yeah…(lifts her ring finger) about 34 years.

 DAVEY

I always had hope.

 DEBORAH (Smiling)

Jennifer finished law school and Mickey owns a computer repair shop… (Takes out a cell phone)

 I-i-32

 DAVEY (Smiling as he looks at photos)

 Oh, look at those guys. Little guys

 DEBORAH

Those are my daughter’s sons. Joshua and Cody.

 DAVEY

Very good looking crop there.

 DEBORAH

They love soccer.

 (Silence a moment…like DEBORAH is waiting for something)

 DAVEY (Takes out his cellphone)

I uh...I got some pictures of a horse I had…

 DEBORAH

Well. That’s okay…I just wanted to stick my head in and say “Hi”.

 DAVEY

Do you have to go now? What’s your rush?

 DEBORAH

I should let my husband know where I am.

 DAVEY

He’s dancing with one of our classmates. I just saw them go by.

 DEBORAH

Well… (Mock indignant) I may be available after all.

 DAVEY

You have a nice-looking family there.

 DEBORAH

You seem to be doing ok, too.

 DAVEY

You ever wonder what our kid... (Catches himself) Sorry…

 DEBORAH

That’s alright.

 DAVEY

They have those…they have those apps on the internet now where you can put your picture and her picture in and the computer will come back with what their kid’s face would look like. I did one with us a couple weeks ago and the poor thing looked like Captain Kangaroo in a Supreme’s wig.…Old puffy face…Not a pretty child at all.

 DEBORAH

You would have been a fine father. I’m sorry you never found someone.

 DAVEY

I did; she left me.

 DEBORAH

(She senses that was aimed at her) Ohhh, Davey please. Let’s not do this again. DAVEY

Was it because you didn’t like being with somebody that you’d betrayed?

 I-i-33

 DEBORAH

Davey…it wasn’t you or anything you did. It was…

 DAVEY

I know it wasn’t me. You’ve said that. Fine. Well, I just want to know *why* you did what you did so I can see it comin’ next time and get the hell out of the way.

 DEBORAH.

Please don’t do this to yourself.

 DAVEY

Ehh. I’m already done. It’s kind of an elephant in the room. Y’know? Explain it to me again. It takes me a while…

 DEBORAH (Sighing)

It’s been so many years. I would think…

 DAVEY

37 years….six months and seven days. I don’t get over things well, do I? You see, I need to hear’m several times. Sometimes I lie and tell everybody that the baby wasn’t mine and that I left YOU. But you have to understand…(Building into a rage) when I’m thousands of miles away overseas fighting a war and thinking about one woman’s face and one woman’s tears imagining that I’m dead and trying to remember the smell of her hair and the taste of her breath and tone of her voice and the feel of her body… would she be worried that I was scared when I was getting God damn shot at? Would she even be worrying at all? Or would she be out at night? Staying late at school. Waiting for a teacher to get done with his last class so that they could go get dinner. And then see a movie. And then go home and drink my wine. And fuck in my bed. And make a baby in my bed and then try to convince me it was mine.

 DEBORAH

It *was* yours. Davey, This…is why we ended.

 DAVEY (Roaring)

I didn’t *DO* anything to you!!! I’m not the bad guy here!!!

 DEBORAH

Please. I didn’t say you were.

 DAVEY

Sorry, I’ve been drinking a little.

 DEBORAH

I’m sorry. What else can I say? I have said I was sorry so many times to you. You know…

 DAVEY

Why did you kill my child?

 DEBORAH

You know part of the reason we didn’t...a big part of the reason…

 DAVEY

Why’d you do that? If it *was* mine. *Without telling me.*  Behind my back.

 DEBORAH

A big part of the reason was me. I was weak and I was alone

 DAVEY

Always happens that way. The bad one wins. The sweet, understanding, puny little nice guy gets reamed.

 I-i-34

 DEBORAH

We ended because you couldn’t find a way to forgive me.

 DAVEY

We ended because I couldn’t stand the sight of you. I couldn’t trust you enough to forgive you.

 DEBORAH

Well why would you want to keep something you couldn’t trust, then?

 DAVEY

That….is the 64,000 dollar question. Why would I want you? Help me out on this? Any ideas?

 DEBORAH (Quietly)

Because even though you hated what I did, you still loved *me*?

 (DAVEY touches his index finger to his nose)

 DAVEY

And if you would have loved ME you wouldn’t have let me push you away. You’d have FOUGHT for me. You’d have MADE me trust you again. You would have MADE me forgive you. Because you would have MADE me know that you loved me too. (Silence, she gives him no hope) Then say it.

 DEBORAH

Please, Davey.

 DAVEY

Say it to me. I’ve been waiting for you to get your head out of your ass and come back for me. But that ain’t gonna happen apparently. Please. Do this for me then. Just once…please? (Silence) So I can know finally for sure. From your own mouth. 40 years.

 DEBORAH (Slowly looks up. Almost gently)

I didn’t *ever* love you, Davey. Never. Not for a single moment. Ever. Is that what you want to hear? I tried. You were there. You were devoted. I was young and it was hard to walk away when somebody cared about me as much as you did.

 DAVEY (Under his breath, beaten)

 Good. Now, why was that so hard? Why did you have to leave the knife in there that long?

 (DEBORAH leans in to kiss DAVEY on the forehead. He hisses)

Don’t do that. I don’t... I didn’t walk around my whole life all bent because of you, you know. But I’m just sayin’ you should just…

 (DEBORAH EXITS no music)

People like you should just be a little more careful with things you do … to other people.

 I-i-35

(DAVEY walks down left. A moment later, HARX enters. *Song “Reflections of My Mind” up very softly beginning at: “the world is…a bad place…a bad place...a terrible place to live” comes up and covers until* and retrieves his sweater from the back of his original seat at TABLE #3. Turns and sees DAVEY standing alone, crosses to him)

 HARX

Hey, Davey. (No answer) Came out to get my sweater for Betsy. Air conditioning’s kind of cold in there. (No answer. Looks out over the audience. Waits a moment) Man…stars are really out tonight. (No answer) Beautiful moon. What an unbelievable sunset we had, huh? (No answer) Really clear out.

 DAVEY (Barely audible)

Clear as a bell.

 HARX

You okay? (No response) Well…uhm…good to see you again. (No response, he EXITS)

 DAVEY (Finally, in a whisper to himself…lost, )

It’s end game. (Shrugs a little) This is end game, now. *(Music swells)*

*(LIGHTS FADE OUT)*

*INTERMISSION*

 II-i-36

ACT II

Setting: (Near midnight. The same patio)

At Rise: At TABLE #1 MARILYN looking at a yearbook; RICHARD enters and boogies through. At TABLE #2 KEITH and ERIC; At TABLE #3 JIMMY AND PEGGY; At TABLE#4 Scotty. HARX and BETSY are slow dancing downstage of tables 2 and 3 to the final strains of Song: “Love Grows” When the song is over, they stop near the doors and BETSY then accepts a quick, gentle kiss from HARX. They go back inside as BOB enters.

 BOB

Hey okay…listen up. Don’t forget about golf tomorrow and the parade on the fourth. You guys have got to help us. Chuck and I can’t do the float alone. You ol’ farts can still swing hammers, I know you can.

 (Song: “Sugar, Sugar” comes up in the background. Groans from offstage. He yells at people in the other room)

I requested that, okay? I can’t have one? What are you talking about? It was the number one. The year before then…whatever. Get over it.

 (Boogies back into the main room.)

