

ABSTRACT

A Reconcilable Difference: A Director's Approach to Geoffrey Nauffts' *Next Fall*

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Despite its significance in contemporary society, the nuances of conversation surrounding homosexuality are rarely civilly discussed in Christian circles, particularly without bias. It is typically definitively addressed or simply ignored. Considering that the person of Jesus taught primarily through stories, why is it so rare for art to thoughtfully consider both faith and the LGBTQ community? This thesis examines nine plays that emphasize both of these topics, as well as their purposes, similarities, and effects. One of the nine plays, *Next Fall* by Geoffrey Nauffts, is more comprehensively explored with the intent of production. Next, production documentation brings to life the creative process, rehearsal period, and production of *Next Fall*. Finally, the closing chapter provides insight into reflection, critique, and reception of the performance.

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A RECONCILABLE DIFFERENCE:
A DIRECTOR'S APPROACH TO GEOFFREY NAUFFTS' *NEXT FALL*

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CHAPTER ONE

Exploring the Intersection of Homosexuality and Christianity

Introduction

In her book *Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again*, Rachel Held Evans observes:

While God indeed delivered a few sermons and entertained a couple of theological discussions, it is notable that according to the Gospels, when God was wrapped in flesh and walking among us, the single most occupying activity of the Creator of the universe, the Ultimate Reality, the Alpha and Omega and the great I AM of ages past and ages to come, was to tell stories.¹

From a Christian perspective, stories are Jesus' primary way of teaching. As a Christian in theatre, Christ's model advances my art past mere entertainment and into something much more transformative. For Christ and for me, stories are where Truth and culture converge.

There are few topics as contentious as that of homosexuality, both in religious circles and the broader culture. If the Christ-follower primarily learns about God, society, and oneself through narrative, why are stories about intersecting faith and sexuality examined so infrequently? It is a difficult topic to explore, but artists should not just interact with what is easy.

Through the examination of nine plays, this thesis explores the intersection of homosexuality and Christianity in regards to how it is approached, displayed, and regarded within stories—specifically in the medium of theatre.

¹ Rachel Held Evans, *Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again* (Nashville: Nelson Books, 2018), 158.

Steve Turner, in his book *Imagine: A Vision for Christians in the Arts*, lists six things that art can accomplish: “The arts can sharpen the vision, quicken the intellect, preserve the memory, activate the conscience, enhance the understanding, and refresh the language.”² These six things describe art’s purpose, but this thesis will also use them to examine the purpose of homosexuality and Christianity as presented in the nine plays.

Sharpen the Vision

“As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”³

In his chapter “The Times”, Turner asserts, “The ideas we end up disagreeing with can have the effect of making our faith more vital by forcing us to examine what we really believe.”⁴ Because homosexuality is such a polarizing topic, especially within Christian communities, audiences are often challenged with characters or ideas with which they may disagree. Even if some ideas presented are seemingly “at variance with” traditional Christian thought,” Turner assures there is still “wisdom to be gleaned.”⁵

While the audience is contending with complex theology, oftentimes, so are the characters in the play. As play sharpens audience, so one character sharpens another. For example, in the play *Embracing* by Stan Denman, the central conflict is between two friends and their deep disagreement with one another on the topic of homosexuality. Their deep-seated beliefs trigger many arguments—explosive battles where slurs such as “faggot”, “fascist” and “go to hell” are the ammunition. Only when they begin peaceful conversation does their fury abate to examination. Ben—struggling with faith and recently

² Steve Turner, *Imagine: A Vision for Christians in the Arts*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2017), 78.

³ Prov. 27:17 (NIV)

⁴ Turner, 122.

⁵ Ibid.

out of the closet—admits to Traci, “I prayed last night too. For the first time in, well, forever. It was a long sucker too. About this...and stuff...It felt good, ya know?”⁶ Traci, whose fundamentalist Christian faith is only so strong because it has never been challenged, admits to Ben, “I’m not sure of much these days...I’m just...I’m not certain anymore.”⁷ At the end of the play, they still disagree, but only after appreciating their differences and allowing their opposition to refine their own beliefs. While they do not fully reach reconciliation, Ben acknowledges that they may reach it one day in one of his final lines: “Hope. There’s hope.”⁸

In Geoffrey Nauffts’ play *Next Fall*, Adam is confused by his boyfriend’s view that homosexuality is a sin. Adam teases Luke for his inane reasoning, but this mocking only serves to weaken their relationship and polarize their beliefs even more. One intentional conversation motivates Adam to deeply examine the origins of his vitriol toward faith:

*Adam closes his eyes...He sits there, open for something to happen. Nothing. He squeezes them tighter, desperately trying to feel the warmth, something. Still nothing. He gives it one last shot, his face softening this time, and there’s a peace that washes over him. A calm. Then, after what seems like an eternity, Adam opens his eyes again, and finds himself back where he started.*⁹

This examination prompts no immediate faith acquisition, nor does Adam ever fully endorse Luke’s beliefs—but Adam’s honest examination does refine his thinking. He begins by acknowledging his extreme struggle with “all the doubts, everything I’ve been

⁶ Stan Denman, *Embracing* (Manuscript, Waco, 2015), 82-3.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁹ Geoffrey Nauffts, *Next Fall* (New York: Dramatists Play Service, 2010), 54 [stage direction].

questioning for the past five years” in his relationship with Luke. He concludes, “none of it meant anything all of a sudden. It was just us...Me and Luke...That’s all that mattered.”¹⁰

One last example comes in Drew Pautz’s play *Love the Sinner*. In the opening scene, Anglican clergy gather at an African conference determining whether or not to affirm homosexuality within the church. There is a very clear delineation between those who want to “evolve, remain current”¹¹ and those that firmly believe “it is wrong.”¹² After a muddled assortment of quarrelling, listening, and ignoring one another, American clergyman Simon bemoans, “We’re not going to agree.” Another clergyman, Stephen entreats “But we’re still talking, don’t you see? We’re more than the sum of our parts because we aim to discover and emulate God’s way. In that alone we can be an example. We can be a model here on earth how human relations might be.”¹³

These three plays are superb models of “how human relations might be,” especially as a person of faith approaching the topic of homosexuality. Someone’s differing, perhaps even opposite, opinion does not have to end in one side’s victory or loss. Art sharpens the vision, it does not decide it. By giving voice to characters who are forced to examine their beliefs on homosexuality, the playwrights are in turn forcing audiences to examine their own beliefs. The characters that consider the differing opinion, inspect it thoroughly, and allow transformation to exemplify a healthy relationship with challenging material—a relationship the audience is encouraged to emulate.

¹⁰ Ibid., 71.

¹¹ Drew Pautz, *Love The Sinner* (London: Nick Hern Books, 2010), 13.

¹² Ibid., 10.

¹³ Ibid., 29.

Quicken the Intellect

“But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation...One who prophecies edifies the church.”¹⁴

Ezekiel lay on his side for 430 days, ate a scroll, and cooked food over cow manure. Isaiah walked around naked and barefoot for three years. Jeremiah hid his unwashed underwear in a rock crevice. The Bible brims with prophets and their bizarre theatrical displays. While a camel’s hair tunic and a diet of locusts in the wilderness may not seem like artistic fodder, Turner suggests that artists today can still mimic some prophetic strategies. He contends, “Like the acts of the prophets, these works puzzle, provoke, and prompt questions.”¹⁵

Certainly, these performative divinations were puzzling and provoking, but they also edified the Church. Ezekiel laying on his side was representative of him bearing the sins of Israel and Judah. Isaiah walked around naked to invoke God, so He would strip their enemies of power. Jeremiah’s revolting underwear was a symbol for Jerusalem’s ruinous pride. Underneath the provocative and confusing, prophets had purpose.

The artist-prophet must constantly maintain this equilibrium: she is both a provocateur and an edifier; both a soother and an exhorter; both an interrogator and a consoler. With this dichotomy, the artist acts as a catalyst—one who quickens the audience’s intellectual discernment. As R.G. Collingwood concludes in his book *The Principles of Art*, “he tells his audience, at the risk of their displeasure, the secrets of their own hearts.”¹⁶

¹⁴ 1 Cor. 14:3-4 (NASB)

¹⁵ Turner, 97.

¹⁶ R. G. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938), 336.

Although the nine plays contain no mention of cow dung, each of them does act as prophecy—they require audiences to question, and therefore refine, their preconceived thoughts on homosexuality and the Church. Sarah Ruhl’s *Passion Play* puzzles audiences by following diverse groups of people as they navigate strange occurrences while performing Christ’s passion. Terrence McNally’s infamous *Corpus Christi* provokes audiences to re-examine Christ as a young, gay man in 1950s Corpus Christi, Texas. Jon Hartmere and Damon Intrabartolo’s pop opera *Bare* prompts many questions through the characters’ journeys of reconciliation of faith and sexuality.

Oftentimes, the plays will have one specific character who symbolizes the work’s unified goal of prophecy. Both in *Bare* and in Matthew Lombardo’s *High*, the character of the prophet is represented by brazen, sharp-tongued, and aggressively devoted nuns, Sister Chantelle and Sister Connolly respectively. In *Corpus Christi*, the embodiment of prophecy is appropriately Jesus Christ himself—Joshua, as he is affectionately called in the script.

One great example of a prophet character is Stephen in *Love the Sinner*. The goal of the clergy in the opening conference is to edify the church, but Stephen approaches this goal with the utmost compassion. He exhorts, “Everyone wants me to condemn. Do you think that will change anyone’s mind? Or his heart? We can only find agreement together.”¹⁷ He is prompting questions in the same way as Judas and Silas, who, “being prophets themselves, encouraged and strengthened the brethren.”¹⁸

Near the end of the play, Joseph, a gay African immigrant, has made his home in the basement of a church. Daniel, one clergyman shares his concern, calling the

¹⁷ Pautz, 28.

¹⁸ Acts 15:32 (NASB)

accommodation “a scandal.”¹⁹ Stephen begins his response by countering, “Why would this be a scandal?” He goes on to explain, “What’s scandalous is, this is what we’re supposed to do, in front of our eyes, man to man, and you don’t even want me to engage, to talk to him.”²⁰ Stephen provokes preconceived assumptions and asks questions of Daniel, but in a way that instructs. Even though Daniel’s mind is not changed—he keeps encouraging Joseph to leave—his thought-process is challenged then refined. Stephen then turns his attention toward Joseph whom he encourages and consoles.

Turner’s association of art and prophecy is easily observable, not only in thematic messages, but in specific characters. These characters puzzle, provoke, and prompt questions, but they also counsel, strengthen, and encourage other characters and thus the audience. The artist as a prophet quickens individuals’ intellect, refines their understanding, and edifies their thinking. And when the assembly of God is edified, so is the Church.

Preserve the Memory

“Do not be overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good.”²¹

Jazz musician Max Roach once said, “The artist is like a secretary...He keeps a record of time.”²² Art preserves memory of past culture, people, and ideas. Certainly, there are many ways to do so, so the question becomes: how should Christ-followers approach preservation through art?

¹⁹ Pautz, 102.

²⁰ Ibid., 103.

²¹ Rom. 12:21 (NIV)

²² Max Roach, quoted in Ted Gioia, *The History of Jazz* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

Today, movies like *Miracles from Heaven*, *Facing the Giants*, and *God's Not Dead* are extremely popular among evangelical Christians. As are Biblical retellings—Noah, Moses, Jesus, and Paul all have recently received lots of artistic attention. These types of stories can be uplifting, but they also seem to reinforce a world order of “how things should be” to their select audiences. They are not typically representative of life.

While sin, suffering, and evil are unsavory, these aspects of life must be present in order to be truthful. In addition to capturing the entire spectrum of human life, Daniel Defoe suggests another reason sin should not be circumvented. In the preface of his novel *Moll Flanders* he states, “To give the history of a wicked life repented of, necessarily requires that the wicked part should be made as wicked as the real history of it will bear, to illustrate and give beauty to the penitent part, which is certainly the best and the brightest, if related with equal spirit and life.”²³ Both evil and good should be present so that the evil can be overcome by the good.

Even though the nine examined plays span thirty years, there are observable similarities among them as to how homosexuality and faith are preserved. Although one or many characters typically believe it is wicked, the playwrights never present homosexuality as the ultimate sin.

In *Lilies* by Michel Marc Bouchard, Bishop Bilodeau sees the evil in being gay, but does not see evil in the murder he has committed. *Passion Play* shows a German soldier condemning homosexuality, but his rebuke is subtly contrasted with his Nazi ideology. *High* seems to question the notion that homosexuality is something to be cured—contrasting the actual treatment that is needed for drug-addiction, especially in religious

²³ Daniel Defoe, *Moll Flanders* (London, 1722).

environments. In *Corpus Christi*, Joshua heals Phillip, not of his love of other men, but of AIDS, anger, and violence. In all these instances, initial rejection of homosexuality morphs into some sort of ambiguity or neutrality.

Because perception of homosexuality is polarizing amongst characters, it often forces them to sift out what is most important. In *Next Fall*, Adam recognizes how powerful his love for Luke is. Talking about their relationship, Adam realizes, “It was like...*finally*...I believed.”²⁴ The character of Peter in *Bare*, recognizes that his love for Jason “was pure and nothing else brought [him] closer to God.”²⁵

In all these plays, the author gives his own “history of wickedness” by identifying what is bad. Thus, homosexuality is presented as either the good that overcomes, or at the very least, a vague middle ground. By fully illustrating the wickedness, these playwrights truly “illuminate and give beauty to the penitent part.”²⁶ These playwrights certainly aim to preserve the memory of beauty.

Activate the Conscience

“As you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.”²⁷

In Terrence McNally’s *Corpus Christi*, Joshua sees Phillip for the first time and asks his disciples, “Who’s that?”²⁸ They unanimously reject him answering, “He’s bad news” and calling him a “disease-ridden, filthy whore”, “dangerous”, and “sick”.

²⁴ Nauffts, 71.

²⁵ Jon Hartmere and Damon Intrabartolo, *Bare* (New York: Theatrical Rights, 2009), 112.

²⁶ Defoe, *Moll Flanders*.

²⁷ Matt. 25:40 (ESV)

²⁸ Terrence McNally, *Corpus Christi* (New York: Grove Press, 1999), 53.

Defiantly, Joshua walks up to Phillip and remarks “I love you.”²⁹ After the disciples see this act of love, Peter apologizes, “I’m sorry, Phillip, I wronged you. We all did.”³⁰ *Corpus Christi* powerfully depicts Joshua as someone who knows the Pentateuchal law “You shall not harden your heart, nor close your hand from your poor brother.”³¹ Just like Joshua to his disciples, art can activate an audience’s conscience.

The great author and essayist Flannery O’Connor articulates, “Writers who see by the light of their Christian faith will have, in these times, the sharpest eyes for the grotesque, for the perverse, for the unacceptable.”³² Though talking specifically about her passion for writing, this should apply to all Christ-following artists. By examining and even depicting the grotesque, artists can inform audiences of their existence and illustrate how to engage them.

Of course, Jesus is the ultimate example of faithfully recognizing those who are oppressed, but there are more great examples in the eight other plays. In *High*, the abused and drug-addicted Cody has seen a life full of perversity. Father Delpapp recognizes this and insists on helping the boy. Early on Father recognizes, “He shouldn’t be punished for being worse off than the others. Sister. He has no one.”³³ Even after Cody’s stubbornness, drug-addiction, and refusal to seek help cause turmoil within the church’s sobriety program, Father insists, “I won’t abandon him.”³⁴ Despite her reservations and reluctance

²⁹ Ibid., 53-4.

³⁰ Ibid., 56.

³¹ Deut. 15:7 (NASV)

³² Flannery O’Connor. *Mystery and Manners* (New York: Farrar, 1970).

³³ Matthew Lombardo, *High* (Manuscript, New York, 2011), 7.

³⁴ Ibid., 69.

to admit a drug addicted teen into her care, Sister Connolly prays for Cody, “This kid’s had one shitty life...None of this is his fault. From the day he was born he never had a chance. So why does he have to suffer like this?”³⁵

Joseph’s circumstances in *Love the Sinner* are also unacceptable and grotesque. He comes from a very poor family and fears their reaction when he tells them his sexual orientation: “They will break my legs, they will whip me...When my family hear they will kill me.”³⁶ Earlier in the play, Stephen acknowledges that “people do terrible things sometimes. We refuse to look one another in the eye.”³⁷ Later, when faced with Joseph, Stephen tells him “I’m looking you in the eye, Joe. Tell me what you want.”³⁸

Michael labels himself a Christian but does quite the opposite of Stephen. When Joseph begs him for help, Michael viciously responds “No. No this is sick, get out of my room...Get out!”³⁹

When Jason goes to confession in *Bare*, he tells the Father about his love for Peter. The Priest initially deems homosexuality as perverse and unacceptable, emphatically rebuking Jason and encouraging him that “God will forgive.”⁴⁰ Later, after Jason’s suicide, Peter approaches the Father and challenges him, “You hid behind a screen knowing how

³⁵ Ibid., 59.

³⁶ Pautz, 48.

³⁷ Ibid., 95.

³⁸ Ibid., 115.

³⁹ Ibid., 48.

⁴⁰ Hartmere and Intrabartolo, 104.

much empathy might mean.”⁴¹ Peter suggests that the true perversity was how much Jason was suffering while the Church did nothing.

By attuning audiences to the perversity that exists in the world, these plays lead some viewers to redefine what perversion. Exploring immorality highlights both beneficial and harmful responses. When a character is aware of another character’s distress and hurt, this activates an audience’s awareness as well. The audience sees Joshua’s response to Phillip and recognizes it as holy. And, as expressed in Matthew’s gospel, in offering care for the least of these, one is also caring for Christ himself.

Enhance the Understanding

“The beginning of wisdom is this: get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.”⁴²

In Salvatore Antonio’s *In Gabriel’s Kitchen*, an Italian-American Catholic family is forced to acknowledge one son’s coming out. Before Gabriel’s official profession of sexuality, Concetta, the mother, prays for her son in a curiously specific way. She pleads with God:

After all this devotion, there are certain things that I see, that I cannot accept...I pray for the strength—not to accept, no. Instead I pray for the strength not to see. Blindness...I pray hard for my son Gabriel: that all I see in him, is not as I understand to be.⁴³

Concetta, as with many other characters in these nine plays, seems very concerned with not knowing or ignoring. She doesn’t want to understand her son fully—she wants to ignore an important part about who he is.

⁴¹ Ibid., 112.

⁴² Prov. 4:7 (NIV)

⁴³ Salvatore Antonio, *In Gabriel’s Kitchen* (Toronto: Playwright’s Canada Press, 2007), 55.

Turner astutely observes, “Christians often ignore the pressing questions of the day. This could be because they fear that even to understand the issues in depth might weaken their faith.”⁴⁴ Certainly, ignoring things is easy, but as Proverbs states, “Blessed are those who find wisdom, those who gain understanding.”⁴⁵

While Concetta silently prays, her husband takes a more direct approach to ignoring Gabriel’s sexuality. He barks, “I am not going to acknowledge this. Ever. So find a way to get this out of you...This will never be spoken about again.”⁴⁶ In *Bare*, Peter’s mother is another example of a parent ignoring rather than trying to understand. In a phone conversation with his mom about his sexuality, Claire insists on hanging up. Peter begs, “Please don’t shut me out here” but then realizes, “You don’t want to hear it. You don’t want to see me. Can’t bear to see me.”⁴⁷ After this same phone call, Claire reveals, “I guess there are some things we don’t want to see.”⁴⁸ In *Embracing*, even non-parent Traci acknowledges that “it was easier when I didn’t know.”⁴⁹

In these instances, when obliviousness is sought over understanding, there are always repercussions. A contributing factor to Ben and Traci’s copious arguments in *Embracing* is her unwillingness to understand him. After their phone conversation in *Bare*, Peter and his mother do not talk again. In *In Gabriel’s Kitchen*, Gabriel feels so ignored by his family that he kills himself. Even after his suicide, Concetta cannot face her own

⁴⁴ Turner, 127.