 ERIC (Smoking a joint)

The guy that lived across the street from us used to make moonshine in his basement. Completely legal as long as it was for his own consumption. One summer they went away for a week or two vacation and had me take care of their cat. Cleo the cat. Dad was keepin’ an eye on the hootch. Well it got ungodly hot and I went downstairs to feed the cat one day and that stuff had started blowin’ up in the jars. Shards of glass everywhere. But dad said afterwards “When things are left to ferment, sometimes the result is real good; sometimes nothing special happens and it lays flat. Once in a while though, all kinds of hell breaks loose.” Want some of this?

 KEITH

Sure…Thank you. So, Alaska huh? What was the attraction in that?

 ERIC

Well…you remember that girl I was dating in high school? That’s how far she chased me before she stopped. I was afraid to come back.

 KEITH (A little disgusted)

That woman from Alaska, who ran for Vice President, though.

 ERIC

Don’t knock her man. Far and away the most beautiful woman up there.

 KEITH

What?

 II-i-37

 ERIC

Oh yeah, we got some dogs up there. Matter of fact some of the dogs are better looking than the women. Matter of fact, most of them up there are.

 KEITH (Laughing, hands back the joint)

That’s just...mean.

 ERIC

I know. I hate myself. I’ve left a couple of times over that, but I keep coming back.

 KEITH

(Confused, The “W” forms on his lips long before the sound comes out) What?

 ERIC

Yeah…I don’t get along with myself very well, so sometimes I just leave...(Laughs). I’m just messin’ with ya’, right, Fifi?

 KEITH (Taking back the joint)

 My name’s Keith, you blunt-hound

 ERIC (Loudly)

Keith? (Looking around) He’s over here with me.

 KEITH

Yeah, I’m over here!!

 ERIC

Wut? Wait, what? (A moment) Didja…didya ever know that Dave’s not here? Dave’s jus’…jus not here, man.

 KEITH

He was here a little while ago.

 ERIC (Knocking on the table)

Who IS it?

 KEITH (Buying in like “Cheech and Chong”)

Dave’s not here man.

 ERIC

Who is it?

 KEITH

I got the stuff man.

 ERIC

No, I got the stuff.

 KEITH

Who is it?

 ERIC

Dave’s not here man.

 KEITH

Dave?

 ERIC

Who?

 KEITH

Dave?

 II-i-38

 ERIC

Who is it?...That not right...(Laughing) That’s not right. You’re messing it up!

 KEITH

No you are! You’re not doing it…I’m supposed to be saying...

 ERIC

Why don’t you let me call you Fifi?

 KEITH

Cause I ain’t one of your foofy-assed dogs.

 ERIC

You an’ me, we go way back.

 KEITH

Neighborhood.

 (Fist bump)

 ERIC

Brothers!

 KEITH

Yeah…Hillside drive!

 ERIC

I lived on Walk St.

 KEITH

What?

 ERIC

Sometimes it was Don’t Walk, though. I got lost a lot.

 KEITH

You lived around the corner. You were one of us.

 ERIC

Well then why didn’t you ever come find me?

 KEITH

What?

 ERIC

Don’t walk.

 (Silence. Then, to himself, quietly)

Bump ahead.

 (Turns to Keith. With the heel of his palm, bumps Keith’s head gently)

Bump a head. (Giggles)

 KEITH (Whining)

Cut it out!

 ERIC

I knew you were a homo before you did.

 II-i-39

 KEITH

What? That’s rude. That’s a rude word.

 ERIC

Rude is a rude word. Yes, it is. But I did know.

 KEITH

How did you know?

 ERIC

Back when we were seven or eight. I could tell things. Ahead of time. Before anybody else.

 (JEANIE ENTERS, “Mama Told me not to come”)

 KEITH

That’s silly.

 JEANNIE

What’s going on here. You boys behave.

 (JEANNIE SITS with them at TABLE #2)

 KEITH

He’s *lookin’* at me funny.

 ERIC

Well, you do have a pretty mouth...but I can’t. I can’t break my Malamute’s heart. Not again.

 KEITH

I have known this Cretin for 50…half a century. My best childhood friend ever.

 ERIC

We used to throw darts at gerbils.

 JEANNIE

Jeemany Cripes!

 KEITH

We didn’t hit it. My sister’s. It would get loose and then it would zip by..

 ERIC (Gesturing)

Whooosh…

 KEITH

So, we both threw our darts at it real fast.

 ERIC (Showing her a scar)

He threw his into my arm. Like, to the bone.

 KEITH

And my army men. We threw darts at army men.

 ERIC

I tell everybody I got shot holding up a 7/11.

 KEITH

And firecrackers.

 II-i-40

 ERIC

(To JEANNIE) And firecrackers too. (Directed at KEITH) He put firecrackers...blew their whole legs…(Back to JEANNIE) He put firecrackers between their legs and blew ‘em up! (Suddenly horrified) In GI Joe! (to KEITH) YOU…that’s how I knew! That’s how I knew you were different. You blew his weiner completely off! (KEITH is hysterical)

 JEANNIE

They didn’t have weiners.

 ERIC

I know. He blew them off!

 KEITH (To JEANNIE)

You were almost in our neighborhood too. You were on Ridge Rd.

 JEANNIE

And we carpooled in kindergarten.

 ERIC (Suddenly to KEITH)

I LOVE YOU MAN!

 (Gives KEITH a big bear hug)

 KEITH

I love you too…Maaannn…

 ERIC (Standing)

We should…we should go bake some cookies. They got an oven here? I’ll bake us some brownies. Don’t leave. I’ll come back and you’ll be gone forever again.

 KEITH

Duuuude, it’s a ball room. No ovens.

 ERIC

Don’t leave!!

 KEITH

I’m not goin’ anywhere.

 ERIC

Okay…Well, I’m leavin’ for a minute. You stay there.

 (EXITS Song: “Cracklin’ Rosie” is playing. ERIC giggles and turns back into the room points to the ballroom)

Neil Diamond..Hah-hah. Far out!!!

 When ERIC closes the door, the music goes out)

 JEANNIE

I love this...this is so bizarre. We all get around each other and it’s like we’re 18-years-old and you’re still stoners but your bodies are chubby, wrinkly old guys.

 II-i-41

 KEITH

I know…I look in the mirror and I go, “Dad?”

 JEANNIE

Yeah me too! I mean not “Dad”…but we’re definitely not in high school any more.

 KEITH

Nope.

 JEANNIE

Marilyn has always been kind of outrageous. I felt so bad about that commotion with her and Tarrence.

 KEITH

I’m glad she did it. I should have stood up to that ape a long time ago. (Confidentially) Felt so good to win one, finally.

 JEANNIE (After a long moment)

So how have you been? KEITH (Chuckling)

For the last 40 years or so? Got a few days to listen? To be honest, it’s been up and down, honey.

 JEANNIE

I feel like I should say something witty about when we were in school. I don’t remember us hanging around much.

 KEITH

Well, I was there. A good bit more of me back then but I was there. What do you do, now?

 JEANNIE

I’m an executive secretary for a lawyer in Minneapolis.

 KEITH (Genuinely)

Good for you!

 JEANNIE

I wanted to be a paralegal but when the children came I didn’t have time to go to school. We couldn’t afford it really. And by the time we could, I thought “Well, things are perfectly fine now. I’m making enough money. Why rock the boat?”

 KEITH

Sounds logical.

 JEANNIE

What about you?

 KEITH

Little bit of this….

 JEANNIE

Can I ask you a question?

 KEITH

Sure.

 JEANNIE

Are you married?

 KEITH

I like to say I am.

 II-i-42 JEANNE

Is she here tonight?

 KEITH

No, my husband is a pilot and he’s somewhere over the ocean on his way to Paris right now.

 JEANNIE

That’s what I thought.

 KEITH

That I was gay?

 JEANNIE

Mm-hm.

 KEITH (Smiles, nods)

Well, I am.

 JEANNIE

I’ll be honest with ya. It took me a long time be okay with that kinda stuff. But it isn’t really any of my business, is it?

(He puts his hand on top of hers, she withdraws a little)

 KEITH

I’m not contagious or anything.

 JEANNIE

Yeah, I know that. But I been trained and I guess I have certain instincts from a long time ago that aren’t always completely sure, I guess.

 KEITH

I understand.

 JEANNIE

You remember AIDS, n’stuff.

 KEITH (Patiently)

I do.

 JEANNIE

I do too. It was so terrible about what it did to you…and your kind.

 KEITH

Yes.

 JEANNIE

Did you ever know anybody who died from it?

 KEITH

AIDS? Yes.

 JEANNIE

Anybody close to you?

 KEITH

Several.

 JEANNIE

It was so scary. We were just getting old enough to figure out what to do with everything and then, bang! It was like “hold your horses, everybody”.

 II-i-43

 KEITH

The body does have a way of getting certain points across.

 JEANNIE

They used to say God was just getting’ even with the gays.

 KEITH

I’ve heard that, too.

 JEANNIE

I noticed when we were talking to Oz that you kinda climbed all over God’s back there a little.

 KEITH

It’s *very* hard to remember that people like Tarrence Austin Akers are not’s God’s fault. There’s nothing in the scriptures that says Satan doesn’t have sneaky ways. I was very religious at one time.

 JEANNIE

Is that so?

 KEITH

Yeah, once. Now, I admit I pray when I need him. (Wryly) We’re just like everybody else in many ways.

 JEANNIE

That’s when he gets the most interest. When things are goin’ bad.

 KEITH

AIDS kind of did us a favor. It made us come out. Everybody couldn’t ignore things anymore. Straight people would die if they did. My grandfather and grandmother used to call the ones who didn’t get married “confirmed bachelors” or “old maids”. I look back now. There’s no such things as those. They were mostly gays and lesbians. Back then, it was safe and convenient to stay hidden away. But AIDS forced us out and we all got stronger and braver when we all had to face it together. If AIDS hadn’t happened, we’d still be in hiding.

 JEANNIE

Who was it that died?

 KEITH

One was a cousin. He was such a good man. Taught me how to ride my first two-wheeler. But in 1984 maybe, he had a mole, then a growth, then the growth became a lesion. Open sores all over eventually. At the same time he got very emaciated. He looked like something out of Dachau. He was 36-years-old.

 JEANNIE

We didn’t know anything about what could get you infected. I knew I shouldn’t touch anybody.

 KEITH

Eventually they put in a catheter. Draining out what looked like…sludge. His eyes… the pupils just dropped off in opposite sides of his head. His face got so thin you could almost count his teeth through the skin over his jaw.

 JEANNIE

Mom worked in a hotel. They told her to wear rubber gloves when she changed the linens. And if two guys checked in a room, the linens were to be burned and if they ordered room service the dishes were thrown out.

 II-i-44

 KEITH

It was a despicable way to die. Nobody “deserved” that. God wasn’t “getting even” with anybody. Nobody ever did anything ugly enough to deserve that in revenge.

 JEANNIE

We don’t hear too much about it anymore.

 KEITH

Oh, it’s still out there.

 JEANNIE

They got that cure. That cocktail thing.

 KEITH

It helps. It’s not a cure though.

 JEANNIE

Were you ever afraid you’d catch HIV or AIDS?

 KEITH

(A moment) I *am* HIV positive, Jeannie. And yeah, I was very afraid when I caught it. You worry about family. My mom just looked at me and said “You don’t have it. You don’t look like you have it. You look fine.” And somehow… her complete denial worked for me. That posture was so strong. I would have shattered if she would have coddled me and sympathized with me.

 JEANNIE

I’m…I’m so sorry. I didn’t know.

 KEITH

I’m fine. I expect to live as long as I was originally intended to live. I think God had a lot to do with me. For the *good.* Every day after I found out, I got down on my knees in front of this statue...you know…of Mother Mary. I didn’t just pray. I BELIEVED. On my knees, I believed every single day. And they, Jesus and Mary, I believe they KNEW I believed. Because... I’m still here. And a lot aren’t.

 JEANNIE

What do you do?

 KEITH

I work in a nursing home. And I listen to the grand dads and grammas

 JEANNIE

That’s so sweet of you.

 KEITH

Nah…It isn’t only for them. It’s for me, too. What could be a sweeter than to listen to adventures and history? Children, pets, travels and dreams? When you almost lose these things, you tend to appreciate them with a second chance. There is an extra effort to living. I want as many second chances as I can get.

 (This time *JEANNIE* puts her hand on KEITH’S forearm, and smiles)

 MARILYN

Keithy…get over here!

(DOUG enters and watches MARILYN from the doorway. Song: “In the Summertime” plays…he crosses and closes the door)

II-i-45

 KEITH

Lemme sit here a little while. If I get up and try to walk, I think my bones will just collapse. I’m pretty much butter right now.

 MARILYN (Yelling)

Scotty!!! Wake up! Come talk to me.

 (DOUG crosses to TABLE #1)

 DOUG

Okay if I sit with you?

 MARILYN

Hey, bud! Pull it up and park it. (DOUG sits) I think it’s funny. I don’t recognize a face in this joint anymore but I can’t tell you the amount of times I was still lonelier than hell for them.

 DOUG

I’ve been looking forward to this for a long time too.

 MARILYN

Scotty okay over there?

 DOUG

He’s pretty blitzed, I guess. I’m driving. He’ll be alright.

 MARILYN

Everybody but me is liquored up. That’s gotta be a first. Where’s *your* wife?

 DOUG

Ex. Connecticut, I think.

 MARILYN

Divorced?

 DOUG

Divorced. Ten years ago. You don’t want to hear about that unsightliness.

 MARILYN
These are the best places to tell it, though, isn’t it? That’s why we have reunions.

 DOUG

I’ve talked to nearly everybody here and about all of them griped about how great things were in high school and how their lives tanked since they graduated.

 MARILYN

Buncha spoiled brats huh?

 DOUG

We all were then and we all are still. Where’s your husband?

 MARILYN

Mine…? (Thinks hard) I don’t know. What day is it?

 DOUG

Friday.

 MARILYN

What month is it?

 DOUG

July.

II-i-46

 MARILYN

I don’t know. Damn…I don’t even know if I’m still married to him. That would explain his not being here. You know, I don’t think I’m married anymore.

 DOUG

You’re not drinking and you don’t know where your husband is and that’s okay? Wow. You wanna marry *me*?

 MARILYN

Honest to God I don’t remember. I think I had somebody take care of it. I think I remember signing off on divorce stuff again...jeez. I should go back to readin’ my tabloids.

 (ERIC enters no music)

 ERIC

 Angie’s making some more stuff.

 KEITH

Where? In here? You found an oven?

 ERIC

No man…I got a Coleman out in the Minibus. (ERIC sits at TABLE #2)

 KEITH

Quit shakin’ the table.

 ERIC (Lighting another joint)

Probably take her an hour…but her stuff is always worth waiting for.

 (JEANNIE begins dialing on her cell phone, she will eventually “get an answer” and turn upstage in her chair.)

 MARILYN

I didn’t get one Valentine’s Day card this year.

 DOUG

Well, did you give any out?