⁴⁵ Prov. 3:13 (NIV)

⁴⁶ Antonio, 83.

⁴⁷ Hartmere and Intrabartolo, 85.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 87.

⁴⁹ Denman, 35.

responsibility. Gabriel's brother Marco accuses, "You are ignoring the biggest part. You leave out what we did. What WE did to him. You and Pa and me. It's because of us that he went and—"50

In his letter to the Colossians, Paul says:

My goal is that they might be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.⁵¹

These plays force audiences to sit, listen, see, and understand—all of which unite people in love.

Some characters in these plays even arrive at acceptance. Only after Gabriel's death does Marco start to enhance his understanding of his brother's life. He tells Concetta, "All of a sudden I understood everything in a different way."⁵² Though it literally cost him nearly all he had, Marco finally got understanding.

Refresh the Language

"Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you probe the limits of the Almighty?"⁵³

"I have found the cross hard to translate into art because it has been done so many times. How do we look at it in another way?" Turner muses. "How do we make these familiar things (the cross, thorns, nails, blood) seem unfamiliar and the unfamiliar things (atonement, sacrifice) seem familiar?"⁵⁴ Often audience members will enjoy a show, then

⁵⁰ Antonio, 42.

⁵¹ Col. 2:2-3 (NIV)

⁵² Antonio, 99.

⁵³ Job 11:7 (NIV)

⁵⁴ Turner, 112.

immediately forget it. How can a show reveal more about who God is? How can a show take overdone imagery and revitalize it?

The supreme example of this is McNally's *Corpus Christi*. Many lines are direct quotes from scripture, but because of the entirely unusual context of Jesus and his disciples as a group of gay men, McNally's intent is that the words take on new meaning. For example, when God's voice rings, "This is My beloved son in whom I take great delight"⁵⁵—many audiences, both gay and straight alike, may have never thought about God delighting in a gay person. Audiences probably have a similar reaction when Joshua says pointedly, "We're each special. We're each ordinary. We're each divine."⁵⁶ Joshua's line "God loves us most when we love each other"⁵⁷ may not be taken directly from scripture, but in the context of a group of gay men it has a different significance than it would normally.

In his introduction, McNally attempts to explain his reasoning for approaching such lofty and controversial subject matter. He begins by explaining, "A ritual is an action we perform over and over because we have to. Otherwise, we are in danger of forgetting the meaning of that ritual." He then suggests Christ's great sacrifice has become a ritual whose meaning many have forgotten. He concludes, "Christ died for all of our sins because He loved each and every one of us. When we do not remember His great sacrifice, we condemn ourselves to repeating its terrible consequences."⁵⁸ His goal is to refresh the Bible's language, so the audience is not complacent about Christ's magnificent sacrifice.

⁵⁵ McNally, 31.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 50.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 61.

⁵⁸ Ibid., vii.

Perhaps McNally could have pursued this ambition through less controversial subject matter. He even acknowledges in his script that this play may not resonate with everyone. In the last few lines, the Actor Playing Thaddeus recognizes, “Maybe other people have told His story better. Other actors. This was our way.”⁵⁹ What is certain is that Terrence McNally took an unconventional approach to probing the limits of God. While many argue that his specific method was blasphemy, others argue that their faith has been renewed through McNally’s reimagining and revitalization of Christ’s narrative.

Conclusion

To get a closer and more personal experience with the intersection of story, Christianity, and homosexuality, I directed the play *Next Fall*, one of the nine plays which I initially examined. The next chapters document my analysis, creative process, and the reception of the production.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 81.

CHAPTER TWO

Next Fall Hodge Analysis

Introduction

The Hodge Script Analysis is named after its creator Francis Hodge who was a former professor emeritus in The University of Texas at Austin Department of Theatre and Dance. This specific analysis is widely known and used in order for the director to thoughtfully and thoroughly examine the play being directed before beginning rehearsals. Comprehensive evaluation of the play allows for directors to more fully understand characters, themes, interpretations, and story in order to increase productivity during rehearsals and to preserve the integrity of the script. The collected information begins with specific, objective facts and ends to subjective interpretation based upon those facts.

Given Circumstances

This section is an intentionally abbreviated outline of play's pertinent information in order to curate the essential elements that make up the play.

Environmental Facts

Time. The action takes place in the present, and in the five-year period leading up to it. Because of events mentioned (i.e. 9/11 and Whitney Houston referenced as alive) it can be deduced that the five-year action of the play takes place somewhere between roughly 2005 and 2016. It probably takes place on the earlier side of that range because flip phones are used rather than blackberries or iPhones. The action in the present begins in the late afternoon/night and gets progressively later and later, ultimately spanning a 12-hour period.

The first two scenes of past action take place about a week apart, but then previous action starts jumping a year between each scene. Times range from morning to afternoon to night time. The season is subtly implied to be fall in each scene, as overtly verified by the title.

Place. All action takes place in Manhattan. The scenes in the present all happen at the Mount Sinai Beth Israel hospital on Manhattan's lower east side. Five of these current scenes are in a waiting room—sterile, mint green, and sparse with fluorescent lights, scattered magazines and uncomfortable furniture. One is in Luke's hospital room, and one is in the hospital's small makeshift Jewish temple. Four of the flashback scenes happen in Luke and Adam's small Manhattan apartment. The other flashback sequences take place on a rooftop, Adam's first one-bedroom apartment, and in Central Park.

Economics. The characters are all white and therefore benefit from a certain degree of privilege. Money and class are never worried about or discussed too much. Brandon works for a prestigious property developer and makes a lot of money. Butch was broke when he and Arlene were married, but he divorced and married a wealthier woman and is now very well off. Luke starts as a cater waiter, then begins working at Holly's candle shop—acting whenever he can on the side. Adam starts by working at the candle shop but ends up pursuing what he loves—teaching. Neither makes much money—their apartment they buy together is very tiny—but they are happy with what they do. Holly is a shop owner and does fairly well for herself. Arlene doesn't mention her finances much, except that she lives in a condo and spends lots of money on her dog.

Political. Political views in this play are heavily influenced by religious affiliation. Butch, for example, follows the stereotype of a southern, traditional, conservative Christian—complete with racial slurs, hyper masculinity, and homophobia. Arlene grew up in the south with the same values but seems very separate from Butch in a lot of his

thinking. Specifics about politics are not mentioned for either of them, however. Adam is a strong democrat. He rants about health reform, is environmentally conscious, and obviously pro-gay rights. Luke is specifically named as a Republican, probably on account of being raised by Butch. Adam does sense some change in Luke, saying, “he’s pro-choice. He believes in stem cell research. I think he might even vote for a Democrat in the next election.”¹ All of the characters are faced with the political and moral choice of pulling the plug on Luke. Adam is charged with trying to convince Luke’s conservative parents that pulling the plug is the right thing to do—assuming their political views disagree with mercy killing. When all the characters are forced to face reality, it becomes less political and much more personal, putting everyone’s pre-determined beliefs into question.

Religious. The main setting is in a Jewish hospital, which hints at the importance of religion in the world of the play. Again, Butch is a very traditionalist Christian—he doesn’t believe in evolution, discredits science, and tells Luke he can’t speak to his brother if he ever comes out as gay. Arlene acknowledges she’s had a rough past, but still calls herself a Christian. She says it brings comfort and familiarity to her in hard times. Being raised in this fundamentalist Christian environment, Luke carries a lot of these beliefs into his adult life. He is also a pretty strict fundamentalist—focused on the rapture, hell, and converting people. He believes homosexuality is a sin, but also believes God forgives if you have accepted Christ. That is how he differs from his parents—and why he is afraid to tell them that he’s dating Adam. Adam doesn’t believe in religion at all. He often makes fun of what Luke believes, calling those who believe it “freaks” and that he could use the Bible as toilet paper and “wake up with a clean ass and a clear conscience.”² He is

¹ Nauffts, 60.

² Ibid., 40.

outspoken against faith, but still has moments where he wants to believe or talks about his soul. Holly grew up Catholic but has drifted away from that. She participates with Adam in poking fun of Luke's beliefs, but is less mean about it. She has moments where she compassionately listens to Luke and seems genuinely curious. Brandon clings to Christianity. He carries his Bible with him everywhere he goes. He is gay but believes it's a sin. He believes one can be forgiven for isolated sexual encounters, but cannot pursue a loving relationship with another man—"the homosexual lifestyle" is what is unforgiveable. In the end, Luke and Adam's relationship and their love transcends any differences they have in religion.

Social. Adam, Holly, Luke, and Brandon are all in their 30s/40s, so have a hard time meeting new friends and people. Holly's anniversary party she throws is where Adam and Luke meet—the former as a partygoer, the latter as the cater-waiter. Other than chance meetings like that, these people's friends are more or less established. Even the party, Adam notices, is not very exciting. Their social lives are no longer about hard partying. Adam goes to his high school reunion, which at this point in his adult life, is very important to him. He wants to impress his old peers with where he is in life. Luke and Adam don't technically go on a traditional date before they hook up, another seemingly common social norm. In their group of friends, Luke does not talk about religion because it isn't common among their social circle.

Previous Action

When Butch and Arlene got married, they were both broke. They both were pretty wild, but when Butch started to settle down into adulthood, Arlene wasn't ready. They had Luke, but she continued getting involved with the wrong things and eventually ended up in jail for six months. When she was released, she struggled to insert herself back into

Luke's life. She started to be a mom again, but soon fell back into the wrong crowd. She and Butch divorced, and she disappeared, getting involved in pot and pills for ten years before sobering up. Butch raised Luke on his own for a while, then remarried a woman named Lynn. Lynn's wealth turned their life around and so did having another child, Ben. At some point in his childhood, Luke had a mystical experience in his dad's car that informs and fuels his faith as he heads toward adulthood. Luke briefly attended law school but dropped out to pursue acting. Butch has always been unhappy with this decision. Luke was in a production of *Huck Finn* and it is this show that moved Butch and made him recognize acting could be a respectable profession. Adam went to school for writing but hasn't done much with his degree. Holly started her own business, a candle shop, and hired Adam to work there. He works there for six years, and still does when the chronological action begins. Luke and Brandon are best friends. They are both gay and Christian. Luke was cast in *Our Town* with Brandon and it opens in a week when the play starts.

Polar Attitudes

The goal of this section is to identify the protagonist and antagonist of the story and then concisely establish the characters' attitudes at the beginning of the play as compared to how they change by the end.

Protagonist. Adam is the protagonist of the play. The main action of the play centers on Adam's efforts to overcome all of his own problems with God and religion and to start a life with Luke. Adam starts the play certain that faith is harmful, there is no God and he can't love both Luke and all of his baggage. By the end of the play, Adam is no longer certain about these things—he realizes faith doesn't have to be harmful, he is left questioning the existence of God, and has reconciled both loving Luke *and* his baggage.

Antagonist. Luke is the antagonist of the play. Luke's devotion to God provokes Adam's problems with religion. Luke starts the play believing that his love for God and his love for men are incompatible, asking God to forgive him of his homosexual acts. By the end of the play, Luke realizes his love for Adam isn't an act, but a relationship, and he is able to reconcile both of his two loves—he even chooses Adam as his priority.

Significance of the Facts in the Total Meaning of the Play

The setting of the Jewish hospital is significant in that it reflects the inescapable presence of religion in these characters' lives. Because there are year jumps between scenes, it can be tracked that all action takes place during the same season—fall. The significance of fall, as referenced by the title, is further explained in section V. As the times in each scene get later, the content gets darker.

Dialogue

This section begins to specifically examine the words, phrases, language, and dialects of the playwright and the characters. It also identifies any important images from the play by isolating individual words and phrases.

Words

Family and Relationship. hillbilly, stepmom, brother, single, Mama, dad, anniversary, cute, horny, teacher, friendship, son, babe, familiar, parents, sweetheart, gay.

Religion and Spirituality. God, angel, Jewish, Christ, soul, Jesus, Mezuzah, Republican, pastor, Sabbath, Christian, praying, afterlife, sin, ashrams, meditation, science, doubts, questioning, southern.

Words of Hope. love, pluck, want, forgiveness, thankful, proud, heaven, plan, perfect, believe, living, fierce, cathartic.

Words of Pain. hospital, overwhelming, admitted, hell, burn, punishment, disappointment, afraid, uncomfortable, pain, unhappy, struggling, judgement, embarrassed, mocking, terrible, freak, worry, surgery, homophobic, coward, coma, fight.

Words of Togetherness/Apartness. sex, alone, leave, us, stranger, divorced, safe, home, warmth, peace, exclusive, compromises, issues, unrequited, connection, flock, argument.

Phrases

Family and Relationships. biscuit sandwich, New York, high school reunion, family only, old friend, Lung Lady, not perfect.

Religion and Spirituality. twinkling of an eye, the last trumpet, Jewish hospital, TV preacher, Son of God, died on the cross for all your sins, seven years, the right thing, praying after sex, sat shiva.

Words of Hope. he's got fight in him, security blanket, look within, let yourself go, deserve to be, took my breath away, New Hope, I love you, I finally believed.

Words of Pain. fat soul, cater waiter, candle salesman, midlife crisis, they don't know about you, epidural hematoma, something's changed, crashing down, walk into the fire, never gonna change, worn out.

Words of Togetherness/Apartness. out of the loop, sex with men, for both of us, break away, there for you, he chose you, I don't want to go, just us

Images

The main image is that of a sterile, impersonal, fluorescent, depressing hospital. These scenes contrast the energy, life, and personality of the scenes in the past that range in location. Another important image that emerges from the text is the play *Our Town*. Stylistically and thematically, *Next Fall* is fairly similar, and it is talked about a lot in the text. This image represents a feeling of loss—that one has missed out on life while living it. It also represents the fact that Luke is acting for his parents—they believe him to be a different person than he really is, like a character in a play. One last image comes from the main two characters names. Adam invokes the Biblical Adam and the fall of man, while Luke invokes the Luke the apostle and doctor. Some other images that emerge from the text are the trumpets on the last day and everyone going to heaven, walking Holly home, Christian images like the Bible and the cross, and taking a pill.

Dialect

There are few dialects in this play, save Arlene and Butch. They are both from Tallahassee and have a slight southern accent—nothing too distracting or dramatic. The dialect is written in some places but inferred largely by their choice of southern colloquialisms and rhythm of speech. An example of Arlene's speech is "You must think I'm some kind of hillbilly twankin' my banjo down there in the boonies somewhere."³ An example of Butch's speech is "Yakkin' the whole time, buggin' everyone...and I say... 'If you don't start paying attention, I'm gonna bop you one.'"⁴

³ Ibid., 12.

⁴ Ibid., 50.

Sound of the Dialogue

The sound of the dialogue alternates between two different consistencies. The scenes in the present action take on a slower, more reserved sound. Characters are not as loud because they are in a quiet and public place, and the somber mood informs the volume and speed of their lines. Some of the characters are meeting for the first time in the present action, which creates lots of silences and pauses. The scenes in the past are generally nimbler, lighter, and louder. The dialogue is very quick witted, lending itself to a faster and cheery pace. The pauses used in past scenes are used for comedic effect, while the ones in the present scenes are used to create a more melancholy and reflective mood. The sound of the dialogue often follows traditional climactic structure, using increased volume and speed to reach a climax. Often these steady increases occur through a few scenes, despite them being in different time periods.

Structure of Lines and Speeches

Lines throughout are generally short and quick, allowing dialogue to move swiftly. There are no irregular speech patterns. Adam has one short, frequently interrupted speech, but the only other speech belongs to Arlene. Even between the two alternate timelines, there is one climax in the present action, with a secondary climax as a part of the falling action. The main climax's lines become even shorter and quicker. The secondary climax happens in one of the longest French scenes of the play.

Dramatic Action

The play's one main dramatic action through both the past and present scenes revolves around Adam trying to start a life with Luke that isn't inhibited by his past—Luke's religion, relationship with his parents, and fear and reluctance to be himself.

French Scenes

A French Scene is a scene in which the beginning and end is marked by a change in the presence of onstage characters. There are approximately 53 French Scenes. Many times, the scene begins with characters speaking from offstage; I do not count their subsequent entrance as a new French Scene.

Character

This section examines five aspects of each primary character of the play. First, the polar attitudes are explored. The protagonist and antagonist's polar attitudes are restated while the other primary characters are examined for the first time. Second, desires and climaxes investigate what a character wants as well as their emotional journey. Willpower and moral stance measure the character's relative strength for gaining his or her desire and also examines values and moral code. Fourth, decorum and mood intensity begin to describe physicality, how the character behaves, and general mood. Finally, a summary-list of adjectives is given as a point of quick reference for each character.

Adam

Function and Polar Attitudes. Adam is the protagonist of the play. The main action of the play centers on Adam's efforts to overcome all of his own problems with God and religion and to start a life with Luke. Adam starts the play certain that faith is harmful, there is no God and he can't love both Luke and all of his baggage. By the end of the play, Adam is no longer certain about these things—he realizes faith doesn't have to be harmful, he is left questioning the existence of God, and has reconciled both loving Luke *and* his baggage.

Desire and Climaxes. Overall, Adam wants to start a life with Luke. More specifically, Adam desires for Luke to love him more than he loves God (or alternatively, Luke's perception of God/his faith). When he initially meets Luke and as their relationship progresses, he is in love and simply wants to keep being loved by Luke. Scene 4 is where Adam begins to sense how God is getting in the way of his and Luke's relationship, and this feeling only intensifies as the relationship proceeds. Initially, Adam's hurt manifests itself through sarcasm and mockery, sometimes going too far in making fun of Luke's religion. Even though Adam still doesn't understand Luke's attachment to his faith, especially his refusal to tell his parents, he begins to respect Luke's wishes and hides their relationship from Butch in Act 2 scene 2. As Adam's love for Luke grows stronger, he even tries (unsuccessfully) to meet him where he's at and experience God. Adam finally expresses his hurt in an incredibly vulnerable moment but realizes that things are not going to change. Adam breaks up with Luke. Throughout the present action, even though Luke isn't conscious, Adam still feels the hurt of Luke's choice. He often hints at his and Luke's relationship to Luke's parents, hoping that revealing this secret is Luke's final step in choosing between him and his faith. His fears are assuaged when he discovers their relationship is not dependent on this choice—they can find the divine together through their love. Sadly, he realizes this too late.

Willpower and Moral Stance. Adam has a strong will, especially when people don't see things his way. The best example of this is Luke and his faith. Adam doesn't believe the same thing and takes every opportunity to bully Luke and try to coax others to see his way. Love softens Adam's resolve and he begins to listen and be present with Luke. His break up with Luke takes lots of willpower, but it is primarily because of hurt, not because of his need to be right. In the present-day scenes, now that Luke isn't there to soften him,

Adam reverts back to his aggression and sarcasm when he encounters conflict. His moment at the end with Luke hopefully begins to permanently heal Adam's haughtiness.

Decorum and Mood Intensity. Adam is 45 years old. He is average height and build. He is aging well, but he is still very aware to the fact he is aging. He does not like to be wrong and copes with conflict through sarcasm, malice, and biting retorts. He wants people to take his side and does not back down until others see his way. His style of conflict is subdued but calculated, always finding a person's weakest part and attacking it. Even when not attacked, his way to bond is through light insults and witty jabs. He never gets physical. Adam's world centers around being right until Luke shows up and takes that place.