 MARILYN (Sneering)

No. Listen, I was the sexiest woman in Hollywood for decades, or have you forgotten? I got 25 dozen roses, all from different people one year. You couldn’t walk through the parlor without the thorns ripping the flesh off your arms. It was like a frickin’ Steven King movie in there.

 DOUG

Hah! (A moment) I don’t get any either.

 MARILYN (Still complaining)

No candy, no nothin’.

 DOUG

I got kids. You’d think I would have gotten something from them. My ex that had my kids left when they were real young…took ‘em. They’re grown now, but still.

 MARILYN

Ohhh, that’s rough.

 II-i-47

 DOUG

Yeah, because my “lifemate” has a whim one time and thinks she loves a guy, I don’t get to watch my kids grow up. Because of her “urges”.

 MARILYN

I cannot see how marriage is an attractive proposition to anybody anymore.

 DOUG

(A moment). It’s really good to see these guys, isn’t it? Helps make you feel a little bit better about your own life’s wreckage.

 MARILYN (Looking through the year book)

Did you know that Dan Rozier had died?

 DOUG

Yeah, years ago.

 MARILYN

I didn’t know. It always bothers me… a lot…when I find out that somebody I know dies. I don’t like it when I don’t know things. I think I’m just now realizing that we’re getting to the age that this whole show could be over for some of us…I mean like, pretty soon, maybe.

 DOUG

I’ve been talking to different people ever since I got here tonight. So much has happened.

 MARILYN

40 years is a lot of time. (Fixating on the yearbook) I don’t know any of these people anymore.

 DOUG

Yeah, you do. Anyway, they know *you.* I’m sure they’re all glad you came this year.

 MARILYN

I can’t imagine why.

 DOUG

You are an inspiration.

 MARILYN

I’m a charlatan.

 DOUG

(A moment) I talked to Jimmy and Peggy a little while ago.

 MARILYN

*That’s* a good couple.

 DOUG

Yeah.

 MARILYN

(A moment) Their daughter died, didn’t she? Something happened.

 DOUG

Buncha kids driving too fast in the snow. Twenty years ago, maybe. Stapled the car around a tree.

 MARILYN

(Grimaces) Mhhm. Somebody told me, that. I remember it now.

 DOUG

(Suddenly) Jimmy’s got lung cancer and she just lost her job and their insurance.

II-i-48

 MARILYN

Are you *kiddin’* me?

 DOUG

And us and our whining.

 MARILYN

I wouldn’t have the strength.

 DOUG

That’s why you get married. For strength. Isn’t it?

 MARILYN

You’re asking me *why* I get married? Hell, I don’t even know *if*  I’m married half the time.

 DOUG

You know how I learned my ex was having an affair? She took the kids for a month to visit her mother at her spread up in Connecticut. While they’re up there I called to say “Hi” and my six-year-old answered the phone. We talked a little about swimming lessons and fishing and stuff. Finally, I asked him where his mom was and if I could talk to her.

“She’s not here, Dad.” He says.

“Where’s she at?”

“She’s outside washing the car with her boyfriend.”

 MARILYN

Ow.

 DOUG

Yeah, Ow. Six years old.

 MARILYN

She sounds like a real peach.

 DOUG

Nobody likes to be thrown away like that. Still pisses me off. Screw her. 20 years later.

 (ERIC Suddenly awakens, lifts his head off the table…a little confused)

 ERIC

TAKE YOUR FLESH… right off!! Like…

 (ERIC scratches his head…looks at JEANNIE AND KEITH.)

 ERIC

Gahhhd…I might have crabs, y’know?

 JEANNIE

My…gosh…is that right?

 KEITH (Startled awake from near sleep)

What…? What? You okay?

 II-i-49 ERIC

I had a dream…and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.

 (ERIC stands, starts pulling off his shirt.)

 KEITH

Come on, Martin Luther. We don’t need to see *your* flesh. Sit down !

 ERIC (Intensely)

People should leave people like you and me alone. They throw everything away and then they just…keep...messing…with us. Y’know? JEANNIE

Do you need some help?

 KEITH

I don’t think so. He just over shot the runway, I think.

 ERIC (Desperately to KEITH)

Cleo ran away. When the booze blew up, that cat just disappeared into the bowels of that house. Me too, now. I wish I could get out. I need to get away.

 JEANNIE (Into her cell phone)

I’m sorry. One a’ my classmates is getting’ a little silly. (Pause a moment) Everybody is honey. (Silence) Oh, Marilyn North says you’re delicious. (Pause)That’s right. (Pause) You better not. (Pause) Well, you tell my daughter to keep those dogs and my grandchildren offa the bedspread in our room, if she would. (Pause) Toenails. (Pause, Smiles at Keith, back to the phone) Kool Aid. (Pause) 350 degrees, maybe 45. (Pause) I don’t know…Might have rolled under the refrigerator. (Pause) Taylor Swift. Honey…(Pause) honey…(Pause) Honey I’m gonna hang up now. I love you bunches. *Be brave*. I don’t know…Lorax or Horton maybe. (Hangs up)

 ERIC (Calmer, to KEITH)

I am déjà vu-ing all over the place right now.

 JEANNE

They used to say that was a sign of genius.

 ERIC

Whatta they say now?

 KEITH

Don’t mix nose spray with crystal meth? I don’t know.

 JEANNIE

No, I read somewhere those that did that Déjà vu stuff were considered visionaries and sometimes even prophets. Like Nostradamus. They could see the future; They could open their own minds.

 KEITH

Exactly, clear out your sinuses and go visit another solar system.

 ERIC (Concerned)

I’m seeing some shit, man. Maybe I’m having a stroke.

 KEITH

You’re fine.

 ERIC

Ghost Dance. I’m too old for this.

 (SCENE focus shifts to TABLE #1)

II-i-50

 DOUG (To MARILYN)

What are you thinking about?

 MARILYN

Jimmy. I was remembering when he stood up to Tarrence in Junior High (Corrects herself) Oz. Oz finally got somebody to show up to a fight. Musta been thirty kids there by the back exit. I was up on the roof.

 DOUG

Of the school?

 MARILYN

Yeah... We all had math together that year. Oz sat behind Jimmy and kicked him every time the teacher had her back turned. Somebody would tell on Oz, and he’d act all “I’m sorry it was an accident” and laugh and all the jocks and people who were afraid of him laughed with him. Next time her back was turned he’d kick him *real hard* right on the tailbone.

 (MARILYN stands crosses from the table)

 DOUG

You don’t have to leave just to light a cigarette. Doesn’t bother me.

 MARILYN

You’re in the minority then. I would’ve thought a doctor would have gone ballistic when I lit up.

 DOUG

I’m not a very good doctor. (A moment, he looks at her) What could I say that you haven’t already heard, anyway?

 MARILYN

You know… I did the math once. Two packs…Ten dollars a day. I figure I smoked $4000 a year in cigarettes. Times almost forty years. That’s about 160 thousand. I smoked away a new Ferrari. If I had a stack of money here…160 grand…if I had that here and said “Here, this money is yours” Would you set it on fire?

 DOUG

Prob’ly not.

 MARILYN

Cigarettes are the biggest mistake of my life. And that includes every one of my marriages.

 (DOUG crosses to her, gently takes the cigarette from her and puts it in his own mouth. She lets him.)

 DOUG

So…he kicked him on the tailbone?

 MARILYN

Hhm?

 DOUG

The rest of your Oz story?