Summary List of Adjectives. Smart, frank, driven, high-strung, know-it-all, sarcastic, haughty, bold, argumentative, quick-witted

Luke

Function and Polar Attitudes. Luke is the antagonist of the play. Luke's devotion to God provokes Adam's problems with religion. Luke starts the play believing that his love for God and his love for men are incompatible, asking God to forgive him of his homosexual acts. By the end of the play, Luke realizes his love for Adam isn't an act, but a relationship, and he is able to reconcile both of his two loves—he even chooses Adam as his priority.

Desire and Climaxes. Luke desires love. He finds it both in Adam and he finds it in God. He doesn't believe those two loves to be compatible and spends the course of the play trying to retain both. He also wants his parents to keep loving him which is why he doesn't want to tell them his secret. He starts by simply keeping quiet. From Adam Luke

hides his religion, knowing that it will affect their relationship. From his parents Luke hides his relationship, knowing they will not approve. Luke eventually gets bolder with his faith, bringing it up more and more with Adam, thinking that his conversion might mean the two loves could be more compatible. Luke turns to praying after sex, trying desperately to hold onto both his loves. Perhaps, in his final moments, Luke realizes his two loves don't have to be in conflict—that God is love and can be found through him and Adam's relationship.

Willpower and Moral Stance. Luke's strong moral character is different from his weaker willpower. The world is very black and white for Luke. He is never forced to examine other points of view or been challenged in his faith. Because of this, he doesn't often have to use willpower in any situation—the answer is simply pre-programmed into him from years of conservative Christian upbringing. The one big example of a weak will is Luke's refusal to tell his parents about his sexuality, no matter how many times he says he will.

Decorum and Mood Intensity. Luke is thirty years old. He is average height and probably pretty muscular with a lot of charm and confidence. He is younger than Adam, and definitely looks like it. He deals with conflict by walking away from it. When people (specifically Adam) attacks his faith, he may start by trying to reason, but usually wants to drop the subject and avoid conflict at all cost. He is often kind and friendly, but it seems more of a neutral goodness rather than a noticeable and active one. He can also be rather weak and wishy-washy.

Summary List of Adjectives. sexy, simple, kind, weak, scared, resolute, easygoing, seductive, persistent, sneaky, charming, confident

Arlene

Function and Polar Attitudes. Arlene is a secondary antagonist in the play. She starts the play avoiding vulnerability and very self-focused. By the end of the play, she becomes vulnerable and starts focusing her attention on others—she even acknowledges Adam and Luke’s relationship with an unselfish grace and tenderness.

Desire and Climaxes. Arlene wants love, but she is terrified to open herself up to people, afraid she will hurt them. That’s why she frequently puts on “the Arlene Show”⁵—this type of attention is the closest she gets to love without opening herself up to people. Distance, putting on a mask, and drugs are her way of separating herself from those that she loves, hoping if she’s far enough away, she can’t hurt them. Her wakeup call is when Butch discovers her pills. She then realizes she can’t continue her charade—she turns to God for comfort and familiarity. One of the biggest moments for her is her incredible vulnerability in her monologue to Adam, followed by her gentle and loving response to Adam and Luke’s relationship. She realizes in Luke’s last moments and through the analogy of *Our Town* that she ran away from Luke’s love when she still had the chance to pursue it. She is resolved to not make that mistake again with the people still in her life.

Willpower and Moral Stance. Arlene has a weak willpower. This is illustrated by her incredible difficulty with staying away from drugs. This addiction stems from her want to love, but her weak will doesn’t want to let anybody in. Once she realizes she is helpless and admits her frail willpower, she is able to pursue to a stronger morality. She purposefully tries to undo the pain she’s caused by distancing and even turns to God.

⁵ Ibid., 27.

Decorum and Mood Intensity. Arlene is a 50-year-old Southern charmer. She talks virtually incessantly. This makes her appear confident and commanding, when in reality she talks to prevent vulnerability. Anything remotely close to personal, she spins into a joke or changes the subject to something lighter. Only at the end do we get a glimpse of the “real Arlene” through her vulnerability.

Summary List of Adjectives. Southern, talkative, heightened, lively, scared, nurturing, anxious, performative, shallow, vulnerable

Holly

Function and Polar Attitudes. Holly is a secondary antagonist. She starts the play unwilling to entertain the idea of God, joining Adam in making fun of Luke’s religion. By the end of the play, she is willing to explore ideologies that are different from hers.

Desire and Climaxes. She wants to make peace, both within herself, and also between others. She often acts as the peacemaker, mediating between two sides in an argument, or calming people down so they can rationally think. She is also seeking this same peace within herself. She goes to meditations, chanting groups, yoga, and similar activities to try to find inner peace. She thinks she’s found that security until Luke comes along and his faith prompts new questions. In Act 1 Scene 5, she joins Adam in poking fun of Luke’s religion, but at the same time really listens to his beliefs. Once Luke is in the hospital, she thinks about his faith a lot more—what she thought was certain becomes confusing. Ultimately, she looks to the Bible for comfort and inner peace. The audience doesn’t see the end of her journey, but rather the start of her longing for inner peace.

Willpower and Moral Stance. Holly has great willpower. She is very open to change and beliefs that are different from her own. She is rather secure in who she is and

not afraid of change. Her strong will allows her to constantly revisit and reconstruct her morals. She tries so many different spiritual practices, in search for the one that most resonates with her.

Decorum and Mood Intensity. Holly is 35. She is very laid back and one might describe her as bohemian. She has a relaxing presence and is very comfortable in her own skin. She tries her best to see things from other people's perspectives and is the one to mediate arguments and make peace between others. She rarely gets into arguments herself, for she is a very calm and centered person.

Summary List of Adjectives. laid back, easygoing, centered, thoughtful, bohemian, peacemaker, confident, curious

Butch

Function and Polar Attitudes. Butch is a secondary antagonist. He starts the play refusing to accept that fact that his son is gay by actively ignoring the topic whenever it comes up. At the end of the play, he finally acknowledges his son's sexuality and even accepts it, even if the acceptance is passive.

Desire and Climaxes. Butch wants to be in control. This manifests itself by wanting to be in charge and right, always getting in the final word and being very stubborn. He is given ample evidence that his son is gay, but when Luke finally works up the courage to tell his father, Butch purposefully shuts down the conversation. In his mind, being gay is wrong, and his son cannot be wrong, so he controls the situation by ignoring it. At the hospital, Butch professes he doesn't know who Adam is. If he acknowledges who and what Adam is, he is, by proxy, admitting what his son is as well. He forcefully continues this charade, trying everything to keep Adam away from Luke. Things get especially heated in

Act 2 scene 6 where the two have a big argument, a desperate clawing for control. His big release of control comes after Luke dies. He finally admits to knowing Adam—who and what he is—thus relinquishing control over his skewed vision of who his son is. This surrendering of power continues when he humbly chooses to leave Adam alone with Luke, something he'd been incessantly trying to prevent.

Willpower and Moral Stance. Butch's willpower is similar to Luke's, largely because he raised him. Butch's strong moral character is different from his weak willpower. The world is very black and white for Butch. He is never forced to examine other points of view or been challenged in his faith. Because of this, he doesn't often have to use willpower in any situation—the answer is simply pre-programmed from his conservative Christian background. His stoic nature can read as strong will, but it's just his simple and affective tactic to avoid thoughtful examination of things outside his comfort zone.

Decorum and Mood Intensity. Butch is 55 and falls prey to hyper masculinity. He stays stoic and strong-willed, all so he can appear to be the most powerful person in the room. He rarely smiles and moves with an imposing stiffness. He tries to prove his manliness by talking infrequently, arguing quickly, and being vulnerable rarely.

Summary List of Adjectives. stoic, intimidating, reserved, argumentative, conservative, bullying, strict, hyper masculine

Brandon

Function and Polar Attitudes. Brandon is a secondary antagonist. He starts the play in strict adherence to the Bible as a list of rules, putting his legalism first and people second. By the end of the play, he no longer clings to his strict interpretation and begins to love people first before anything else.

Desire and Climaxes. Brandon ultimately wants to get into heaven, and this is to be accomplished by being the best and most blameless Christian. Luke and Brandon start as best friends, but when Luke's beliefs on homosexuality shift, Brandon ceases their friendship. He is afraid that a friendship with a "sinner" is wrong and thwarts his desire to be the best Christian. His list of rules is more important to him than Luke. Only when Luke is hospitalized does Brandon begin to reexamine what is important. Luke and Adam's love for one another seems to affect him—he says he will keep watch while Luke and Adam spend time together. Rather than a long list of rules, it seems his desire to be blameless starts to focus on the greatest commandment—to love one another.

Willpower and Moral Stance. Brandon doesn't have a strong willpower. Rather than confront and be changed by different beliefs, he shuts down and refuses to even acknowledge them. His moral stance seems strong, but only because he refuses to be challenged.

Decorum and Mood Intensity. Brandon is a very successful 30-year-old businessman. He is fairly kind, but it seems like his kindness comes from being told a Christian has to be kind, rather than from a true place. Despite his success, there seems to be an unhappiness about him. He doesn't like to argue and stays rather subdued.

Summary List of Adjectives. Strict, unhappy, struggling, put-together, reserved, conservative, nice.

Idea

This section explores more interpretative and creative aspects of the script. The meaning of the title is expounded upon, the play's philosophical statements are hinted at through quotes from the text, the idea of the play is identified in one word, the mood and

tempo are explored throughout the play, and the tone section attempts to summarize the entire play's nature in one sentence.

Meaning of the Title

"Next Fall" has a few meanings. Literally, it represents when Luke will come out of the closet to his parents. He says to Adam, "I will. I promise. Next fall. When Ben's in college."⁶ Sequentially, the scenes take place exactly one year apart, meaning every scene takes place the next fall of the previous one. "Next Fall" becomes a sort of a symbol of hope and fear for them both. This waiting is paralleled by Luke's waiting for the Rapture, which is also anticipated with hope and fear. It is also no coincidence that the main character's name is Adam which intentionally parallels the Adam of the Bible. Many fundamentalist Christians see homosexuality as the ultimate, unforgiveable sin. Normalizing gay relationships is a near apocalyptic event for them. In their eyes, the first Fall has already happened, but this Adam is at the forefront of the next one. Also, because Luke prays for forgiveness after sleeping with Adam, every time Luke has sex is his next fall.

Philosophical statements

- "He's a good man, but he's not perfect."⁷
- "The whole thing is so confusing, all of the sudden."⁸

⁶ Ibid., 45.

⁷ Ibid., 57.

⁸ Ibid., 42.

- “She wonders if anyone ever realizes how wonderful life is. How precious. Even as they’re living it.”⁹
- “Loving is too much of a sin?”¹⁰

Idea of the play

The main idea of this play is “acceptance”. Every character yearns to be accepted for who they truly are. In other words, they want to be fully seen and fully loved. The characters yearn to be accepted, but at the same time have a hard time accepting aspects of others or themselves. Luke constantly puts off telling his parents because he is terrified they will not accept him. He is also struggling to accept his relationship with Luke as it interacts with his relationship with God. He learns to accept the idea that each time he has sex it’s not a fall. He no longer needs to anticipate the next one because he accepts that his two loves are compatible. Both Adam and Holly learns to accept Luke’s ideology. But Adam also struggles to acknowledge and accept his own issues he has with faith—not accepting these things keep him and Luke apart. Arlene and Butch both learn to accept their gay son, each in their different ways. Brandon learns acceptance both of Adam and Luke’s relationship, but he also struggles with accepting his own sexuality.

Mood

In general, the first act tends to be more playful and cheery while the second act more reflective and distressed. The scene breakdown is as follows:

1.1 Cheerful

1.2 Flirtatious

⁹ Ibid., 69.

¹⁰ Ibid., 62.

- 1.3 Strained
- 1.4 Cautious
- 1.5 Biting
- 1.6 Jabbing
- 2.1 Contemplative
- 2.2 Exciting
- 2.3 Fearful
- 2.4 Reverent
- 2.5 Fidgety
- 2.6 Confrontational
- 2.7 Bouncy
- 2.8 Shock

Tempo

In general, the first act is much more upbeat and of a faster tempo. The second act stays at a slower/moderate tempo for the most part, save the climax and its build up.

Tone

Next Fall is an exploration of one couple's individual struggles to find acceptance, finally to realize that acceptance comes by uniting with one another in love.

CHAPTER THREE

Next Fall Production Documentation

Project Description

This directing project was in fulfillment of the Advanced Directing class at Baylor University. The Capstone project required us to choose virtually any play we wanted to direct that could be cut down to an hour. The rehearsal process was about four weeks, with an hour and half rehearsals each day. I blocked, organized and led all the rehearsals, with only two attended by my faculty advisor for notes on progress.

Our final three rehearsals were technical rehearsals—two days of cue-to-cue and one full run. I had a stage manager to help during rehearsals, a lighting and sound designer, two board operators, and a four-person run crew. We were allowed one week of two-hour rehearsals, leading up to and including tech rehearsals. I had no budget at all for this project, only access to select costumes, props, and set pieces already in Baylor Theatre's stock.

The rest of this chapter archives the documentation detailing the production elements of *Next Fall*. Included is a rehearsal calendar, technical paperwork, the cut script with blocking notes, concept, design, and research images, one example of the rehearsal reports distributed daily, acting notes, and production photos. The subsequent documentation illustrates my creative process as well as the rehearsal period and final production.

Production Documentation

SEP2018

NEXT FALL REHEARSAL CALENDAR

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
16	17	18	19	20 4:15—5:45p	21 —	22 10:30a— 12p
23 10:30p—12a	24 10:30p—12a	25 4—5:30p	26 10:30p—12a	27 4—5:30p	28 —	29 11a— 12:30p
30 7p-8:30p						

OCT2018

	01 5:30—7p	02 4—5:30p	03 10:30p—12a	04 4—5:30p	05 —	06 8—10p
07 5:30—7:30p	08 5:30—7:30p	09 10:30p—12a	10 10:30p—12a	11 10:30p—12a	12 10:30p—12a	13 10:30a— 12:30p
14 9—11p	15 10:30p—12:30a	16 10:30p—12:30a	17 <u>6pm SHOW!</u>	18	19	20

NEXT FALL FRENCH SCENE BREAKDOWN

Characters:								Act 1																												
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29								
Max Morgan													<SRp		<SLp						>SR					<SR										
Damian Lassetter															xOS						>>SRp					xSR										
Kelli Jo Crosby								<SLp							>SR																					
Trevor Smith												<SRp			>SL									<SLp		>SR										
Melissa Archer															>SL			<SLp		>SLp		<SL				>SL										
Abel Espinoza												><SRp			>SR						<SR					>SL										

Act 1														Act 2																
Characters:								30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52
Max Morgan								xSR>SL	<SL					>SR					<SRp	>>SRp			>SLw		<SLw>SRp	<SRp			><SRp	
Damian Lassetter								xSR						xOS				>SL		<SLw			><SRp				>SLw		<SL	
Kelli Jo Crosby																<SR		<SRp			>SR									
Trevor Smith																														
Melissa Archer								<SL						>SLw	<SL											>SRp	<SRp		>SL	
Abel Espinoza																		<SLp		>SR										

Act 2																												
Characters:								53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71		
Max Morgan											>SL									<SL			>SR					
Damian Lassetter											>SRp	<SRp>SR				><SRp				><SRp			>SLw	<SLp				
Kelli Jo Crosby												<SR				>SRp				>SL				>SLw	<SLp			
Trevor Smith																			<SLp		>SL				<SLp			
Melissa Archer																				<SLp	>SLp				<SL			
Abel Espinoza											<SRp	xOS						>SR							<SR			

NEXT FALL WORKING SET PIECE LIST

Label	Item	#	Reh.	Real	Notes
Act 1, Scene 1, 3, 6; Act 2, Scene 1, 8: Waiting Room					
	Waiting chairs	10	Y	Y	
	Side tables	3	Y	Y	
	table	1		Y	
	Coat rack	1		Y	
	Cushioned bench	1		Y	
Act 1, Scene 2: Rooftop					
	Bench	1	Y	Y	
Act 1, Scene 4: Adam's Apartment					
	Kitchen Chairs	2	Y	Y	
	Kitchen table	1	Y	Y	
	Shelf/counter	1		Y	
	CD player/stereo system	1		Y	
Act 1, Scene 5; Act 2, Scene 2, 3, 7: New Apartment					
	Couch	1	Y	Y	
	Lounge chair	1	Y	Y	
	Coffee table	1	Y	Y	
	Counter and stereo	1		Y	
Act 2, Scene 4: Temple					
	Bench	1	Y	Y	
Act 2, Scene 5: Central Park					
Act 2, Scene 6: Hospital Room					
	Gurney	1	Y	Y	

NEXT FALL ADAM COSTUME TRACKING CHART			
Item	Reh.	Real	Notes
Act 1, Scene 1: Chilly casual			
Periwinkle sweater		Y	
Trousers		Y	
Tennis shoes		Y	
Coat		Y	
Act 1, Scene 2: PARTAY			
Party shirt		Y	Base is CHILLY CASUAL, shirt will be under sweater in Scene 1
Act 1, Scene 3: Casual			
Base: Chilly Casual		Y	Put on PERIWINKLE SWEATER, no COAT
Act 1, Scene 4: The morning after			
sweats		Y	Put on over pants, base is CHILLY CASUAL, take off PERIWINKLE SWEATER and PARTY SHIRT, take off TENNIS SHOES
t-shirt		Y	Will be under PARTY SHIRT
Act 1, Scene 5: Button Down			
Button Down shirt		Y	Take off SWEATS, put on BUTTON DOWN, put on TENNIS SHOES
Act 1, Scene 6: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	Put on PERIWINKLE SWEATER
Act 2, Scene 1			
Act 2, Scene 2: Button Down			
Base: Button Down		Y	Take off PERIWINKLE SWEATER
Act 2, Scene 3: The morning after			
Base: The morning after		Y	Put on SWEATS, take off TENNIS SHOES, take off PERIWINKLE SWEATER, take off BUTTON DOWN
Act 2, Scene 4: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	Take off SWEATS, put on BUTTON DOWN 2, put on PERIWINKLE SWEATER, put on TENNIS SHOES
Act 2, Scene 5: New Shirt			
Button Down 2		Y	take off PERIWINKLE SWEATER
Act 2, Scene 6: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	put on PERIWINKLE SWEATER
Act 2, Scene 7: PARTAY			
Base: Partay		Y	Take off PERIWINKLE SWEATER and preset, Take off BUTTON DOWN 2
Act 2, Scene 8: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	Should be in PERIWINKLE SWEATER

NEXT FALL LUKE COSTUME TRACKING CHART			
Item	Reh.	Real	Notes
Act 1, Scene 1			
Act 1, Scene 2: A waiter			
Dress pants		Y	
White button up		Y	
Nice shoes		Y	
Act 1, Scene 3			
Act 1, Scene 4: The morning after			