 II-i-51

 MARILYN

Oh….well, anyway…everybody was around them in a circle for that fight. I was gonna throw a brick down on his head. But they got started so quick and Oz’s first swing hit him right square in

the jaw. I mean a vile, closed fist, full shot right in the teeth. Jimmy went down. Oz was dancin’ around daring him to get up taunting him like Muhammad Ali. “You cryin’? You want more? Get up!” Then everybody started to mumble and somebody said “Shut up, Oz”.. Dead silence. Then people just started walking away. Jimmy was bleeding all over the place. Put his little fists up and walked over to Oz. Finally, Oz just snorted and turned around. So…I ran down to the nurse and I told her where Jimmy was and what had happened. Oz disappeared for two weeks. I like to think I helped get him suspended.

 DOUG

A lightning bolt hit that tree. Split it right down the middle a month after Jim’s daughter passed away.

 MARILYN

Good. It had it comin’.

 (DOUG crosses back to the table to put out the cigarette. He sits)

You lasted longer with that thing than I thought you would, Doc.

 DOUG

I wanted to make sure my mouth tasted nice so when we start making out you won’t feel so self-conscious. So why did you get into show business?

 MARILYN

Approval. All you gotta do is be a teenage girl to know how much you care about what other people think of you. But that’s it. That’s the answer to life.

 DOUG

You always acted in school like you didn’t care what anybody thought of you.

 MARILYN

I’m a good actress.

 DOUG

All of that not caring work out well for you, did it?

 MARILYN

Don’t patronize me.

 DOUG

You could pretty much buy Iowa, I’d guess? You should be fine, if money is all it takes to be happy.

 MARILYN

 (A long moment) I bought a 33-million-dollar house in Beverly Hills, 3 Jaguars, a house in St Croix and a good- sized yacht. Not one family member ever spent a single second in any of them. I’ve got no kids. Nobody came over and shared my stuff; neighbors didn’t care. Their houses were as good as mine. I have the garbage guys come in and have breakfast with me on Tuesday mornings. And I’m thinking “Are you kidding me? This is the high-point?” I seriously thought about asking one of them to marry me just for the company. I’m pathetic. Its approval. (a moment, quietly) God…I don’t want to die alone. (Smiles) You know I pay an analyst $675 an hour for what you’re trying to do.

 II-i-52

 DOUG

I told you. We should get married, then.

 MARILYN

No.

 DOUG

So what is my day gonna be like when we get married and you keep me?

 MARILYN

Well…after you put your own futon back, you’ll have to walk down to the all-night liquor store at the corner and get my breakfast at three in the morning

 DOUG

(Smiles) I’m in.

 MARILYN

(Smiles) Eat me, Alice. You ain’t big enough for this rabbit hole.

 (ERIC Stands. Oddly frantic but trying to stay under control. Rises to his feet. He stares over the audience at the moon)

 ERIC

Creepy. It’s so quiet. (Points)That is a blue waning moon right there tonight. (Starts singing from CCR “Bad Moon Rising,”softly, creepy) “ I see the bad moon risin’. I hear the voice of rage and ruin.”

 (Turns to KEITH, calmly, darkly.)

We got to get out of here. Something…something…something.

 *(Song “Bad Moon Rising” covers the blackout.)*

 II-ii-53

 SCENE 2

Setting: (Very late. Nearly two AM that same night. Still on the patio. No music can be heard)

At Rise: (No one has moved. ERIC under control but still very earnest and intense, is up and pacing most of the time. Mildly reacting to Meth he has taken earlier He is drinking a cup of coffee now. DOUG is sitting a little closer to MARILYN now and has his arm draped over the back of her chair. JIMMY and PEGGY are at the table #2 now, too)

 MARILYN

Put these tables together!

 (THEY ALL move tables 1,2 & 3 together over the next few lines)

 ERIC

What kind of car did your family have?

 MARILYN

What? Hell, I can’t remember. Blue and white Dodge Station wagon, I think.

 ERIC

Right…1959 or 60?

 MARILYN

I don’t know.

 ERIC

Three tail lights in the back or one?

 MARILYN

How the hell would I remember... (Looks at him shocked) Three!!! How did you do that?

 ERIC

59…wasn’t as ugly as the 60. Terrible on gas though. Half a tank of gas to start it up.

Zero to fifty in about five minutes but in the snow it was art. The sun would hit the chrome right it’d put your eyes out. I knew the make and model of everybody’s car within four blocks of our house. In any direction. Everything in the neighborhood. I could even tell you whether your family gave out candy bars or crap for Halloween.

 KEITH

Root beer barrels. Remember those?

 JIMMY

Those’re why I don’t have any teeth.

 DOUG

Skybars and candy corn.

 MARILYN

I loved candy corn.

 II-ii-54

 PEGGY

Worst Halloween candy ever! You might as well give the kids a cube of painted sugar.

 KEITH

And sucking on Sugar Daddies. (To Eric who has begun to react) Don’t you say a word!

 ERIC

Not needed.

 KEITH

(Finally, joking) Cause I’ll kick your ass, buddy. I’m on a roll tonight.

 MARILYN

I remember my neighborhood. I loved it so much.

 PEGGY

What else do you guys remember?

 DOUG

Well, when I was still in my crib…

 MARILYN

Last week!

 DOUG

I was sick one time, and I remember intentionally throwing up and trying to hit the can at the bottom of the register my mom had put in as a humidifier. Trying to be tidy …or helpful maybe. That’s my first memory of *anything* in my life*.*

 JEANNIE

I recall helping my mom put sheets over the furniture when the people came to paint the living room. My grandmother had a stroke right in front of me when I was about five. “Hi Jeannie.” Then she just closed her eyes. I thought she was taking a nap until the emergency squad came.

 KEITH

When I was six, I played Red Rover every summer night with all the kids on the street. “Red rover red rover send Fifi right over.” I hated that game. What was the difference between Red Rover and London Bridge?

 PEGGY

London Bridge they’d tried to catch you in a hug. Red Rover you tried to break somebody’s arms. You run across to another line of kids.

 ERIC

Oh yeah…”London bridge is falling down”. Yeah, you had to sing…three-year-olds’ game. Red Rover was like for six or seven year olds. It was cool…

 PEGGY (Giggling)

Kick the can in my neighborhood. Going to everybody’s birthday parties. JIMMY

At eight years old we were playing whiffle ball baseball in the street.

 DOUG

CAAAAARRR COMIN’!!! I always ended up going in the sewer when the ball would roll down in it. I was the skinniest.

 MARILYN

I had a hula hoop. Barbie’s Deluxe Dream Kitchen. (Peggy squeals in delight)

II-ii-55

 JIMMY

When I was 10 years old, State was in the National Championship game and I was playing basketball all the next spring and summer down at the barn at the end of our street. I was gonna be the next John Havlicek. I came home to use the bathroom one day, and Dad had left the newspaper draped over the tub. I sat on the toilet and read that Marilyn Monroe had died.

 JEANNIE

And Batons…cheerleader twirling batons. My brother kept throwing mine on the roof and up in the trees.

 KEITH

At eleven-years-old was sixth grade.

 (A momentary pause by all)

 PEGGY

Everybody says that’s when America lost its innocence

 DOUG

Kennedy? Yeah, that’s what they say.

 PEGGY

Then Martin Luther King got shot, then Bobby Kennedy died.

 DOUG

You know what my father said when he heard Martin Luther King died?

(MARILYN shakes her head) “I figured somebody would get that sunnuvah bitch”.

 JIMMY

They burned up the streets in the cities after King died like they did in the summer race riots, Chicago Democratic convention riots, Davis and Carlos in Mexico City…and on top of that Vietnam was ramping up after Tet. I thought the country was done for.

 KEITH

Juniors in high school. Already convinced I had about two years to live. I was so worried about about being able to do push-ups for basic training and then getting shot. Go off to protect our interests overseas. (Intense) What interests? I didn’t have any interests in Southeast Asia.