Boxers		Y	Take off DRESS PANTS, take off WHITE BUTTON UP, take off BLACK APRON, take off NICE SHOES, boxers will be on underneath DRESS PANTS
t-shirt		Y	Will be underneath WHITE BUTTON UP
Act 1, Scene 5: Casual			
jeans		Y	Put on JEANS, put on SWEATER, put on TENNIS SHOES
sweater		Y	
Tennis shoes		Y	
Act 1, Scene 6			
Act 2, Scene 1			
Act 2, Scene 2: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	
Act 2, Scene 3: JAMMIES (morning after?)			
Long pajama pants		Y	Take off TENNIS SHOES, take off SWEATER, put on T-SHIRT, TAKE OFF JEANS
Act 2, Scene 4			
Act 2, Scene 5			
Act 2, Scene 6: Hospital Gown			
Hospital gown		Y	Will have BOXERS on underneath, take off LONG PAJAMA PANTS, put on HOSPITAL GOWN
Act 2, Scene 7: Chilly casual			
Base: Casual		Y	Take off HOSPITAL GOWN, put on JEANS, put on SWEATER, put on TENNIS SHOES
Act 2, Scene 8			

NEXT FALL ARLENE COSTUME TRACKING CHART			
Item	Reh.	Real	Notes
Act 1, Scene 1: Chilly casual			
blouse		Y	
jeans		Y	
boots		Y	
Coat		Y	Will be put on coat rack
Act 1, Scene 2			
Act 1, Scene 3			
Act 1, Scene 4			
Act 1, Scene 5			
Act 1, Scene 6: Casual			
Base: Chilly casual		Y	No coat
Act 2, Scene 1			
Act 2, Scene 2			
Act 2, Scene 3			
Act 2, Scene 4: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	
Act 2, Scene 5			
Act 2, Scene 6: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	
Act 2, Scene 7			
Act 2, Scene 8: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	

NEXT FALL BUTCH COSTUME TRACKING CHART			
Item	Reh.	Real	Notes
Act 1, Scene 1: Chilly casual			
polo		Y	
jeans		Y	
boots		Y	
Coat		Y	Will be put on coat rack
Act 1, Scene 2			
Act 1, Scene 3			
Act 1, Scene 4			
Act 1, Scene 5			
Act 1, Scene 6: Casual			
Base: Chilly casual		Y	No coat
Act 2, Scene 1			
Act 2, Scene 2: Past			
Polo 2		Y	Change to POLO 2, Put on COAT
Act 2, Scene 3			
Act 2, Scene 4: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	Take off COAT, change to POLO
Act 2, Scene 5			
Act 2, Scene 6: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	
Act 2, Scene 7			
Act 2, Scene 8: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	

NEXT FALL HOLLY COSTUME TRACKING CHART			
Item	Reh.	Real	Notes
Act 1, Scene 1: Chilly casual			
boots		Y	
Maxi skirt		Y	
Knotted crop top		Y	
Brown corduroy blazer		Y	Will be on coat rack
Act 1, Scene 2: PARTAY			
Party Skirt		Y	Change to PARTY SKIRT, put on CARDIGAN
Cardigan		Y	
Act 1, Scene 3: Chilly Casual			
Base: Chilly Casual		Y	Take off CARDIGAN, change to MAXI SKIRT, put on BROWN CORDUORY BLAZER
Act 1, Scene 4			
Act 1, Scene 5: Wine Drunk			
Base: partay		Y	Put on LONG SLEEVE BLACK SHIRT, change to PARTY SKIRT, no outerwear
Long sleeve black shirt		Y	
Act 1, Scene 6: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	Take off LONG SLEEVE BLACK SHIRT, change to MAXI SKIRT
Act 2, Scene 1: Casual			
Base Casual		Y	
Act 2, Scene 2			
Act 2, Scene 3			
Act 2, Scene 4			
Act 2, Scene 5			

Act 2, Scene 6: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	
Act 2, Scene 7			
Act 2, Scene 8: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	

<i>NEXT FALL BRANDON COSTUME TRACKING CHART</i>			
Item	Reh.	Real	Notes
Act 1, Scene 1: Chilly casual			
Shirt		Y	
Trousers		Y	
Tennis shoes		Y	
Coat		Y	Will go on coat rack
Act 1, Scene 2			
Act 1, Scene 3: Casual			
Base: Chilly casual		Y	COAT should be off
Act 1, Scene 4			
Act 1, Scene 5			
Act 1, Scene 6: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	
Act 2, Scene 1: Casual			
Base: Casual			
Act 2, Scene 2			
Act 2, Scene 3			
Act 2, Scene 4: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	
Act 2, Scene 5: Chilly Past			
Base: Chilly Casual		Y	Put on SWEATER, put on COAT
Sweater		Y	
Act 2, Scene 6			
Act 2, Scene 7			
Act 2, Scene 8: Casual			
Base: Casual		Y	Take off SWEATER, preset COAT

NEXT FALL PROPS LIST						
Label	Item	#	Perishable?	Reh.	Real	Notes
Act 1, Scene 1						
1	Styrofoam cups for coffee	3	Y		Y	Brandon, Arlene, Holly
2	sugar packets, creamer packets, stirring sticks?				Y	Arlene
3	flip phone				Y	WILL BE IN ALL SCENES WITH BUTCH
4	Arlene coat				Y	
5	Arlene purse				Y	
6	Brandon Bible				Y	
7	Magazines	14			Y	T1: 3, T2: 3, T3: 2
8	Kleenex	2			Y	Stationary, One on T1, one on T2
9	Hebrew Star				Y	Stationary, T3
Act 1, Scene 2						
10	Glass of water		Y		Y	Water will need to be filled each night
11	Postcard				Y	Relates to the show Luke is working on
	Serving tray				Y	
Act 1, Scene 3						
12	Bottle of pills				Y	
Act 1, Scene 4						
13	Plates with tomatoes and utensils	2	Y	Y	Y	New tomatoes each night
	CDs	5			Y	In counter drawer
Act 1, Scene 5						
11	Mezuzah				Y	
12	Wine glasses	3			Y	
13	Bottle of wine		Y		Y	Refill bottle each night
14	Boxes	4		Y	Y	
	Plates	5			Y	Goes in B1, brought to SLp
15	Books	20?			Y	To pack in boxes, flexible number
16	Pumpkin Candle			Y	Y	
	Flicker candle				Y	
Act 1, Scene 6						
17	Earbuds			Y	Y	Damian
18	Cards			Y	Y	Butch
19	Newsweek magazine			Y	Y	Needs photo with a sexy guy
Act 2, Scene 1						
Act 2, Scene 2						
20	Sheets				Y	
21	Tea tray with teacups		Y	Y	Y	Refill tea each night
22	Trick box				Y	Bottomless, books fall out
23	Books	10?			Y	Books for box
24	Pictures	15?		Y	Y	For box
25	Ass photo			Y	Y	
26	Shopping bag				Y	Suppose to have Windex
Act 2, Scene 3						
27	Laptop			Y	Y	
28	Sleeping pill, and a glass of water	2/1			Y	
Act 2, Scene 4						

Act 2, Scene 5						
29	Adam wallet			Y	Y	
30	Starbucks cups	2	Y	Y	Y	References Venti, 2 Starbucks tops/cups
Act 2, Scene 6						
	clipboards	4			Y	
	Sheets for gurney	2			Y	
Act 2, Scene 7						
31	Adam weekend bag			Y	Y	
32	Adam clothes				Y	In weekend bag
33	Periwinkle sweater				Y	
Act 2, Scene 8						
34	Pen				Y	In Arlene purse?

NEXT FALL PROP TRACKING SHEET

Props	Act 1, Scene 1							Act 1, Scene 2				Act 1, Scene 4				Act 1, Scene 5												
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
Holly coffee	ENT SR KJ							EXT SL																				
Arlene coffee	ENT SR KJ							EXT SL																				
Brandon coffee	OS w/ A							EXT SR																				
sugar packet, creamer, stirring sticks	ENT SR KJ pocket							EXT SL																				
flip phone						ENT SR T		EXT SR																				
Arlene coat	OS coat rack							OS coat rack																				
Arlene purse	ENT SR KJ, drops on T1							OS T1						OS T1														
Brandon Bible	OS T3							OS T3						A picks up reads														
magazines	OS T1, T2, T3, bench																											
Tissues	OS T1, T2																											
Hebrew Star	OS T3																											
Glass of water								EXT SL portal						EXT SL portal														
postcard								ENT SL portal Luke pocket						EXT SL portal														
serving tray								EXT SL portal						EXT SL portal														
bottle of pills	OS in coat							OS in coat						OS in coat				OS T1										
tray with tomatoes																		ENT SR M				EXT SR on table						
CDs																		OS in counter				EXT with counter/stereo						
mezuzah																						OS in Box 1 / EXT SL portal						
Holly wine glass																						OS w/ ML						
Adam wine glass																						OS w/ D						
Luke wine glass																						OS table						
bottle of wine																						OS table						
plates																						OS in BI/EXT SL-p						
Box 1																						DSC						
Box 2																						next to couch SL						
Box 3																						behind chair						
Box 4																						DSL						
Books 1																						OS in Box 1 / EXT SL portal						
Pumpkin candle																						OS in Holly purse						
carbuds																												
cards																												
Newsweek magazine																												
sheets																												
tea tra with tea cups																												
trick box																												
Books 2																												
pictures																												
ass photo																												
Shopping bag																												
laptop																												
sleeping pills and water glass																												
Adam wallet																												
Brandon Starbucks cup																												
Adam Starbucks cup																												
Adam weekend bag																												
Adam clothes																												
pen																												

<i>NEXT FALL RUN CREW SHEET</i>			
Presets:			
Who	What	Where	Notes
Alivia	Ass Photo	SR Props table	
	Stack of Books	SR Props table	Should be 11 books
	2 Starbucks cups	SR Props table	
	Sugars, stirring sticks	SR Props table	
	2 plates, 2 forks, 2 knives	SRp table	
	Butch's photo	SR Props table	Group of BUT students
	Wash Styrofoam cups	SR Props table	Set with sugar packets and stirring sticks, fill 3 with coffee
	Stack of clothes	R Props table	3 items of clothing NOT folded
Brooke	3 photos for chair	SR Props table	1 w/ Max and Damian, 2 w/ just Max
	2 Altoids containers	SR Props table	
	Water glass	SR Props table	Clean glass and fill with water, set with Altoids
	Butch's phone & 2 eye glasses	SR Props table	
	Trick Box	Under SR Props table	Fold properly
	Armchair Box, with plays and books	On armchair	
	Max Box, with set of plates and Mezuzah	Under SR props table	
	Set 2 kitchen chairs	SRp	
Brooke & Alivia	Set arm chair	SRp	Make sure arm chair box is on it
	Set counter w/ stereo	SR Wing 1	Make sure the stereo is facing the proper way
Daniel	Tea tray	SL Props table	Includes pot, 2 tea cups, cream pourer, honey bear, CLEAN pot, 2 tea cups, FILL pot with tea
	Sheet	SL Props table	1 sheet
	2 Throw pillows	SL Props table	
	Serving tray with "Our Town" cards and glass	SLp table	Clean glass and fill with water
	2 clipboards	SR with you and Charity	Make sure there is a paper in the clip AND pens or pencils attached
	3 photos	SL Props table	1 w/ Damian & Max, 1 w/ Damian & Charity, 1 w/ Damian & Sawyer
	Set coffee table	SLp	
	Set bench	SLp	
Charity	Bottle and 3 glasses	SL Props table	Clean bottle and glasses, fill bottle with juice
	Pride flag & 4 candle	SL Props table	
	Duffle bag	SL Props table	Set with 2 items of clothing
	Bag with Windex	SL Props table	
	Couch Box w/ Sheets	On Couch	
	Couch Box with books	On Couch	
	Holly Box w/ comforter	Under SL Props table	

	Gurney & Drip bag	SL Wing 2	Make up, 3 pillows (should be at end with lock), 1 base sheet, 1 top sheet undone,
Daniel & Charity	Set Couch	SLp	w/ the 2 boxes and 2 matching pillows
Kenna	Fly in Legs and Full Black		
	Set 4 Waiting Room chairs		
	Set 4 tables		
	Set Coat rack		
	Hebrew Star	Table 3	
	Brandon Bible	Table 2	
	2 Kleenex	Table 2 & Table 3	
Andrew	Set 6 Waiting Room chairs		
	Magazines and pen	Table 1, Table 2, Table 3, Cushioned Bench	Pen goes on couch
Kenna & Andrew	Set Cushioned Bench		
	Set Butch's Table		
Max	Pants, Sweater, Casual shoes, Long pajama pants	SRp	
	Hospital Gown	SL	
Damian	Headphones	Pants pocket?	
	Laptop	SRp	
Damian	Sweats	SRp	
	Button Down	SLp	
Trevor	Button Down 2	SL	
	Shirt 2	SL	
Kelli Jo	Butch's phone	Coat pocket	
	Coat	Coat rack	Set with pill bottle in coat pocket
Melissa	Purse	Under chair	Set with creamer in it
	Coat	Coat rack	
	Purse	OS	
	Party Skirt, cardigan, black shirt, purple blouse, leggings	SLp	
Abel	Sweater	SR	
	Coat	Coat Rack	
Act I Scene 1: Waiting Room			
Daniel & Charity	Start SRp		Have clipboards for each of you from SL props table.
	Walk from SRp to SLp		When Butch is on the phone "Ben this is your father"
Daniel	Holly party skirt, cardigan, party shirt	SLp	Set for quick change
TRANSITION Act I Scene 1 – Act I Scene 2: Waiting Room - Rooftop			
Melissa	Strike Holly Coat, purse	Coat Rack	Move to SLp
	Holly Quick Change	SLp	Change to PARTY SKIRT, put on CARDIGAN
Daniel	Set Rooftop Bench	DS	
Abel	Catch Adam's Sweater	C	EXT SR, hand to Brooke
Brooke	Catch Adam's Sweater	Abel	Preset for quick change SRp
Act I Scene 2: Rooftop			
Charity	Set Holly Hospital Skirt and Coat for Quick change	SLp	
TRANSITION Act I Scene 2 – Act I Scene 3: Rooftop – Waiting Room			
Damian	Adam Quick Change	SRp	Put on SWEATER

Melissa	Holly Quick Change	SLp	Change to HOSPITAL SKIRT, take off CARDIGAN put on COAT, PURSE
Max	Strike Bench	SRp	
Daniel	Strike serving tray, Our Town postcard, water glass	Bench	Set in proper position on props table SL
Act I Scene 3: Waiting Room			
Max	Luke Change	SRp	Take off PANTS, take off WHITE BUTTON UP, should be in BOXERS and T-SHIRT
Alivia	Adam's Sweats	SRp	Preset sweats for quick change
TRANSITION Act I Scene 3 – Act I Scene 4: Waiting Room – Adam's Apartment			
Damian	Adam Quick Change	SRp	Take off SWEATER and PARTY SHIRT, take off SHOES put on SWEATS. Should be T-SHIRT and SWEATS,
Alivia & Brooke	Set Counter and Stereo	SR	Make sure stereo is facing the correct way
Trevor & Max	Move Card table	Farther DS	
Melissa	Strike 2 waiting room chairs	SR Wing 2	
Kelli Jo	Set 2 kitchen chairs	SRp	Set around kitchen table
Act I Scene 4: Adam's Apartment			
Daniel	Set Holly Box	SLp	
	Set 3 wine glasses and bottle	SLp	
Charity	Set Adam's Button Down for Quick change	SLp	
	Set sheet	SLp table	
Alivia	Set Luke's pants and sweater for Quick Change	SRp	
	Set Luke's Box	SRp	
Brooke	Set stack of books	SRp table	
Melissa	Holly Change	SLp	Put on LEGGINGS, PURPLE BLOUSE, take off CROP TOP, HOSPITAL SKIRT, put on COAT, PURSE
	Set Pumpkin candle	Purse	Should be on SL props table
TRANSITION Act I Scene 4 – Act I Scene 5: Adam's Apartment – Main Apartment			
Damian	Adam Quick Change	SLp	Take off SWEATS, put on BUTTON DOWN
	Set 3 wine glasses & bottle of wine	Coffee table	From SLp
Max	Luke Quick Change	SRp	Put on PANTS, SWEATER
Alivia & Brooke	Set Stereo and Counter	SL	Move from SR to new spike
	Set Card Table	To Waiting Room spike	
	Strike 2 Kitchen Chairs	Wing 2	
Abel	Set Coffee Table	DS	From SLp, no decoration
Daniel & Charity	Set Couch	DS	From SLp, 2 box on couch
	Set couch boxes	SL of couch	Stack, box with books on top

Trevor & Kelli Jo	Set Arm Chair	DSR	From SRp, 1 box on chair
Trevor	Set Armchair box	SR of chair	
Melissa	Set Holly Box	On coffee table	
Max	Set Luke Box	On ground in front of chair	
Act I Scene 5: Main Apartment			
Brooke	Set Adam's Sweater, shoes for Quick Change	SRp	
	Catch boxes	SR	Max will bring off boxes, move out of portal
Alivia	Set Holly Hospital skirt, crop top for Holly Quick Change	SRp	
TRANSITION Act I Scene 5 – Act I Scene 6: Main Apartment – Waiting Room			
Damian	Strike 3 wine glasses and wine bottle	SRp	
	Adam Quick Change	SRp	Put on SWEATER, SHOES, make sure phone is your pocket
Melissa	Holly Quick Change	SRp	Run from SL to SR, put on HOSPITAL SKIRT, change to CROP TOP, put on SHOES, COAT, PURSE
Kelli Jo	Set 2 Waiting Room Chairs	SR Wing 2	To Butch's table
Trevor & Brooke	Strike Armchair	SRp	1 box on it
Daniel & Charity	Strike Counter & Stereo	SL Wing 1	
Abel	Set boxes	On couch	The boxes on the ground
	Set candle	On couch	
	Strike coffee table	SLp	
Max & Alivia	Strike Couch	SLp	2 boxes on it
Act I Scene 6: Waiting Room			
Brooke	Move 3 wine glasses and wine bottle	SL Props table	Stay SL
	Enter with Brandon SLp, EXT with Kelli Jo		
Alivia	Strike box	Armchair	move to SR props table
	Set armchair frames	armchair	Should be 3 frames
	Set stack of books	armchair	
	Set throw pillow	Arm chair	Should be in one of the boxes
Alivia	Set trick box	Arm chair	Make sure its folded properly
	Set Butch's photo	SRp table	
	Set Ass photo	SRp	
Daniel	Strike 2 boxes	SL props table	2 boxes on couch
	Move to SR		
Charity	Set 2 throw pillows	couch	Remove pillows already on couch
	Set 4 candles, pride flag	Coffee table	
	Set picture frames	Counter	
	Set tea tray	SLp	
Max	Luke Change	SRp	Put on shoes
TRANSITION Act I Scene 6 – Act II Scene 2: Waiting Room – Main Apartment			