 JIMMY

Remember that monk that set himself on fire in the middle of a Saigon street? That scared the hell out of me. I mean these guys meant it…they meant business. We should have known…this country. We should have never messed with those people.

 DOUG

I was just thinkin’. You know there wasn’t a single black in our town in 1970. Besides maids. We didn’t know how to deal with anybody that looked different than us. Still don’t.

 JEANNIE

Things tried to kill us back then too. Other than the war, I mean.

 KEITH

Yeah, Disco. Mirror balls gave me two convulsions that I *know* of.

 DOUG

Not like today, though. Terrorists. Jihad.

 JIMMY

Kids go to war to protect Oil. It’s no wonder the world hates us. Maybe we *are* the great Satans.

II-ii-56

 DOUG

I don’t know that our breed will be remembered too kindly. We started out with such hope and innocence in our childhood.

 MARILYN

And we end up with violence everywhere. That’s the answer to everything anymore. Every problem.

 DOUG

But who taught them? Who taught all this selfishness and hate?

 MARILYN

Where did all of the darkness come from?

 PEGGY

I didn’t go to school with you all. I taught for a living for a few decades. I watched the kids I taught go from innocence and questions, earnest joy to anger and sadness. At times, it was like watching an eclipse go across their faces from day to day. Child by child. One day there was sunshine on their shiny faces, the next was shadows and confusion and fear. One person there one day, the next day they were gone. Something else crept in. We teachers used to say “I don’t like you’re attitude”. We’ll they didn’t make that “attitude” up on their own.

 JIMMY

Not just our kids. It’s always been that way. Our parents were just better at hiding their darkness than we are.

 ERIC (To KEITH. Oddly dark, pleading)

I absolutely don’t feel right about being here tonight. Just some serious bad juju, man. I’m just all worked up inside.
 (Sits oddly straddling the chair facing upstage away from others)

 KEITH (To ERIC)

What’s up?

 JIMMY(Muttering, indicating ERIC))

Don’t know.

 (BOB *ENTERS Song: “If I could Turn Back the Hands of Time” plays as the door opens*)

 BOB

Last call. Let’s wrap it up okay…let’s get out of here. (*Music out when the doors closes)*

 DOUG

That sucks. Why…? It’s only (Checks his watch) It’s past one thirty. Are we the only ones left?

 II-ii-57

BOB

Not many. Harx and Betsy, Angie, Becky and Steve, a couple of others…Richard’s still out there dancin’ in the middle of the floor all by himself. Oz and Debbie and her husband. The DJ is still here. We should wrap it up. I have a 7:00 O’clock tee time.

 DOUG

Go home. Go sleep. I’ll lock up.

 BOB

Yeah…no. My name is on the rental agreement.

 DOUG

You seen Davey?

 JIMMY

Left a few hours ago, I think.

 BOB

His Mustang is out in the parking lot.

 JIMMY

I don’t know. Haven’t seen him. Maybe he left with somebody.

 DOUG

I better count on driving Scotty back to his hotel, then. He doesn’t look too good.

 BOB (SITTING at TABLE #1,2 3)

(To JIMMY) He been over there all night by himself?

 JIMMY

He hasn’t moved for like four hours.

 BOB

Is he still alive?

 JIMMY

I don’t know.

 BOB

Did you check?

 JIMMY

No.

 (JIMMY AND BOB stare at SCOTTY trying to muster courage to go over to him)

 BOB (Quietly)

Oh Shit.

 ERIC (Over the crowd, truly scared. Stands)

An’ I got…I got…you guys gotta take a look at this. (Takes off his shirt) I got a skin tag right on my left tit.

 MARILYN (Turning away)

Oh god!! …

 KEITH

Dammit man!!

 II-ii-58

ERIC (To DOUG)

Is that like…terminal?

 DOUG (Laughing)

Put that back on…jeez I don’t wanna look at that.

 ERIC

You see? You’re a doctor. Look at it for me. Right *on* the nipple.

 DOUG

Yeah, I see it. Get that out of here.

 ERIC (Whimpering)

You think…that that could be like, serious man?

 MARILYN (Slowly shaking her head)

That’s a grisly way to go, sweetie.

 DOUG

Somethin’s definitely tryin’ to eat your tittie, Slick.

 (Laughter from all but ERIC)

 JEANNIE

This has been so much more fun than I thought it would be.

 ERIC (To MARILYN whispering)

You know…you know I have cats.

 MARILYN

Really?

 ERIC

(Racing again)Yeah…two…and you know...you should listen to them. I used to put a little catnip in a bag and then the bag would go up in the air when the cats ran in and like…change directions several times…in mid air.

 MARILYN (Playing along)

And I should listen to your magic, flying, talking cats?

 ERIC

Yeah, yeah, all women should…listen to the cats.

 MARILYN

Why?

 ERIC

Cause they know.

 MARILYN

What do they know?

 ERIC

They know…they know how to get the man cat.

 MARILYN (A little defensively)

Oh really?

 ERIC

Oh yeah…cause when they’re ready…you know… ready?

 MARILYN

Yeah?

 II-ii-59

ERIC

(Intensely)When they’re ready…in the middle of the night and they want it…they just…drag their naked asses across the front lawn and scream at the top of their lungs…

 Silence. MARILYN AND ERIC look at each other. Oddly, ERIC is almost in tears. DOUG begins laughing. MARILYN begins to get indignant, but finally, can’t hold the laughter back)

 MARILYN

 Oh, my dear *God* what is wrong with you?

 ERIC (Plaintively)

Yeah, y’see? Women should do that, too. There wouldn’t be any more doubt anymore and guys would know what she wanted from right from the beginning. No more hurt feelings…

 MARILYN (Laughing)

Yeah okay, okay…nice image.

 DOUG

I think that is superb. There’s gotta be a dissertation in there somewhere.

 (ERIC rises…suddenly angry, a chair goes flying.)

 KEITH

Hey, what’s up?

 ERIC (Serious, quiet, scary)

You assholes…Something is going to happen here. Tonight! I can smell it coming. You can stay here if you want to. I’m out!

 (ERIC EXITS…no music. ALL are very quiet)

 DOUG

What the hell…?

 MARILYN

Did I say something?

 KEITH (Rising)

I’ll go after him. I’ll tell Angie…

 DOUG

Reefer madness.

 (No laughs from anyone)

 KEITH

That isn’t pot, Doug. Something’s wrong. Something is going on with him the last couple of hours.

 II-ii-60

 (KEITH EXITS following ERIC. The Scene shifts focus to BOB who warily crosses to SCOTTY)

 BOB

Scotty… (Pushes SCOTTY, no response) Scot….(Nothing, BOB looks back to the others…pushes again) Scotty!! (SCOTTY sighs and inhales deeply, looks slowly to BOB) You okay?

 SCOTTY (Barely audible)

Yeah.

 BOB

How many beers’ve you had?

 SCOTTY

I dunno.

 BOB

You okay?

 SCOTTY (Looking at BOB for a long time)

Yeah...I think so

 BOB

What? What are you lookin’ at?

 SCOTTY

Nothin’.

 BOB

You alright? You were pretty far away there.

 SCOTTY

What time is it?

 BOB

One thirty.

 SCOTTY (Trying to stand)

I need to leave. Whoa… (Sits)

 BOB

I just thought I’d check up on you. We’re gonna wrap this up here pretty soon. Doug said he’d take you back your hotel room.

 SCOTTY

You ever in my house?

 BOB

What…? No I don’t know where you live, Scotty.

 SCOTTY

My home. My first home with my mom and dad.