Damian	Adam Quick Change	SL	Take off SWEATER
Abel	Strike Brandon coat	Coat rack	Move SR
	Strike Brandon Bible	Table 2	Move SR, put on SR props table
Daniel & Alivia	Set armchair	DSR	w/ trick box, frames, books
Alivia	Set trick box	DS of armchair	Fold it properly
Charity & Brooke	Set couch	DS	
Trevor	Strike Butch's coat	Coat rack	Move SL
Trevor & Melissa	Set Counter and Stereo	SL	Should have frames on it
Kelli Jo & Max	Set Coffee table	DS	w/ candles and flag
Act II Scene 2: Main Apartment			
Daniel	Catch Abel's Coat	SR	Set on SR props table
	Set Luke's pajama pants for quick change	SRp	
Alivia	Set Adam's sweats for quick change	SRp	
	Set laptop	SRp table	
	Set glass of water and two altoids	SRp table	
TRANSITION Act II Scene 2 – Act II Scene 3: Main Apartment – Main Apartment			
Damian	Move to SR		
	Adam Quick Change	SRp	Take off BUTTON UP, SHOES, put on SWEATS, should be T-SHIRT and SWEATS
	Set laptop	SRp table	
Max	Luke Quick Change	SRp	Take off SHOES, SWEATER, put on PAJAMA PANTS, should be in t-shirt and pajama pants
Brooke	Strike tea tray & anything else on table	SL props table	
Act II Scene 3: Main Apartment			
Alivia	Set Adam's Button up 2, sweater, shoes for quick change	SRp	
Daniel	Set Brandon Bible	SRp table	Will be on SR props table
TRANSITION Act II Scene 3 – Act II Scene 4: Main Apartment - Chapel			
Damian	Adam Quick Change	SRp	Take off SWEATS, put on BUTTON UP 2, SWEATER, shoes
Kelli Jo	Grab Brandon Bible	SRp	
	Set Bench	DSR	From SRp
Daniel & Alivia	Strike Arm Chair	SRp	From DSR
Trevor & Melissa	Strike Counter & Stereo	SL Wing 1	w/ 2 picture frames
	Strike Couch	SLp	If pillows on ground put on couch
Max	Strike Coffee Table	SLp	And any props laying around
Act II Scene 4: Chapel			
Alivia	Grab Brandon coat	SRp	
	Set 2 Starbucks cups	SRp table	

Daniel	Set Adam's coat for quick change	SRp	
TRANSITION: Act II Scene 4 – Act II Scene 5: Chapel - Park			
Damian	Adam Quick Change	SRp	Take off SWEATER, put on COAT
	Grab 2 Starbucks cups	SRp table	
Alivia	Hand off Brandon coat	Abel	He will be on stage
Daniel	Strike Bench	SRp	
Act II Scene 5: Park			
Alivia	Set Sweater for Adam quick change	SRp	
Daniel	Set headphones	SRp table	
Max	Luke change	SL	put on HOSPITAL GOWN, get in gurney with head towards lock
TRANSITION Act II Scene 5 – Act II Scene 6: Park – Hospital Room			
Damian	Adam Quick Change	SRp	Take off COAT, put on SWEATER
	Grab headphones	SRp table	
Charity & Brooke	Set Gurney & drip bag w/ Luke	SL Wing 2	LOCK the gurney
Act II Scene 6: Hospital Room			
Alivia	Set duffle on armchair	SR Wing 2	Get duffle (should have clothes in it) from SL props table
Daniel	Set stack of clothes	SRp table	
Alivia & Daniel	Move to SL		Prepare to bring on couch
TRANSITION Act II Scene 6 – Act II Scene 7: Hospital Room – Main Apartment			
Charity & Brooke	Strike Gurney and Drip Bag	Wing 2	
Max	Remove Hospital gown	Gurney	Wait until light cues you, walk into scene
Damian	Adam quick change	SRp	Remove SWEATER, set in stack of clothes
	Grab stack of clothes	SRp table	
Daniel & Alivia	Set couch w/ coffee table	SLp	
Trevor & Melissa	Set counter and stereo	SL Wing 1	
Abel & Kelli Jo	Set Armchair w/ duffle	SR Wing 2	
Act II Scene 7: Main Apartment			
Daniel & Alivia	Move to SR		
TRANSITION Act II Scene 7 – Act II Scene 8: Main Apartment – Waiting Room			
Trevor & Melissa	Strike counter and stereo	SL Wing 1	
Brooke & Charity	Strike Couch	SLp	
Abel & Kelli Jo	Strike Coffee Table	SLp	
Daniel & Alivia	Strike Armchair	SR Wing 2	
Abel	Set Brandon coat	Coat rack	
	Set Brandon Bible	Table 2	

SET CONCEPT AND DESIGN

Waiting room:



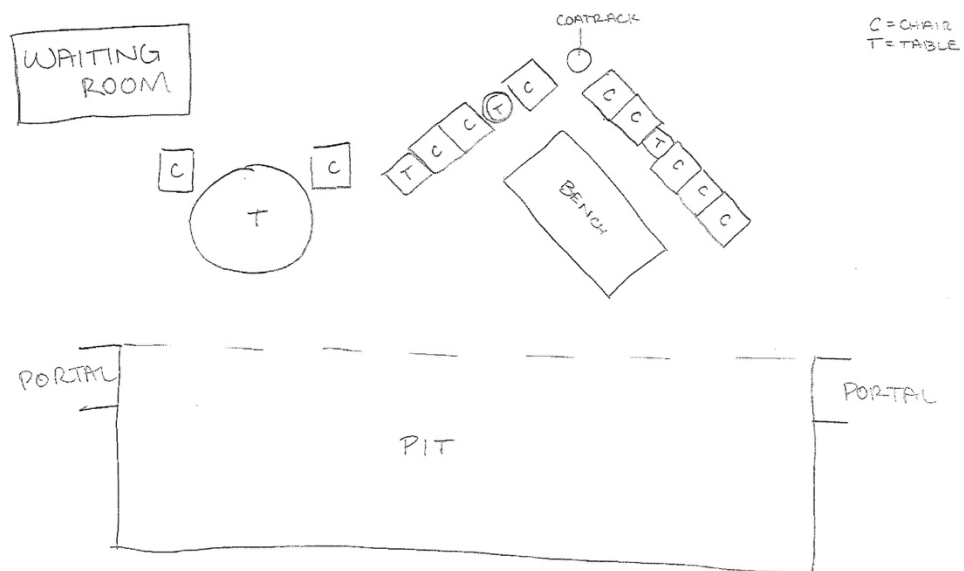
New York apartment:



Jewish temple:

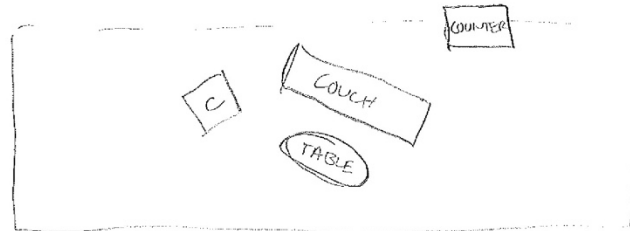


GROUND PLAN

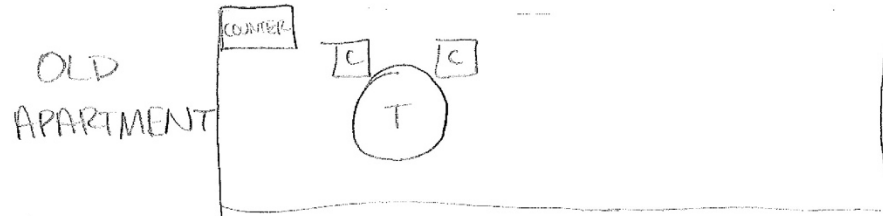


GROUND PLAN CONTINUED...

PIT LOOKS



NEW
APARTMENT



OLD
APARTMENT



HOSPITAL
ROOM

ROOFTOP



HOSPITAL TEMPLE



COSTUME CONCEPT:

Luke:

1.2



1.4, 2.3



2.6



Base look



Adam:

Base look:

1.4, 2.3



Other looks:



Arlene:



Holly:



Butch:



Brandon:



PROP CONCEPT AND DESIGNS:

1.2



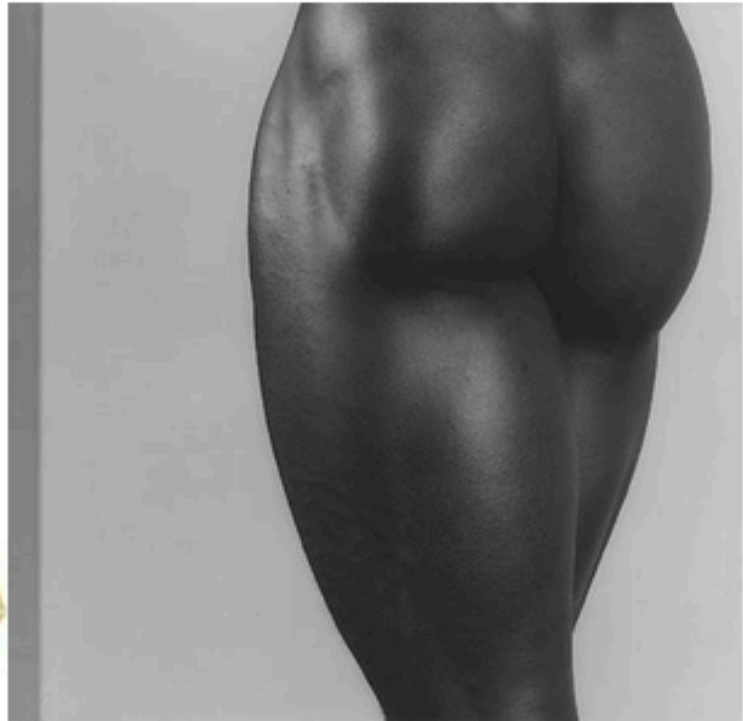
1.5




1.6



2.2



SOUND CONCEPT – *Next Fall* Playlist



Capstone
Andrew Sabonis-Chafee


PLAY

33 SONGS

...

- Getaway Car
TobyMac • Welcome To Diverse City
- Bring Em Out
Hawk Nelson • Smile, It's The End Of The World
- My Brain Says Stop, But My Heart Says Go
FM Static • X2011
- Can't Go On
Group 1 Crew • Group 1 Crew
- Love Addict
Family Force 5 • Business Up Front/Party In The Back
- Who I Am Hates Who I've Been
Relient K • Mmhmm
- Boomin' - Opera Trip Interlude
TobyMac • As Heard On TV
- Whispers In The Dark
Skillet • Comatose
- Avalanche
Manifest • The Chase
- Movin'
Group 1 Crew • Ordinary Dreamers
- Outrage
Capital Lights • This Is An Outrage!
- Monster
Skillet • Awake
- I'm Not Alright
Sanctus Real • The Face Of Love
- Rolling In The Deep
EXPLICIT Adele • Pay Close Attention : XL Recordings
- We Found Love
Rihanna, Calvin Harris • Talk That Talk (Deluxe)
- Paradise
Coldplay • Mylo Xyloto
- Countdown
Beyoncé • 4
- Saving All My Love for You
Whitney Houston • Whitney Houston
- So Emotional
Whitney Houston • Whitney
- All This And Heaven Too
Florence + The Machine • Ceremonials (Deluxe Edition)
- I'll Believe In Anything
Wolf Parade • Apologies To The Queen Mary
- 715 - CREEKS
Bon Iver • 22, A Million
- 22 (OVER SEASON)
Bon Iver • 22, A Million
- 45
Bon Iver • 22, A Million
- Love Me Patiently
Tom Crouch • A Civil War of Head & Heart
- Everything You Ever Wanted
Hawk Nelson • Smile, It's The End Of The World
- Souls A'fire
Matt Corby • Into The Flame
- Signs
Bloc Party • Intimacy
- 5AM
Amber Run • 5AM (Deluxe)
- Be the Song
Foy Vance • Melrose EP
- If You Ever Wanna Be In Love - James Bay Spotify Session 2015
James Bay • James Bay Spotify Session 2015
- Land of the Living
Matthew Parryman Jones • Land of the Living
- Dirt
Hayden Calnin • Dirt

NEXT FALL RESEARCH IMAGES



EL AL

Since its establishment as Israel's national airline, EL AL's history has been intertwined with the history of the country, as an inseparable narrative. We invite you get to know us as you go through our history and our modern



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A 799-bed teaching hospital founded in 1889 on Manhattan's Lower East Side, Mount Sinai Beth Israel is notable for its unique approach to combining medical excellence with clinical innovation. We have recruited world-class specialists to expand services in heart disease, cancer, neurology, and orthopedics. We also continue our long tradition of excellence in medical specialties, including gastrointestinal disease, chemical dependency, psychiatric disorders, pain management and palliative care, and HIV/AIDS research and treatment. We have also significantly advanced our commitment to community-based ambulatory care and expanding patient access to primary and specialty care.

Thrombosis

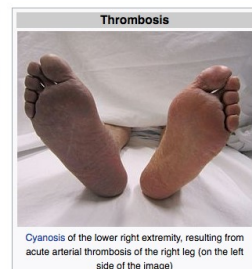
From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Thrombosis (from Ancient Greek θρόμβωσις *thrómbōsis* "clotting") is the formation of a blood clot inside a blood vessel, obstructing the flow of blood through the **circulatory system**. When a blood vessel (a vein or an artery) is injured, the body uses platelets (thrombocytes) and fibrin to form a blood clot to prevent blood loss. Even when a blood vessel is not injured, blood clots may form in the body under certain conditions. A clot, or a piece of the clot, that breaks free and begins to travel around the body is known as an **embolus**.^{[1][2]}

Thrombosis may occur in veins (**venous thrombosis**) or in arteries. Venous thrombosis leads to congestion of the affected part of the body, while arterial thrombosis (and rarely severe venous thrombosis) affects the blood supply and leads to damage of the tissue supplied by that artery (ischemia and necrosis). A piece of either an arterial or a venous thrombus can break off as an embolus which can travel through the circulation and lodge somewhere else as an embolism. This type of embolism is known as a *thromboembolism*. Complications can arise when a venous thromboembolism (commonly called a VTE) lodges in the lung as a **pulmonary embolism**. An arterial embolus may travel further down the affected blood vessel where it can lodge as an embolism.

Contents [hide]

- Signs and symptoms
 - Venous thrombosis
 - Arterial thrombosis
 - Limb ischemia
- Causes
- Mechanism



Portfolio Selected Works

Self Portraits View



Male Nudes View



Deepak Chopra

American-Indian author



deepakchopra.com

Deepak Chopra is an Indian-born American author, public speaker, alternative medicine advocate, and a prominent figure in the New Age movement. Through his books and videos, he has become one of the best-known and wealthiest figures in alternative medicine. [Wikipedia](#)

How to play: Gin Rummy

COMMENTS(0) < SHARE

Game Type: Rummy

Age: 8+

Players: 2, 3, 4

RANK OF CARDS

The order of the cards, from highest to lowest, is: king (K), queen (Q), jack (J), ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, deuce and ace.

As for the value of the cards, the figure cards are worth 10 points and the other cards are worth the value indicated by their pips.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

Each player uses their hand to form combinations of three or more cards, to get more than the 100 points required to win the game before their opponent does so when played over several hands.

THE DEAL

The deck is spread out on the table and each player takes a card. The player who draws the highest card chooses where to sit and deals out ten cards to each player, one by one, leaving the deck with the remaining cards in the center of the table. The top card of the stock deck is placed face up next to it to start the discard pile. In the following games, the player who wins the previous game becomes the dealer.

THE PLAY

The player who did not deal the cards starts the game, with the option to pick up the upturned card next to the stock deck, meaning that one of their cards must be discarded. If the said card is of no interest, the player passes without discarding. The opponent may, in turn, take that card and discard another, and if they are not interested, they pass without discarding. Then the first player can now take the top card off the stock deck, discarding another. The game continues, with each player in turn being able to take the top card off the stock deck or the discard pile, then discarding a card, but which may not be the same card that they just picked up from the discard pile.

The game consists of players grouping the 10 cards in their hand to make minimum combinations of three cards of the same rank or runs of the same suit. The ace can be combined with the deuce but not with the king (K). A player can fold when their hand contains only unmatched cards worth a total value of no more than 10 points, making a Knock. As soon as a player discards their last card, they show all of their cards, announcing the number of points that are left without combining. It is not compulsory to Knock, a player can prolong the game in order to improve their hand. The best hand is to make Gin, consisting of placing down the ten cards combined.

In either case, when a player folds, exposing all of their cards, the opponent does the same, having the opportunity to get rid of those cards that were left unmatched and being able to combine cards with those exposed by the player who Knocked or announced Gin. A partial game also ends when there are only two cards left in the deck, this game is declared null and the same player cards deals out a new hand.

When a player announces Gin they win the partial game, whereas if a player Knocks, either that player or the opposing player can win it. The player wins if the value of their unmatched cards is less than the value of the opponent's unmatched cards and the opponent wins if the value of their unmatched cards is equal to or less than that of the one that Knocked.

The cards of the opponent to the one who announced Gin or Knocked are valued after having discarded the cards that they have not combined and that link with combinations of the hand laid down by the one declared Gin or Knock.

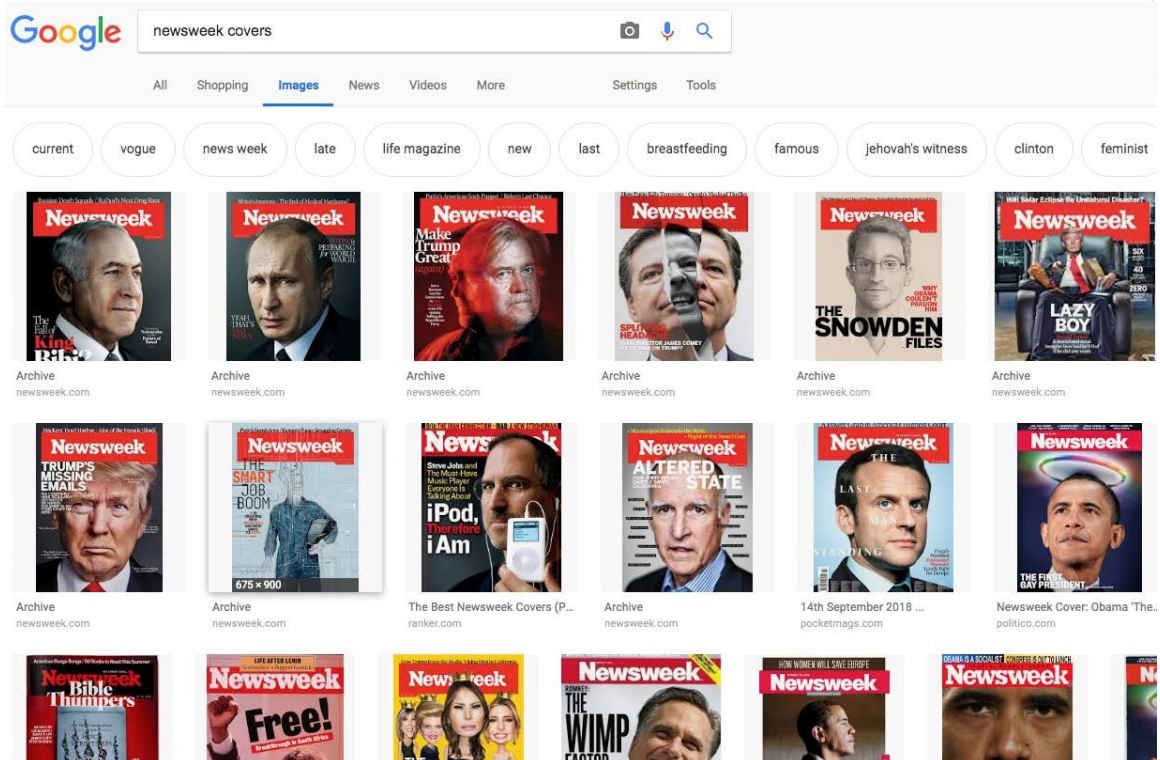
HOW TO KEEP SCORE

A game ends when sufficient partial games have been played to allow one player to get 100 or more points.

The player who makes Gin, scores 20 points plus the value of the opponent's unmatched cards. If the player who Knocks wins the game, they score the difference in the value of their unmatched cards with those of their opponent, while if the opponent wins, they score 10 points plus the difference in the value of the unmatched cards between both players. If there is no difference, the 10 point bonus remains.