 BOB

(Thinks) Maybe…maybe once or twice with Cub Scouts or something. I think so. Up on Old Oak Road?

 II-ii-61

 SCOTTY

Yeah…I was just dreaming about my mom. It was so clear. I never remember dreams. I remembered this one. She used to love to put up the best Christmas trees. Real live ones with pines cones that snapped when they got hot.

 BOB

Not very many have live trees at Christmas anymore or even cut ones for that matter.

 SCOTTY

They smelled so good. And lights…We had them little bubble candles…big bulbs on the lights.

 BOB

And foil icicles.

 SCOTTY

Old ones were like leaded or something.

 BOB

Did you ever see those whirly gig ornaments that you would hang just above the bulb so that when it got hot, the hot air rising would make the thing whirl and spin around inside like a propeller?

 SCOTTY (Excitedly, like a kid)

Spinners! Spinning fans. Sometimes they called them birdcages because they had like a pointed roof. They were my favorite.

 BOB (Fondly)

Mine too.

 SCOTTY

I was sitting here remembering every present my mother and dad ever got me. Dinky Toy cars, boxes of baseball cards. And board games and trucks, and slot cars, HO scale, an aquarium one year, lots of ‘45s and albums… (A moment) I brought my mom back Christmas decorations from overseas when I came back from serving in the war. She never put ‘em up. (Sadly) Mom never put ‘em up once. She didn’t like to be reminded that I was over there and maybe almost died for “absolutely no fucking reason.” That’s the way she put it about Vietnam. (Suddenly) I drive trucks now. I drove a potato chip truck when I grew up, a lunch truck and a meat delivery truck…(Giggles) My boss’s name was Rocco and I was never allowed in the back. I just drove.

 BOB

Really?

 SCOTTY

Yeah. (Smiles) I probably was muscle for a mafia family and too dumb to even know it.

 BOB

You’re not so dumb, buddy. Smarter than most of us.

 SCOTTY

I’m real lucky. I know that.

 BOB

You think we should get ready to go?

 SCOTTY

Just a little while longer. I’m trying to get someplace. (Gestures to his head)

 BOB

Well…a little while then. (Rising) I’ll call you. I want to get a picture of all you ol’ codgers before you go.

 II-ii-62

 SCOTTY

Hey, Bob.

 BOB

Yeah?

 SCOTTY

You like being married?

 BOB

(Sits, thinks) I do. I know my sons love me. I love my wife more than my own next breath. (Laughs) My damned dog genuflects every time I come into the room.

 SCOTTY

Dogs are good.

 BOB

It is nice to have something hysterically glad to see you when you come home at night, idn’t it?

 SCOTTY

I imagine so.

 BOB

It took me three marriages. I never, ever imagined I could enjoy someone so completely. She is my best friend. Too bad it took so long to get to her. (A moment) Don’t give up, man. Don’t ever give up on finding somebody good to be with you.

 SCOTTY (Smiling)

So you think I should get a dog?

 BOB (Laughs)

Sure. Go get a big yella dog.

 SCOTTY

Loving somebody. Pretty simple idea, isn’t it?

 BOB

You’d think so.

 (BOB pats his shoulder and crosses and sits with the others at #1#2 #3. SCOTTY closes his eyes and goes back to his dream. Suddenly OZ, BETSY and HARX enter. *“Spirit in the Sky” plays when the door opens*. OZ stands a moment at the doorway. Sees MARILYN and advances. This time, more imperious and a little darker. Almost threatening ALL are watching)

 OZ (In a booming voice, toward Marilyn. Closes No music door “Spirit in the Sky” out.)

So *this* is where the action is.

 (MARILYN Sees him, mutters, looks down, shakes her head)

 MARILYN

Damn this whore. (Loudly) Cool your jets, Oz. Jus’ stay right there. Save your breath. I’ve made a decision.

 (OZ, smugly cocks his head)

 II-ii-63

 MARILYN CONT

Yeah, I uh…you convinced me. You finally got to me. I think it might be a good opportunity to do something *good* with my privileges.

 (MARILYN digs through her purse takes out a checkbook)

How much `ya need? How much is deeply needed for this (Sarcastically) chance of a lifetime? Who do I make it out to?

 (MARILYN begins writing in her checkbook)

 OZ

Well anything you might find appropriate. PZ Enterprises, even my name is fine. If it’s one unit, the better ones start at around $750,000, I believe.

 MARILYN

What do you say we make it a fat million, then?

 OZ

Excellent. Our ministries will certainly welcome such a generous contribution…

 (OZ Looks around for everyone’s approval of his good fortune. MARILYN Looks up, thinks better of it, continues writing the check)

 MARILYN

Let’s make it seven. No… How about fifteen million? Is that good enough? I think that’s a little better.

 OZ (Truly stunned and pleased)

Oh my...That would be a spectacular help to our Lord’s…

 MARILYN

Oh hell. Let’s just leave the amount blank.

 (DEAD silence)

 OZ (Moving toward her)

Miss North... your generosity knows no bounds. I am truly humbled…

 (MARILYN finishes her signature and rises and crosses to JIMMY with the check. She folds the check and puts it in his shirt pocket.)

 JIMMY

What is this?

 MARILYN

You buy the damned hospital, if you have to.

 JIMMY

I can’t…

 MARILYN

Why not? I’m not gonna ever use it all. (Whispers) Let me throw my brick this time.

 II-ii-64

 JIMMY

Thank you. MARILYN

You promise me one thing. You come back here in five years. Next reunion. You understand me?

 PEGGY

Thank you, Marilyn.

 JIMMY

I promise.

 (MARILYN Crosses and stops next to OZ.)

 MARILYN (Directly into OZ’s face)

People like you… almost make me hate God sometimes, you know that?

 (MARILYN Snaps her fingers, motions for DOUG to follow. He goes to her and takes her hand. BOTH EXIT. No music)

 DOUG

Well, I guess I’m leavin’ with a movie star, yes I am.

 BOB (Calling out)

Don’t leave. I want to get another photo.

 MARILYN (Off)

MAKE IT HAPPEN NOW BOBBY!

 BOB (Calling out into the other room)

DEBORAH…bring Gary over…The rest of you. We need pictures here.

 (ALL OF THE REST EXIT up center, HARX, BETSY,OZ and BOB are the last to go.)

 OZ (To BOB, looking at MARILYN)

That woman has *such* a troubled heart. I feel her pain.…I feel compelled to follow her and…

 BOB (Calmly interrupting)

Shut up, Oz.

 (OZ stands, cold, imperious and alone Finally, OZ EXITS. BOB looks back to SCOTTY)

You comin?

 (No response. To HARX and BETSY sitting at TABLE #2)

What’re you guys doin’? I’m trying to get everybody in the other room for pictures

 II-ii-65 HARX

You round everybody up. We’ll be in, in a minute

 (BOB EXITS. HARX and BETSY are holding hands. They look at SCOTTY who is sitting with his head back, eyes closed, grinning.)

He’s having a good time.

 BETSY

Seems to be.

 HARX

So did I.

 BETSY

Me too.

 HARX

I’m glad .

 BETSY

So am I.

 HARX

Really?…Because if you are…Betsy I don’t ever want to walk out of your life. I don’t want you to leave on Monday.

 BETSY (A little wary)

What are you saying?

 HARX

You want to get to know each other again? I’m convinced…I was convinced the first time I saw you. I still am. I want to do it. I’ll move to Colorado.

 BETSY

That’s crazy Harx.

 HARX

Why? Are you going to move back here?

 BETSY

I can’t. You know that.