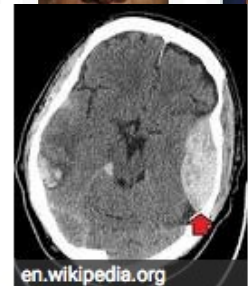
Once the game has finished, the players note down the following bonuses: 100 points for winning a game, 20 points for each partial game won and 100 points for winning all the rounds of a game without the opponent having won any.

February 11, 2012



Epidural hematoma (EDH) is a traumatic accumulation of blood between the inner table of the skull and the stripped-off dural membrane. ... Blood vessels in close proximity to the fracture are the sources of the hemorrhage in the formation of an **epidural hematoma**. Oct 27, 2016

[Epidural Hematoma in Emergency Medicine: Background ...](https://emedicine.medscape.com/article/824029-overview)
<https://emedicine.medscape.com/article/824029-overview>



Arrhythmia

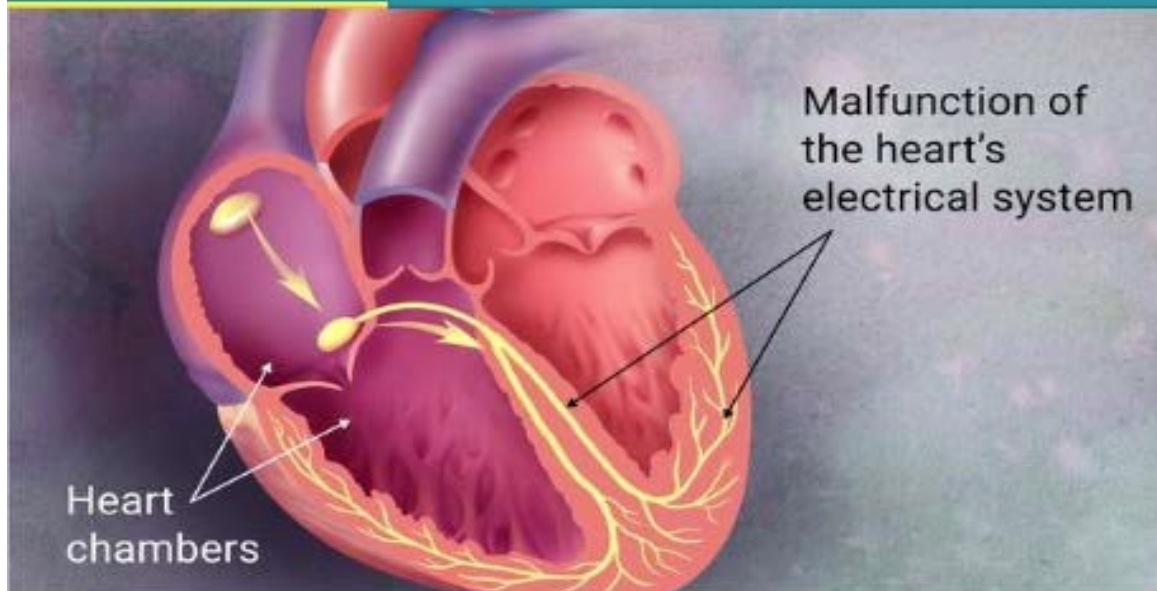
Also called: irregular heartbeat



ABOUT

SYMPTOMS




TREATMENTS



Improper beating of the heart, whether irregular, too fast, or too slow.

Very common

More than 3 million US cases per year

-  Requires a medical diagnosis
-  Lab tests or imaging often required
-  Treatable by a medical professional

Cardiac arrhythmia occurs when electrical impulses in the heart don't work properly.

There may be no symptoms. Or, symptoms may include a fluttering in the chest, chest pain, fainting, or dizziness.

If needed, treatment includes anti-arrhythmic drugs, medical procedures, implantable devices, and surgery.

BAYLOR
Theatre

NEXT FALL

Rehearsal Report
Director: Andrew Sabonis-Chafee

Rehearsal Report #1
9.23.18

Scheduled Time: 10:30pm - 12:00am

Actual Time: 10:45pm - 12:00am

TODAY'S SCHEDULE:

1. Cuts
2. Table Work

ABSENT/LATE

1. None.

INJURY/ILLNESS:

1. Kelli Jo is sick, so if we all fall we know it's HER, but yeah, her voice is kind of gone.

GENERAL:

1. Will be able to talk to playwright, and we will be Skyping in at a future rehearsal.
2. Discussed ARLENE character
3. Went through Hodge words for each character
4. Andrew sent out playlist, wants music in scene transitions, with transitions wants unscripted transition scenes
5. Max wants to use glasses for symbolism
6. KJ thinks there's gross cleavage, Lisa hairstyle, gaudy jewelry, thick makeup, and has pants in mind, stilettos
7. Luke is sexy, thoughtlessly stylish, max has boxers with spicy peppers, glow in the dark
8. Adam's a mess
9. Did Viewpoints activities: How does your character walk?
10. Melissa never wants to be alone, always helping someone
11. Max wants to stay away from people more than being close to Damian, Abel feels like an outsider, KJ wanted to stay close to Adm, Max wanted to stay in-between Adam and Abel, tended to veer towards Brandon

ANDREW:

1. Do we know who lighting and sound designers are? - yes Alex
2. Do you want me to keep time?

KENNA:

1. Alex Marino is LD

LIGHTS:

1. For unscripted transition scenes, spotlights on transition character.

SOUND:

SCRIPT CONT:

1. None, thank you.

SCRIPT:

1. pg. 15: CUT ADAM: We sat...hours; CUT ADAM: I'm starving...Cinnabon; CUT ARLENE: He certainly...ARLENE: Yes...we called it.
2. pg. 16: CUT ARLENE: Luke's got a ton of it
3. pg. 19: CUT HOLLY: It's Belinda...ADAM: I'd pay to see that
4. pg. 21: CUT ADAM: She went to school...ADAM: I guess
5. pg. 23: CUT ADAM: Are you kidding...week; CUT ADAM: And you were the conductor; CUT BRANDON: But it's...ADAM: Excuse me
6. pg. 24: CUT BRANDON: I'm not...ADAM: What are you talking about; CUT BRANDON: Luke needs...ADAM: You don't think I know that
7. pg. 25: CUT ADAM: Hours...HOLLY: Adam
8. pg. 27: CUT ADAM: What kind...LUKE: Well, it's fun...trust me
9. pg. 29: CUT LUKE: Killing men...ADAM: It's just a hypothesis
10. pg. 30: CUT ADAM: What are you doing?; CUT LUKE: Trying to get this thing off; CHANGE ADAM line: What thing? MAKE LUKE: What thing? ADD: 's this READS LUKE: It'll look like a palace. What's this thing?; CUT HOLLY: The mezuzah...LUKE: Ma-wha-wha; ADD: "A" before ADAM: Mezuzah READS ADAM: A mezuzah
11. pg. 32: CUT HOLLY: What about...ADAM: Especially him; CUT ADAM: *Singing*
12. pg. 34: CUT ADAM: If you can believe...LUKE: I don't judge...that's up to you
13. pg. 35: CUT ADAM: It's what...all these years; CUT ADAM: Yeah, well...HOLLY: I agree...vegetable
14. pg. 36: CUT HOLLY: after that...HOLLY: Cleft palates, right. And; CUT Holly: past 75th and 76th
15. pg. 37: CUT ARLENE: Oh, for Pete's...Uh-huh...Uh-huh...Uh-huh
16. pg. 39: CUT BUTCH: Sounds like...ARLENE: Okay, buster...warn you
17. pg. 45: CUT ADAM: Now what...ADAM: And I ain't...the pieces
18. pg. 47: CUT BUTCH: I used...part of something
19. pg. 48: CUT BUTCH: Fifteen...with me, and; CUT ADAM: No entourage...Just him
20. pg. 49: CUT ADAM: You don't...ADAM: Who wake...Screaming
21. pg. 52: CUT LUKE: Tell me what KEEP LUKE: the doctor said CUT LUKE: again; CUT ADAM: It could be a...doesn't know; CUT LUKE: He said KEEP LUKE: it wasn't a brain tumor CUT LUKE: Adam; CUT LUKE: What about the headache...CUT LUKE: Okay, you need therapy
22. pg. 53: CUT LUKE: I mean, what more do you want?...LUKE: I sat in a...feel "uncomfortable"
23. pg. 55: CUT ADAM: Can we wear...LUKE: Sure...your hair hurt; CUT ARLENE: They have this elevator...ARLENE: I see...Well I guess...push any buttons
24. pg. 56: CUT ARLENE: So many things...ADAM: Of course
25. pg. 59: CUT ADAM: Then, I guess, you coming...ADAM: It would mean so much...frying a
26. pg. 60: CUT ADAM: turkey...ADAM: Never mind; CUT ADAM: Oh, and we're talking about...mostly good
27. pg. 62: CUT BRANDON: You're funny...ADAM: Oh, well. Maybe...Guess not
28. pg. 63: CUT ADAM: Brandon said you...BUTCH: You sure?...thing can just
29. pg. 69: CUT HOLLY: Gets consumption...just...dies
30. pg. 70: CUT ARLENE: Around the corner?

SCENERY:

1. None.

REHEARSAL NOTES

9.20

PREP

- Excited!
- Scheduling
- Big play. Thank you for being brave and tackling these themes
- Connected to thesis. Conversations important
- Cuts! Don't be offended if I have to cut more
- Maybe talk to playwright?
- Songs are important! Collaborative playlist
- Character work
 - I know characters better than you now, but I don't want that at the end
 - Don't get character arc often at Baylor theatre, so it will require outside work
 - How do they change?
 - What do they want?
 - A line that captures them
 - Meyers Briggs, Enneagram?
 - Songs?

NOTES

- Cuts
 - 29, 32, 35, 36, 37, 39, 47-8, 49, 52, 55, 59-60, 62, 63, 68, 69, 70

9.22

PREP

- Schedule
- Off book date
- Safe space for conversations
- Make sure we aren't projecting til the end
- Fell emotion, not necessarily cry
- Table work

9.23

PREP

- finish table work
- Kelli Jo character questions
- Cuts
- Character work

9.30

NOTES

- ARLENE - don't sit down so fast. Stay up ding things
- ARLENE - coat in 1st scene. That's also where cell phone is
- BUTCH - No medical forms
- ADAM AND LUKE – liked the bench straddle
- BUTCH – make sure all movement is purposeful. No wandering
- LUKE – we may have CDs for you to sort through. Do that before table clean
- BUTCH – scene 6, one chair over
- BUTCH – cards in drawer
- ARLENE – more movement
- BUTCH AND ADAM – find way to show audience magazine cover. Hold it up
- ADAM – liked you reading the magazine
- BRANDON AND HOLLY – switch seats in 2.1
- LUKE – look over your blocking. Hard without all the boxes, but do more
- BUTCH – experiment with loading “swanky”. Maybe you even sit there
- BUTCH AND LUKE – handshake not hug
- LUKE – bedroom is portal, not offstage
- BUTCH – pick up photo when you say your n word line
- ADAM AND LUKE – stand in argument sooner? We will look at that
- LUKE – enter on “you should’ve seen her in there”
- ADAM – sit facing forward at end
- BRANDON – watch posture
- BRANDON AND HOLLY – stand earlier when Butch collapses
- ARLENE – help Butch stand

10.1

NOTES

- ARLENE – look at movement
- ARLENE – faster
- ARLENE – love the laughter. More places
- ARLENE – phone in coat pocket, then put purse away
- MAX – liked the bench straddle from yesterday
- HOLLY – turn out more in 1.3
- BRANDON – read your bible in 1.3
- LUKE – full pray, not halvesies
- LUKE – “it’s human nature” stand
- ADAM AND LUKE – react to candle more
- ADAM – go to box sooner? We will look at that
- ADAM – vocalize when he leaves
- HOLLY, ADAM, AND LUKE – wings are exit, not portal
- ADAM – great magazine to audience
- HOLLY AND BUTCH – learn how to play gin rummy
- ARLENE – movement again. Lets look at it
- BUTCH AND ARLENE – fall needs to build. We will look at it
- ADAM – no earbuds in 2.2, music on radio
- LUKE – don’t sit in 2.3
- ARLENE – give Brandon Bible as you leave
- ALL – 2.9, nonverbals throughout
- Cuts
 - 16, 32, 35, 48, 50, 60, 61, 68, 69

NOTES FROM MENTOR

- Cut things
- Look at set. Bench in the middle. Angle
- Cowboy boots for trevor
- Kelli Jo not as big of an accent
- Adam has never been to waiting room, so have him look around before
- Adam is more mature, settled, not nervous. Hes a rock, steady, quieter. “let yourself go” is said to him so we have to see that. Reserved, uptight, not as theatrical. Work on that with Damian

- Make sure Max doesn't play AT gay. Play at shame or guilt. Keep it real. He can find something that connects him with Luke
- Long bench not short one
- "I have a confession" needs to be close
- Don't push comedy
- Melissa is too casual in trumpet scene
- Pronunciation of "ashrams"
- Babe moment and coming out after. Make it quicker
- Laptop on couch other way so audience doesn't see it
- Different emphasis on "Lung Lady"
- Try adam and Brandon scene standing
- Abel needs to be more awkward, more embarrassed, more close to his chest
- Too ready for fight over Luke in hospital room. Try to NOT fight
- Pronunciation of "shiva"

10.2

NOTES

- ADAM - talk as soon as you come in
- ADAM – more forward
- ARLENE – sip coffee before going for creamer
- ARLENE – places for laughter
- ARLENE – "bless her heart" more subtext
- BUTCH – "behaved yourself" is less pointed
- ARLENE – cross in front
- LUKE – we may get you a serving tray
- ADAM – keep his Our Town card
- ADAM – "im not so sure" forward

10.3

NOTES

- BRANDON – react to "thong on a float"
- ADAM – you can be loud and still focused. Less frenetic
- ADAM – no pockets at argument
- BUTCH – stay on phone

- ADAM AND LUKE – faster pickups in 1.4
- ADAM – don't block face
- HOLLY – say no you don't want to play cards but mean the opposite
- ADAM – pages 39 and 40, get lines down well so that can build
- ADAM AND BUTCH – don't adjust at stare down
- ADAM – don't put earbuds back in

10.4

PREP

- Work on intimacy
 - Page 68
 - 49 & 50
 - 54 and a little before
 - 63 if we have time

10.6

NOTES

- HOLLY – draw out “a little something”
- We need a pumpkin label
- HOLLY – good taking things more seriously!
- ADAM AND LUKE – argument faster, build more
- ADAM – remember the nonverbal when he leaves
- LUKE – write down and review blocking cuz it's a lot and it has to be down well
- ADAM AND LUKE – look at reasons for correcting Butch with “candles”
- ADAM – watch franticness in 2.2, don't match Luke's nervous energy in this scene

10.7

- ARLENE AND BRANDON – just some sugar packets, not the whole tub. Then, Brandon can bring some out from backstage
- ARLENE – less space between lines. Mow that first scene down
- ALL – magazines are great, but only use them when not talking to someone. Or when things are awkward. Just don't cling to them so much

- ARLENE – creamer from purse before Butch comes in, then put creamer back in purse!!!!
- ADAM AND HOLLY – don't cross in as much. Holly go meet him more when he comes in the waiting room to not cover Butch
- ADAM – put card down with water, don't hold it the whole time
- ADAM – doing a really really good job of slowing Adam down. Keep going that direction!! In scene 2, slower with water sips, too spastic
- BUTCH – take space out before “everything okay?”
- BUTCH – stay on phone a while longer after “still no service”. Just so you aren't rummaging in jacket for so long
- LUKE – “the arlene show” is a joke, so you can laugh a lil! Which leads me to
- ALL – think about if your character laughs at their own jokes. I think there are a few times where some of you can definitely take that permission to at least smile or something. That's such a picky note, but think about it.
- LUKE – “do you really want to get into this” still be more playful with that
- KENNA – boxes: 2 on couch (1 has books, 1 has nothing), 1 on chair (with plays and books), 1 holly brings in (sheets), 1 max? or someone else brings in (with plates and mezuzah)
- LUKE – when you cross up to box to get you up by chair, get up earlier to look in box before picking it up to sort through
- ADAM AND HOLLY – “I had Honeywell” make sure that makes it through
- ALL – small look when she says bull penis. Not as big as when he wipes his ass
- ADAM – build more to clean ass. Go through peoples other lines if you have to
- ARLENE – put pills and phone back in purse. Not in jacket. Thatll just be quicker
- LUKE – faster book/picture sorting at the beginning. Maybe he's already sorted those out in the bedroom so they don't require a huge examining.
- LUKE – good build. Keep being frantic. Get to those picture frames by the stereo, maybe faster book sorting will help with that. Even bigger build up to FUCK. Either that or a smaller fuck. If that makes sense.
- LUKE – try not to show your dad that you are freaked out. Hide it
- BUTCH AND LUKE – set down the photo that butch brings out so he can get it off the table, not your hands
- LUKE – when Butch says the n-line, your “excuse me” should again be like trying to hide how startled and astonished you are. Like if your uncle said something really racist at thanksgiving but youre not really close enough to confront him.
- LUKE – don't get too upset with Adam too soon. More loving/concerned/playful at beginning and play around with where it starts to get more serious

- ADAM – further cross when you take computer to exit. Then stay there. Then find a moment in the big argument to cross to Luke and throw computer down. That will just add a lil more movement in the big argument section
- ADAM AND LUKE – remember to get comfy at the end. And Luke initiates the “cuddling” so Adam can lean his head on him.
- ALL – I love you all
- ADAM – maybe at the start of your silent thinking part, add a deep breath. Or somewhere in there. Keep playing with that part. Give it some sense of separateness.
- ADAM – why does Adam go to the temple? Think about that
- ARLENE – “Lung Lady” is a little kid trying to say “Young Lady” so play around with where the emphasis is.
- ARLENE AND ADAM – Arlene slower when you are about to leave so Adam can stop you before you cross to other side of him. In other words, you’ll basically just stand up before he stops you
- BRANDON AND ARLENE – Arlene give Brandon his bible as you leave, not before then
- ADAM – “you were his emergency contact” How does he feel about this? Maybe less angry
- ADAM AND BRANDON – both too handsy in this scene. Two hands on cup, one in coat or pant pocket. Also good looking out at environment, but can also look down at coffee or hands or something. Its awkward!!
- ADAM –focus on being less nervous and jumpy at the beginning of the scene especially
- BRANDON – don’t show us everything on your face. He plays his cards pretty close.
- ADAM – try keeping shoes on today. Or if you think you can slip them on or something try that.
- ARLENE – lets see a difference in Arlene. She tries to joke in this last scene, but I think it comes from a different place than it has. Play around with that
- BUTCH – same with Butch. Lets see a big difference in him. I saw a good physical difference, so lets try to add a vocal difference too. Play around with that
- ADAM – “I wasn’t afraid” that section, don’t show us everything.
- BUTCH – remember to leave that phone!

10.8

NOTES

- ARLENE – there's a wall, don't go into it
- ARLENE – not so long before "Brandon, how do i..."
- BRANDON – enter earlier
- ARLENE AND BUTCH – say your lines while A helps B navigate a smartphone
- LUKE – you can set tray down
- ADAM – pause before "sorry" to Holly
- ADAM AND LUKE – we will look at end of scene 2
- BUTCH – faster pickup on "everything okay?"
- LUKE AND ADAM – "she's a crackhead" joking. Laugh
- LUKE – touch longer prayer
- LUKE AND ADAM – look over 1.4 lines
- LUKE – just take off plates and mezuzah, not box
- HOLLY AND LUKE – she knows you don't like pumpkin, let that inform those lines
- ADAM – I like you on the table for cheers
- LUKE – be more toward chair to unload boxes
- ADAM AND HOLLY – "the Vatican" inside joke maybe? Laugh
- ADAM AND HOLLY – don't get super drunk!
- HOLLY – sit on sofa to put shoes on
- ADAM – good build in 1.6, you just forgot lines
- BUTCH – explode more at the pills
- LUKE – in 2.2, there's a sheet for you, not that giant comforter
- ADAM – "does my left..." say as you walk out, not giant space there
- LUKE – cross in more after "babe"
- BUTCH AND LUKE – sorta overlap on white/manly
- ADAM – "it's not like im trying..." too spastic
- ARLENE – monologue-look at lines
- BRANDON – is it hard to say "just go?" think about that section
- BRANDON – do you miss Luke? Think about that too
- BUTCH – more time to "new hope"
- ADAM – only back up if Butch feels threatening, not just for blocking purposes
- LUKE – help Adam fold his laundry before and after kiss
- LUKE AND ADAM – give him the right sweater!
- ADAM – "love me more than him" don't go back to straddling, maybe just prop head up
- BUTCH AND ARLENE – stand at beginning of last scene, like doctor just left
- ADAM – "luke wasn't afraid" more tender

- ADAM – “I truly believed” lets talk about that section. I don’t think there’s as much finality
- ARLENE – get purse and coat
- HOLLY – “must be Butch’s” who else?
- ARLENE – we will have a pen on the counter, so no digging through purse

NOTES FROM MENTOR

- Transitions from portals, not wings
- Carpet sliders?
- Chairs from Theatre 11, they seem more permanent
- Kelli Jo in chapel scene – we see crack in her wall she puts up. She knows shes going to bury her son
- Volume, especially at beginning
- Trevor annunciate, especially until audience gets used to tone
- He shouldn’t go right to his spot at the beginning
- Reading glasses for Butch and Arlene
- Luke in first scene is seductive, smooth ladies’ man, for lack of a better term. Confident. His irritation with Adam is good, but attraction needs work.
- All actors need to read each other more. listen
- Brandon and Adam scene is weakest. Needs to be more casual, not stiff
- Butch needs to weight a lot of his lines “dainty” being an example. More going on underneath
- Breakfast scene – this isn’t the first time a relationship has failed because of Luke’s faith. Some weight, not as cheerful the whole time
- Holly needs to stay grounded, think lots about what she’s saying. She is super thoughtful
- Lots of weight on Luke’s “listen dad” which then goes to anger.
- Max needs to work on the casual touch of being in a long term relationship. Naturalization of it
- Pronunciation of “bustier”
- Open up Arlene at hospital bed
- Louder earlier in hospital room so Arlene has a reason to come in
- Butch’s collapse needs to build. Play with breath and tensing muscles. Panic attack. His son was gay and is dead, he’d think of both of those things as his fault.

10.10

- ARLENE – keep speeding up those lines in first scene! Especially pickups to “I love candles” and “now Brandon...”
- ARLENE AND BUTCH – the whole Luke’s brother engineering thing needs to go faster! And Arlene stay over there to help him figure out his phone before sitting down.
- ALL – louder!!
- ARLENE AND BUTCH – missed “clip the curlyquies” or however that’s spelled
- ARLENE – use those reading glasses when you read the magazines in the beginning
- BUTCH – good use of reading glasses throughout!!
- LUKE – much better with the direction of your meeting. Keep going that way! You are a slick confident seducer. Also I really liked the straddle of the bench so see if it feels right to keep it!
- ADAM – “in Pittsburgh” stay moving. Not too much of a to the audience line
- BUTCH AND ARLENE – I liked that the jacket ended up on Butch’s chair. if it ends up there, butch you don’t even have to get up. Just make sure to look around for the jacket first.
- LUKE AND ADAM – “shes a crackhead” share a flirty laugh there
- LUKE – keep looking at when you get serious in the breakfast scene. Great start but go further. I noticed the line “this one just happens to be mine” leading into “you really want me to get into this?” as a spot to look at.
- HOLLY – have purse more accessible for pumpkin candle
- ARLENE – when holly asks if your housekeeper shit in your apartment, react! Maybe a look or a laugh or something Arlene would do before you go into “no, my dog”
- ADAM, BUTCH, HOLLY, ARLENE – last scene of act 1. lots skipped here. Arlene never found her purse. Adam didn’t build like he should have. Idk who messed up but look at it
- LUKE – those pictures start on the chair, but then theres a stack of books marked out on the prop table for you to also carry out and sort. To give you more sorting business
- LUKE AND ADAM – the energy in the de-gay scene totally flopped because of not knowing lines. Look at them.
- BUTCH – good with adding more subtext. Even more! maybe even on “do what you gotta do”
- LUKE – I liked it the other day when you accidentally left a pillow on! Keep that!

- LUKE – right direction, but not as big reaction on “candles!”
- BUTCH – look around before “where’d your friend go”
- ADAM – don’t slam computer down on coffee table. Its just a loud noise at a quiet moment
- ADAM – also don’t crunch on the sleepin pill
- ARLENE – the beginning of the monologue scene when you are reading your bible is a great spot for your reading glasses!
- ARLENE - Keep looking over lines in that monologue, but lovely direction your taking it in.
- BRANDON – “might be a time to be alone with him” is HUGE for Brandon. Feel that weight
- BRANDON – when adam first says “praying after sex” don’t react big. Play with being shocked that whole thing. You are revealing too many things on your face, when Brandon plays much closer to the vest.
- ADAM – don’t forget “you don’t have to answer”.
- BRANDON – your “ive struggled with this stuff” speech, watch for too much hands. Can be simpler, awkwarder
- ADAM AND LUKE – lets look at the hospital bed laying
- LUKE – damian is bringing in more clothes to fold, so you will help with that rather than just standing there.
- KENNA – whoever moves that couch on for the final apartment scene, make sure they preset pillows back on
- LUKE – “maybe once for a second. Then you know...” what does he know? Think about what he is saying. This is big!
- ARLENE – “back in the olden days” not as happy
- ADAM – keep playing with “luke wasn’t afraid” still more tender
- BUTCH – when you say “my fingers I cant feel them” or whatever that line is, you do an interesting gesture of kind of rubbing your hands together. Experiment with keeping that throughout that final moment before your collapse. Really nice work and I don’t think you can go too far with that labored breathing!
- ARLENE – we will have pen preset on one of the tables. Rip out a bit of a magazine to write your number on. That’s where the paper will come from
- ARLENE – make sure to get purse and jacket sometime before you leave! Look at when you can maybe do that
- LUKE AND ADAM – great work with more casual touch, intimate moments. I noticed it and really like the direction its heading. But More! face touching, hair jostling, eye contact, all these things can happen much more, especially as the relationship grows. Yall ROCK

10.11

- HOLLY AND ARLENE – a way to get the hair out of yalls face?
- ARLENE – don't turn to look at Brandon or Holly when you are getting phone and talking about Ben
- BUTCH AND ARLENE – good stuff on the “how does this phone work” business. Butch maybe just look at it blankly, Arlene notice that he probably has no idea what hes doing and snatch it away to help him.
- LUKE – make sure to read notes from other day. In addition to keeping the straddle when yall meet, I think theres a moment or two where you scoot closer.
- LUKE AND ADAM - Lets look at the end of scene 2. It's a big moment. Neither of yall know that you are both gay, so there is caution, but also excitement in this. And maybe yall inch even closer
- LUKE – you were less flirty than you've been before. Both in breakfast and rooftop scene. There are moments (in breakfast scene) for seriousness, but also for fun so remember to keep that up
- ADAM – make sure the wine glass doesn't cover your face
- ADAM – Good build to wiping ass! Keep going with it
- BUTCH – youre a natural with those reading glasses.
- BRANDON – when you come in maybe add an “Arlene” before you go into “they need you in there”
- LUKE – if his legs are on the coffee table flag when you go to get it, move his legs off yourself
- ADAM – good with the throwing the pillows back on! Loved it
- BUTCH AND ADAM – quicker with “I spent a semester”. Just not as much time before
- BUTCH AND ADAM – also quicker with the tea pour. Good to have some space there but not too much
- ADAM – “almost smug” keep up the intensity to build it. Don't drop too much
- ARLENE – “afraid I might break him...or lose him”. Or lose him is a HUGE line, especially with what's going on right now. Is that where she realizes? Or starts to? I really don't have an answer, just giving you something to think about!
- ADAM – why do you go to tell Arlene about you and Luke then? Even after being warned against it by Holly? How do you think she'll respond? Let all those things color that line “luke and I...we..”

- BRANDON – listen more in this scene. He basically says “we aren’t friends and don’t really like you, but I need advice” how would he react? Just really tune into what Adam is saying in this scene
- ADAM – “you don’t have to answer” can be a small comedic moment. Like “shit I cant believe I just asked him point blank if he prays after sex”
- BRANDON – Adam says “Luke misses you” and you say “I miss him too”. Do you really miss him too? I don’t have an answer, but think about that
- ALL – second go round was better in hospital room. Remember what we went over and keep working on lines cuz they go fast
- LUKE AND ADAM – don’t let that kiss sneak up on you. Have more of a tension filled lead up to it
- ADAM – after karate chopping his back, try more pressure and less squeezing massage if that makes sense. He wants you crack it after all
- BUTCH – awesome with your moment in this last scene. Im going to keep pushing you to do more! but what you have is really good
- ARLENE – we already talked about your “but she’s...but they don’t” moment in your Our Town monologue. Nervous to talk too much about death
- ADAM – we already talked about not giving your final chunk of lines as much finality or conclusion. Don’t lay it all out there, hold some back too and think about it.

10.12

NOTES

- ALL - entrances come in a little more to be in the light
- ARLENE AND BUTCH – nice phone moment
- HOLLY – “for a reason” can overlap a little
- ALL – don’t freeze when scene ends
- LUKE – your “excuse me” in 2.2 can start as shock, THEN transition to anger

10.13

NOTES

- ARLENE – great! Laughs and lines
- BUTCH – give time for phone to ring when calling Ben
- ADAM – nerves got to you and made lots of things more hyper

- HOLLY – don't cross out of light in 1.2
- LUKE – eat tomatoes so you know they are fierce
- BUTCH – transition to 1.6 put books in the box
- ARLENE – make sure purse is under chair
- HOLLY AND BUTCH – where was the stereo in transition to 2.2
- CREW – not as many books on chair
- BUTCH AND LUKE – more time in this scene. Especially before “where's the bathroom” and “what happened to ass photo” and “listen dad”
- ADAM AND LUKE – look when you hear a flush
- LUKE – remember to open computer at close of 2.3
- LUKE – please for me, use 2 hands!
- ARLENE – don't try too hard to regain composure. Once at end, not throughout.
- ADAM – hide your uncomfiness in park by making jokes. Not just joking for the hell of it. Also the praying after sex really bothers you!
- LUKE – bigger movement on hospital bed
- ARLENE AND BRANDON – faster moving on that chair
- ADAM AND LUKE – more time in last scene together, from “I love you” until the end

NEXT FALL

ACT ONE

Scene 1

In darkness we hear brakes squeal to a crashing halt, followed by a car horn stuck in a plaintive wail. The horn begins to sound like a trumpet's call before fading out.

A small waiting area off an ICU at a Jewish hospital. Mint green. Sterile. The low buzz of fluorescent lighting. There's a couch, two armchairs, a TV and a small coffee table holding a box of Kleenex and some magazines. A pair of doors upstage lead to a hallway that goes on forever.

Brandon sits, contemplatively thumbing the pages of an old book. Holly peruses a magazine next to him. She tosses it down with a sigh, and their eyes meet.

HOLLY: Weird, huh?

BRANDON: Yeah.

HOLLY: How quickly that rug gets pulled out from underneath you? (A beat.)

BRANDON: What rug?

HOLLY: Any rug. The perfect old rug. It's like, one minute you're doing the morning crossword, next thing you know you're well over there.

BRANDON: ... Yeah. (Arlene blows in like a tornado.)

ARLENE: Here you go, hon. (She hands Holly a cup of coffee.) Black, right?

9

HOLLY: Perfect.

ARLENE: Wish I could drink it like that. I mean, I like my cream and sugar, don't get me wrong, but I like my thighs, too. Especially when they're not rubbing up against each other.

HOLLY: Thanks. (Arlene plops down with her own coffee.)

ARLENE: My dog is gonna strangle me, I swear. She's just gonna wrap her little paws around my neck and wring it.

HOLLY: You have a dog?

ARLENE: (Nodding.) My neighbor said she'd keep an eye on her, but ... She's Puerto Rican ... My dog, not the ... Well, my neighbor's Puerto Rican, too ... Chihuahua ... That's Puerto Rican, isn't it? Or is it Mexican?

BRANDON: Um ...

ARLENE: It's something Latin. She's got that temperament, you know? I've only had her a week, and already it's like we're in prison and I'm her bitch. Can't stand it when anyone comes near me. She gets all snarly and yappy. It's made us real popular at the dog park, let me tell you.

HOLLY: It's always the little ones.

ARLENE: Oh, she's a pain in my butt, she really is. But I love her, I do. Like a biscuit sandwich. Luke's dad thinks I've turned into one of those scary dog people. ~~He's never met me, but he's heard the stories.~~

HOLLY: How's he doing?

ARLENE: Who?

HOLLY: Mister ...

ARLENE: Honeycut ... You can call him Butch. He's fine. Off spraying his spray, I bet. Makes him feel better.

HOLLY: I only know Luke by his stage name.

ARLENE: The stage name, right? I wouldn't bring that up around Butch. It's kind of a sore subject.

HOLLY: I think it was a union thing if that makes him feel any better.

ARLENE: ~~Not really.~~ (She blows on her coffee.) Now, Brandon, why do you look so familiar?

BRANDON: Luke's *Our Town* opening?

ARLENE: That's right. Lord, my mind's going. I can't remember a thing anymore.

BRANDON: At that sushi restaurant.

10

Blocking:

1 ~~and A C~~ 5 and 6

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Props ENT/EXT:

1 coffee

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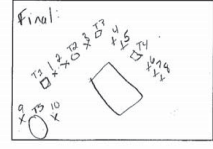
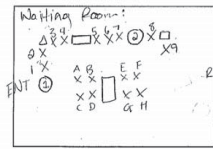
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Stage Pics:



Blocking:

1 KS H ~~and A C~~ 5 and 6

2 KS ~~and A C~~ 5 and 6

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Props ENT/EXT:

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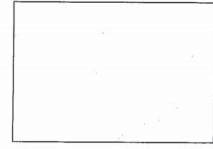
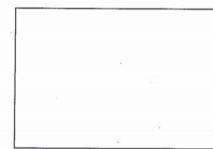
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Stage Pics:



ARLENE. It's not so much my long term memory. That's pretty good. My short term's not bad either. It's just everything in between that's getting a little fuzzy ... Was I flapping my gums the whole night? ~~Nothing came.~~

BRANDON. You seemed to be enjoying yourself.

ARLENE. Of course, I was. You should've stuffed a nori roll in my mouth, Brandon. That's what you have to do, you know, or I'll go on for days.

BRANDON. I remember your turban being quite the topic of conversation.

ARLENE. Oh, no. ~~With the nuts?~~

BRANDON. ~~There were lots of squirrel jokes.~~

ARLENE. My friend Spike makes those. Uses rabbits, too. ~~White Cheddar M&Ms. Anything you find in a bag of food, you put in it.~~ It's called "outsider art." Because that's where it ought to be hung — outside — where no one has to look at it. ~~We're not speaking any more, Spike and me. I mean, what the heck was I thinking? (A beat.)~~ ~~HOWEVER, I never did do my last two years of high school.~~

ARLENE. And what?

HOLLY. But I hold your hair in place?

ARLENE. Once up.

HOLLY. ~~I should have the prom picture to prove it.~~

ARLENE. Good God, woman.

HOLLY. I have a mood, too. One of those big yawn ones.

ARLENE. ~~Where the heck's mood?~~

HOLLY. It's like a sweater for your hair!

ARLENE. No, no! How about you, Brandon? Any skeletons hanging in your closet?

BRANDON. Yes, I guess. I only have red, white and blue ones ~~when I wanted in D.C.~~

ARLENE. Now, I don't know you and Luke know each other, hey? ~~D.C.~~

BRANDON. Luke's the one who convinced me to move here.

ARLENE. Well, that's Luke now, isn't it? Luke 10m Sawyer with ~~one of whitewash. His daddy's the owner.~~

HOLLY. Brandon works for a big property developer. He's making more money than all of us.

ARLENE. Stop it.

BRANDON. It's hard to believe, but it's been a good couple of years, so ...

11

Blocking:

1 ~~dot high~~ ~~Q&A~~, A ~~3~~ x SR

2 A slows

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Props ENT/EXT:

1 magazines?

2 ~~car~~ for A?

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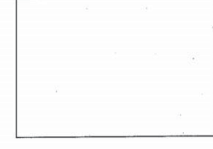
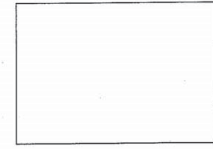
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Stage Pics:



ARLENE. What about you two? How do you kids know each other? ~~(Holly and Brandon exchange a glance.)~~

HOLLY. We don't really. We've met like, what, once or twice, right, Brandon?

BRANDON. Through Luke, yeah.

HOLLY. Luke works at my shop.

ARLENE. The candle store? That's yours?

HOLLY. Well, candles and cards and tchotchkes and things, yeah. We're expanding.

ARLENE. Chachis?

HOLLY. Tchotchkes.

ARLENE. Is that like bagels ... Something Jewish?

HOLLY. It's basically all the little, crappy things that clutter up your house. Knickknacks, I guess.

ARLENE. Okay, now you're speaking my language. My condo's like a chachi warehouse.

HOLLY. Tchotchke.

ARLENE. Hub?

HOLLY. Never mind. ~~(Holly sips her coffee.)~~

ARLENE. From Capitol Hill to candles. No wonder his daddy's ~~was high blood pressure.~~

HOLLY. Actually, candles are really in now.

ARLENE. Oh, I know, honey. I'm just teasing. I love candles. Luke sends me a different flavor for every holiday. Just the other day, I got my pumpkin spice.

HOLLY. That's our best seller. ~~(Laughter erupts in the hallway in time.)~~

ARLENE. ~~Someone's having a good time ... (They hear for a moment. Arlene shifts gears.)~~ And, so Luke likes it up here? He's having a nice life in New York?

HOLLY. He loves it.

ARLENE. I keep waiting to see his face on TV again. There was that commercial he did a while back. For computers, was it? Or cell phones?

BRANDON. DSL.

ARLENE. Okay, see, now I have no idea what that is, either. You must think I'm some kind of hillbilly, twankin' my banjo down there in the boonies somewhere.

HOLLY. I don't know what it is either ... and I have it.