 HARX

We’ve both agreed that these hours have been the best in decades for both of us!! So what else is left to do? Go back to lonely houses and wait alone for our sad little ends? (Resolute) I’m doing it. I’m gonna have an apartment in Colorado by the end of next week.

 BETSY

I think you might.

 HARX

You would like to see me again, right? I hope.

 BETSY

Oh yes…I would.

 HARX

On a regular basis?

 II-ii-66

 BETSY

Yes.

 HARX

(Silence) Look, it’s taken me 40 years to make my move. You’re going to have to help a little here.

 BETSY

This is the most romantic thing anyone has ever done for me.

 HARX

And not even remotely close to what might be.

 BETSY

You don’t know anything about me.

 HARX

I know you like soft voices, Tom Waits, grandchildren…

 BETSY

What if I turn out to be human? What happens if I’m not what you dream about ?

 HARX

I don’t want her. I’m afraid of her. (They laugh) I want a lady. This lady. Whom I was privileged to adore since I was a kid.

 BETSY

But what if…

 HARX

Shh. Don’t you *want* to be cherished? Dont you *want* to be worshipped? What’s wrong with you?

 BETSY

I really don’t know.

 HARX

(Kiss) I’ll take you to the parade tomorrow, to the fireworks, to the ballet on Sunday.

 BETSY

To the airport on Monday.

 HARX

And next weekend, I’m taking you to the moon.

 BETSY

You are so… sappy.

 HARX

I’ll be there. I promise.

 BETSY

You... (Shakes her head) are also very brave.

 HARX

(Kisses her gently) Now look into my eyes. (She does and he nods his head) I’m there. I’m in your kiss, I’m in your eyes. I’m there …

 BETSY

Never in a million years did I think this might happen tonight.

 II-ii-67

 (DAVEY has entered down right very quietly from the aisle and sadly stands with his hands in his suitcoat pockets watching the two from the dark. He is barely visible far downright)

 HARX

I’ll tell you stories. I’ll tell you all the times I thought about you, and every song I sang to you that you never heard. Every time I dreamed that you were thinking about me and every time you looked at another guy and I was jealous.

 BETSY

 And the sap…just… keeps pouring out of you. HARX

Oh…(Slowly shaking his head and smiling into her eyes) You have seen nothing yet. I’m going to make you immortal.

 BOB (Off )

PICTURE HARX, SCOTTY, BETSY NOW!!

 (As they open the door “Nights in White Satin” can be heard. HARX

 AND BETSY exit up center, holding hands)

Okay lets smile...let’s get this picture.

 (The doors are left slightly open when BETSY AND HARX leave)

Let’s be memorable, people. Give your grandchildren something to remember. Come on…at least pretend you’ve enjoyed the last 58 years. C’mon! Smile!!

(*The music builds,* a young ASIAN WOMAN has slipped in behind SCOTTY and drapes her arms around his neck. She lays her head on his shoulder. He does not move, and only keeps smiling, eyes closed, head back. Dreaming of this girl who is the memory of LIEN. Suddenly, SCOTTY’S eyes fly open and he turns to see DAVEY standing, looking into the open doorway leading into the dancehall area. DAVEY reveals a handgun. DAVEY stands a moment and finally begins to move toward the door.)

 SCOTTY (Quietly)

Hey, Dave.

 (DAVEY stops walking, closes the door without turning around. The song stops)

What’s up?

 DAVEY (Barely audible)

I got to talk to these people.

 SCOTTY (A moment)

You ought’n to do that, buddy.

 II-ii-68

 DAVEY (Darkly)

What?

 SCOTTY

What you got in your hand, there. That ain’t right. You know better’n that.

 DAVEY (To him)

I don’t think I do.

 SCOTTY

Yeah, you do.

 DAVEY

Yeah?

 SCOTTY (Calmly, deliberately)

That ain’t no answer.

 (DAVEY turns back and starts to walk to the door.)

Davey! We’ve *all* done stuff and had stuff done to us. But this kinda violence is not a way to deal with things.

 (DAVEY stops again. SCOTTY crosses to DAVEY, SLOWLY)

I knew you as the first person outside of my family when we were little tiny kids. I knew your mom and dad almost as good as my own. (Silence) We got raised better’n this, Davey! This (to the gun) isn’t us. This ain’t our kind. This certainly isn’t you. People our age?…. Hurting other people is not gonna fix things. We should know that by now.

 DAVEY (To SCOTTY)

You did. That boy in Viet Nam.

 SCOTTY

And a day doesn’t go by that that doesn’t make me ill in my heart. War doesn’t fix anything, does it? Hurting somebody that breaks your heart…does that make them love you the way you want? Would you really want her now that you know that she don’t love you?

 (Quietly…pushing his hand with the gun down slowly. Whispering)

Please put that away.

 DAVEY

(Swaying a little) I uh…I been drinkin’ a little bit more than usual tonight, you know.

 SCOTTY

Maybe a little.

 DAVEY (A moment, trying to regain coherency)

Wow…(Looks at the gun) People are such stains…you know.

 SCOTTY

Sometimes they are a challenge.

 DAVEY

I don’t think I was really gonna do anything. Not really.

 SCOTTY

Nah.

 II-ii-69

 DAVEY

I might have though.

 SCOTTY

You wouldn’a done anything.

 DAVEY

Did you really *like* seeing these people again?

 SCOTTY

Yeah. It was fun. I guess.

 DAVEY

I don’t know any of them no more.

 SCOTTY

No.

 DAVEY

She killed my unborn child, Scotty. My only child, ever.

 SCOTTY

I know. They ain’t no easy answers why to these things. None of it is clean.

 DAVEY

It’s on her though.

 SCOTTY

Yeah

 DAVEY

I saw guilt on her. I think I’ll let her live with that some more. (Puts the gun back into his pocket, then to SCOTTY) Thank you.

 SCOTTY

You’re good now?

 DAVEY

 (Truly amazed) How do people just go like that? Just abandon somebody…no thought at all.

 SCOTTY

That’s the way it is these days. That’s the way some people behave.

 DAVEY

Some people don’t have a clue how to live a life, then.

 SCOTTY

I guess not.

 DAVEY

I don’t. I know how to drink and I know how to be mean. And I know I’m always right about everything. (Shakes his head) Jeesus… SCOTTY

You do better’n that.

 DAVEY

I’m not so sure. (Hugs SCOTTY) (To the door) I wanna go inside.

 SCOTTY

Gonna start something, still?

 II-ii-70 DAVEY

No. I just want to see her. Just want to watch her and her husband a little bit. It’s kind of like I had something to do with it. Her happiness, I mean. By lettin’ go. Maybe that’ll help. You understand?

 SCOTTY (Shaking his head, smiles)

Nope…that’s about three layers of crazy deeper than I like to go.

 DAVEY

(Shaking his head) Nothin’ left though…

 SCOTTY

 (Smiles, a moment). You know, there are others out there that need you. Just waitin’ for you.

 DAVEY

Me? Who? Where?

 SCOTTY

Well, …I’m gonna go get me a big yella dog tomorrow. You wanna come with me?

 DAVEY

What?

 SCOTTY

Dog. (thinks for a second) Pluto.

 DAVEY

Tomorrow?

 SCOTTY

Yeah, We’ll do tomorrow.

 DAVEY

Tomorrow. Sure, why not?

 (They open the doors and are greeted with shouts of “DAVEY!!” and “SCOTTY” and “Get in the picture, hurry up”, not knowing how close they came to dying. DAVEY EXITS. SCOTTY hesitate a moment, looks back to LIEN in a low spot. They briefly look at one another. SCOTTY smiles at her, and the spot quickly fades out) (“Bridge Over Troubled Water” comes up)