ARLENE. ~~I enjoyed that musical because it was a real hit.~~

12

Blocking:

1 A EXT SR

2 A ENT SR \$ 4

3 KJ \$ x \$ 6

4 KJ \$ x DS 6 rooms

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Props ENT/EXT:

1 sugar packet

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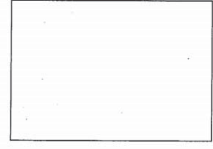
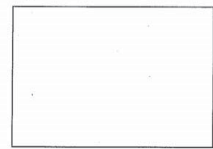
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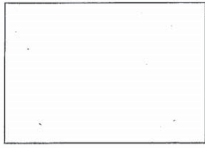
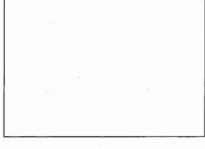
Stage Pics:



~~HOLLY. Well, hon, Luke could sing.~~
 ARLENE. ~~Luke an angel.~~ But my favorite still, Brandon, was that *Our Town*.
 BRANDON. Yeah.
 ARLENE. Luke was just terrific in that. Especially when the girl died. He was so believable.
 HOLLY. Yeah, the acting thing's been going really well for him.
 ARLENE. And he still has all that time to sell candles. *(Butch enters, with medical forms.)*
 BUTCH. Idiots.
 ARLENE. What now, Butch?
 BUTCH. The taxi driver's uninsured.
 ARLENE. Oh, for Pete's sake.
 BUTCH. No green card, either.
 ARLENE. Would you leave that poor man alone! He's traumatized enough as it is.
 BUTCH. Who lets these jackasses across the border, that's what I want to know. He didn't just go through the red light. He ran right up on the sidewalk.
 ARLENE. It was an accident.
 BUTCH. And don't get me started with the ambulance driver.
 ARLENE. Pay no attention to him, you all. He hasn't been here an hour, and he's already tried to have two interns and a security guard fired.
~~BUTCH. Well, they were dumb; too.~~
~~ARLENE. It's called a Napoleon complex.~~
~~BUTCH. Napoleon was short.~~
~~ARLENE. Ought to see if we can't get you a shoe for this while we're here, huh.~~
 BUTCH. I'm keeping a list. That's what I'm gonna do.
 ARLENE. Oh, that's helpful, Butch. That's real constructive.
~~BUTCH. I'll use the whole damn city if I have to.~~
~~ARLENE. Would you hush!~~ *(Butch sits, frustrated.)*
 BUTCH. Knuckleheads.
 ARLENE. Have you called Lynn yet?
 BUTCH. I can't deal with Lynn right now.
 ARLENE. Well, neither can I, and I'm the one she keeps speed dialing.
 BUTCH. I told you not to give her your damn cell phone number.
 ARLENE. *(To Holly.)* Luke's stepmom.

13

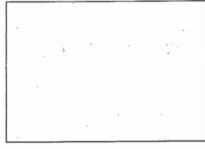
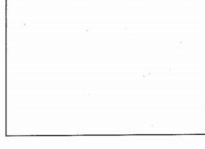
Blocking:
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 2 TX \$1.403
 3 KJ x \$9
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Props ENT/EXT:
 1 medical form
 2 coat
 3 phone
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 Stage Pics:



HOLLY. Oh, I thought you were his ...
 ARLENE. Oh, no, hon. Lynn did a lot of the rearing, but I'm the real deal. Poor thing had a brow lift and a tummy tuck yesterday, can you imagine? And then this happens? She's been calling every half hour in a complete Vicodin haze, bless her heart. Can't understand a word she's saying. *(To Butch.)* Of course, she's got the housekeeper and the personal trainer five times a week, so I can't feel too bad for her.
 BUTCH. You coulda had that if you'd behaved yourself.
 ARLENE. How about Ben? Have you reached Ben yet?
 BUTCH. My phone's not getting any service.
 ARLENE. Well, here, try mine. *(Arlene fishes a cell phone out of her coat pocket and hands it over.)* Luke's brother. He's a sophomore at Georgia Tech.
 BUTCH. An engineering major.
 ARLENE. He's pledging a fraternity today.
 BUTCH. Nuclear engineering. Got a 3.9 last semester.
 ARLENE. Sweet kid.
 BUTCH. He's gonna work for NASA someday. *(Into the phone.)*
 Ben, it's your dad again. Give me a call as soon as you get this, son. It's important. *(He hangs the phone up and hands it back, the reality of the situation hitting them all. Arlene sticks it back in her coat pocket, and switches gears.)*
 ARLENE. That anaesthesiologist seems nice, Holly. The one with the hook nose and the beanie. And cute, too. Are you single?
 HOLLY. Um ...
 ARLENE. I'll introduce you later on. After Luke wakes up. So glad they brought him to a Jewish hospital.
 BUTCH. Arlene ...
 ARLENE. We're lucky, that's all. They make great doctors. Accountants, too.
 BUTCH. Christ on a Christmas tree ...
 ARLENE. You clip those curlie things off the side of his head, he'd look just like George Clooney, wouldn't he, Holly?
 BUTCH. Arlene, why don't you be still and muzzle it for a while. *(Adam enters, wet and exhausted.)*
 HOLLY. Adam?
 ADAM. Oh, my God. *(He makes a beeline for the coat rack.)*
 HOLLY. I thought your flight was canceled.
 ADAM. You wouldn't believe the hoops I had to jump through to

14

Blocking:
 1 KJ \$x6
 2 T \$ pages SR
 3 KJ P1, TX KJ, T & P1
 4 TX DSR, -1, H P1 KJ
 5 TX \$1
 6 D ENT SR x D hug P2
 7 (2 x D hug
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Props ENT/EXT:
 1 KJ phone
 2 D coat
 3
 4 T2: Henry 3 mug, 1 Henry
 5 T2: 3 mug, 2 Henry
 6 T3: 2 mug, 1 jaw str
 7 bench 6 mug
 8
 9
 10
 Stage Pics:



get here. (Holly tries to cut him off at the pass.)
 HOLLY. This is Adam, everybody.
 ADAM. We sat on the tarmac for like two hours.
 HOLLY. I didn't think you were gonna make it in tonight, sweetie.
 ADAM. ~~I'm missing. All I've had to eat today is like three bloody~~
~~Marys and a Cinnamon. (He bangs his wet coat up and turns, para-~~
~~lyzed, when he sees Arlene and the rest of the gang staring at him.)~~
 ARLENE. Hi there.
 HOLLY. This is Arlene, Adam. Luke's mom.
 ARLENE. Nice to meet you.
 HOLLY. And you know Brandon.
 BRANDON. Hey ...
 HOLLY. Brandon was the first one to get here.
 BRANDON. I only live a couple blocks away, so ...
 ADAM. ~~You moron.~~
 BRANDON. ~~I've known you since you were a kid.~~
 HOLLY. And Luke's dad.
 ARLENE. Stand up, Butch. Have some manners.
 ADAM. We've met.
 BUTCH. We have? (Holly pushes Adam towards a chair.)
 HOLLY. Why don't you have a seat, sweetie?
 ADAM. Where is he?
 HOLLY. Just out of surgery. He was in there for, like, five hours.
 ADAM. Can I see him?
 HOLLY. They want us to hold off for a while.
 ADAM. Can't I just stick my head in?
 HOLLY. He's still in the coma. (Adam sinks into a chair, the weight
 of it all finally hitting him.) Adam was just at his high school
 reunion. He must be feeling like we were when we first got here.
 ADAM. It's a little overwhelming, isn't it, sweetie?
 ADAM. He's gonna be okay though, right?
 HOLLY. ~~Of course, he is.~~
 ADAM. ~~I mean, what's the worst that could happen?~~
 ARLENE. Well, now, Butch, you were the last one to speak to the
 surgeon, sweetheart. What did he have to say?
 BUTCH. He said my boy's got fight in him.
 ARLENE. ~~He certainly does. We were just talking about that,~~
~~weren't we, Brandon? Pluck. That's what we called it growing up.~~
 BUTCH. Pluck?
 ARLENE. (Snippy.) Yes, pluck, Butch. That's what we called it.

15

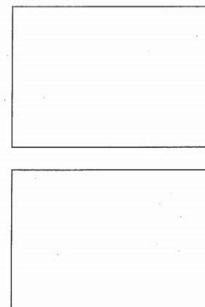
Blocking:

1 KJ & V leads D
 2 KJ x D
 3 KJ shakes D
 4 KJ & V
 5 V & D, D & V

Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



Luke's got a ton of it. What else did he say? (A beat.)
 BUTCH. He's gonna need it. (Adam goes pale as the room spins all
 around him.)

Scene 2

Lights up on a rooftop. Five years earlier. Adam, pale and
 sweaty, is trying to catch his breath. Luke, wearing a white
 shirt and black pants, steps out and hands over a glass of water.

LUKE. Here you go. (Adam takes a huge gulp.)
 ADAM. Thanks.
 LUKE. Sorry about the Heimlich.
 ADAM. Don't worry about it.
 LUKE. I thought you were choking.
 ADAM. I think it was more of an arrhythmia thing. (He downs the
 rest of the water and hands the glass back.) Is the roof spinning or is
 it just me?
 LUKE. Have you tried sliding your arms in the air?
 ADAM. You think?
 LUKE. I saw it on TV once. Some doctor show. (Adam sticks his
 arms in the air.) How'd that feel?
 ADAM. Like I was being crushed.
 LUKE. Might have been a cop show. (Adam lowers his arms and
 sinks to the floor.)
 ADAM. I think maybe if I just sit here for a minute.
 LUKE. Some party, huh?
 ADAM. Fabulous.
 LUKE. Who's your party is it anyway?
 ADAM. My friend Holly's.
 LUKE. The large woman?
 ADAM. She's fat. You can say it ... No, not her. That's a friend
 of hers.
 LUKE. Oh, sorry. Didn't mean to ...
 ADAM. That's okay. She wasn't always like that, apparently.
 LUKE. You can call. Some people just seem like they've been fat

16

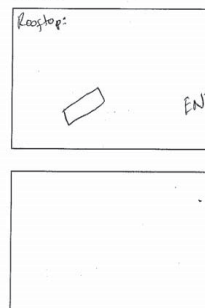
Blocking:

1 D & V
 2 M ENT SL
 3 M & V

Props ENT/EXT:

1 glass of water
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Stage Pics:



~~their whole lives, you know? Like that used to be. But she looks like it kinda stuck up on her out of nowhere ... And suddenly, there she was. That's for sure.~~
~~ADAM: What happened so large?~~
~~LUKE: Like she woke up one morning in someone's back.~~
~~ADAM: Yeah, well, she's on the road to recovery now, so ...~~
~~LUKE: What do you mean?~~
~~ADAM: It's not a real anniversary down there. It's a sweet-to-step thing.~~
~~LUKE: That's a crap? You mean, like, it's~~
~~ADAM: Yeah, only it's CA.~~
~~LUKE: CA?~~
~~ADAM: Overaters Anonymous.~~
~~LUKE: Oh, I see.~~
ADAM. Listen, thanks for the water, but I think I can take it from here. *(Luke reaches out his hand.)*
LUKE. We haven't officially met yet.
ADAM. You gotta be kidding, I practically threw up on you.
LUKE. I'm Luke. *(Adam shakes his hand, tentatively.)*
ADAM. Adam.
LUKE. Nice to meet you, Adam. So what do you do?
ADAM. *(Off guard.)* What do I do?
LUKE. Yeah.
ADAM. Like in life?
LUKE. Is that a trick question?
ADAM. Uh ...
LUKE. Like, me? I'm an actor.
ADAM. No kidding?
LUKE. Is it that obvious?
ADAM. The white shirt. The black pants ... The serving tray.
LUKE. Okay, I'm an aspiring actor. I'm not really making any money at it yet, so I guess, technically, I'm a cater waiter.
ADAM. Gotcha.
LUKE. Not for long though. *(Luke digs a postcard out of his pocket and hands it over.)*
ADAM. What's this?
LUKE. A show I'm working on. We go up next week.
ADAM. Oh ... Well, break a leg.
LUKE. I wanted the part of George, but I'm the Stage Manager.
ADAM. Well, we all have to start somewhere. *(Adam sticks it in*

17

Blocking:

1 D & M shake

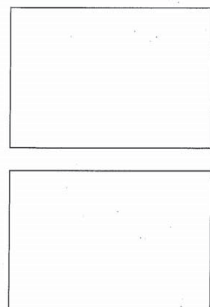
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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



his pocket.)
LUKE. What about you?
ADAM. Me? We're back to me again?
LUKE. Are you like a Wall Street guy? An accountant, maybe?
ADAM. An accountant? I look like an accountant?
LUKE. An ad exec? I don't know. A sous chef?
ADAM. No, none of those.
LUKE. Come on, help me out here.
ADAM. *(Hitting a nerve.)* I'm not so sure anymore. *(Luke joins him on the floor.)*
LUKE. Well, what would you like to do?
ADAM. What would I like to do?
LUKE. You're a vampire.
ADAM. A what?
LUKE. You keep repeating the question. That's what I always do when I'm not sure how to answer.
ADAM. *(Considering.)* What would I like to do?
LUKE. See? You did it again.
ADAM. I'm thinking. Give me a sec. *(Adam leans his head back, reaching for the ceiling.)* I read about this equipment once they took me down and stuck it in a room with no light, no love, no sound, and just left it. They'd come in, every so often, and feed it through some kind of tubes, you know, but it basically had no human contact whatsoever.
LUKE. That's criminal.
ADAM. Maybe I'm getting it wrong. Maybe it wasn't a newborn. Maybe it was a mouse. Yeah, I think that's what it was. A baby mouse.
LUKE. Still.
ADAM. Anyway, that's how they raised the Babadook. And once enough he grew up to be, like, a complete leg-catcher. When they finally threw him into a tank with some other mice, he wouldn't even move.
LUKE. Sad.
ADAM. Just eat in the corner and drink.
LUKE. And your point is ...
ADAM. You call someone "leg-catcher" long enough, they start believing it. Does that answer your question?
LUKE. Not really. But we can move on to the next topic.
ADAM. I guess I'm a candle salesman.
LUKE. There you go.

18

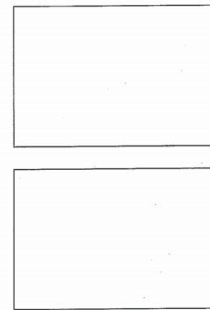
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Props ENT/EXT:

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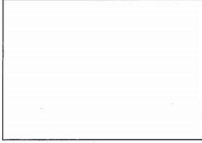
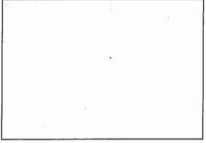
Stage Pics:



ADAM. That's what I do.
 LUKE. That wasn't so hard.
 ADAM. Jesus, how did I wind up being that?
 LUKE. You can change your mind if you like.
 ADAM. No, I'm a candle salesman.
 LUKE. Good for you.
 ADAM. Yup, I sell candles.
 LUKE. Okay, easy now.
 ADAM. It's just the first time I've ever really admitted it out loud.
 LUKE. And how does it feel?
 ADAM. Terrible. I don't care if I ever sell another pumpkin-scented anything for as long as I live.
 LUKE. I hate pumpkin.
 HOLLY. Adam! *(Holly appears from the party below.)*
 ADAM. Sorry.
 HOLLY. It was quirky for, like, ten minutes, now it's just rude.
 ADAM. I said I'm sorry.
 HOLLY. Well, get back down there. ~~It's my anniversary.~~
 ADAM. I can't.
 HOLLY. What do you mean you can't?
 ADAM. The air. There's like a pall down there.
 HOLLY. A pall?
 ADAM. A heaviness, yeah. I don't know. ~~Everyone just seems so~~
~~...hungry.~~
 HOLLY. ~~You done, Shedd?~~
 ADAM. What happened to all those past-life regression weirdos you used to hang out with? At least those people knew how to party. *(Holly sits, as it all comes clear.)*
 HOLLY. It's Belinda, isn't it?
 ADAM. Who?
 HOLLY. That's what this is all about.
 ADAM. Absolutely not.
 HOLLY. It's just a book, sweetie.
 ADAM. A best-selling book. She's making a fortune.
 HOLLY. Well, good for her. We should all be so lucky.
 ADAM. They're making a movie of it, too.
 HOLLY. That's ridiculous.
 ADAM. No, it's not. There's a huge bidding war, apparently.
 HOLLY. It's a book on breast-feeding, Adam.
 ADAM. I'd pay to see that.

19

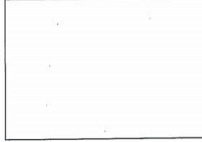
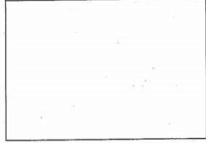
Blocking:
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Props ENT/EXT:
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 Stage Pics:



HOLLY. Okay, I'm leaving now. *(She starts offstage.)*
 ADAM. I'm a candle salesman, Holly. *(She stops and turns.)*
~~HOLLY. What?~~
~~ADAM. I'm a forty-year-old candle salesman.~~
 HOLLY. What are you talking about?
 ADAM. That's just not what I thought I'd be at this point in my life.
 HOLLY. Oh, for fuck sake.
~~ADAM. When you hired me, it was to help you get through the holiday season.~~
~~HOLLY. So?~~
 ADAM. ~~That was six years ago.~~ *(A beat.)* I don't want to end up like your friend downstairs.
 HOLLY. Which one?
 ADAM. Whats-her-name, the middle aged fat one who sells bongos in the smoke shop around the corner.
 HOLLY. Rachel?
 ADAM. The one who looks like she cries in her closet.
 HOLLY. She's nice.
 ADAM. That's not what I want. *(Another beat.)*
 HOLLY. Well, I sell candles, too.
 ADAM. You own the shop, Holly. You're a shop owner. There's a big difference. ~~Plus, you're not forty.~~
 HOLLY. Neither are you.
~~ADAM. Yes, I am.~~
~~HOLLY. You're forty?~~
~~ADAM. Oh-huh.~~
 HOLLY. You've been lying about your age the whole time. I've known you!
 ADAM. Yes.
 HOLLY. *(Processing for a moment.)* Well, you're not fat.
 ADAM. My body may not be, but my soul is.
 HOLLY. Okay, now I'm really leaving. *(Adam stands.)*
 ADAM. I want more, Holly.
 HOLLY. ~~That's not me, Adam. That's me.~~ ~~And we must be~~
~~when you hired me.~~
 ADAM. ~~For now.~~ I'll give you a couple more weeks.
 HOLLY. *(Realizing he's serious.)* So, what, you're quitting? Great. ~~Who's gonna help me unload that huge crate of Esprit quees we just~~
~~got in? It's the only one who knows how to pronounce those~~

20

Blocking:
 1 $\heartsuit \times$ SL
 2 $D\text{ \$}$ \times \heartsuit , \heartsuit shops
 3 $\heartsuit \times$ SL
 4 $\heartsuit \times$ D
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Props ENT/EXT:
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 Stage Pics:



~~wooden chairs.~~

ADAM. You'll find someone else.

HOLLY. *(To Luke.)* Hey, handsome, wanna sell candles?

LUKE. Is that better than cater-waiting?

HOLLY. Way better. Talk to me on your way out. I'll hook you up.

LUKE. Cool.

HOLLY. *(Back to Adam.)* You feel better?

ADAM. A little... ~~less.~~

~~HOLLY. Thanks, no I'm staying.~~

~~ADAM. There's a piece of cake, Holly. Have two. You don't have an eating disorder.~~

~~HOLLY. You don't get it, do you?~~

~~ADAM. Get what? *(She shakes her head and starts off.)*~~

HOLLY. Okay, five more minutes, then I'm calling the guys with the straitjacket.

ADAM. Love you.

HOLLY. Yeah, yeah, yeah. *(And she's gone. Adam blots his forehead.)*

LUKE. Wow...

ADAM. Sorry about that.

~~LUKE. Was that like a mid-life crisis, or something?~~

~~ADAM. Mid-life crisis? No... What makes you say that?~~

~~LUKE. You quit your job and you're forty. *(Adam slams his heart and starts crying.)*~~

~~ADAM. I think it's happening again.~~

~~LUKE. Maybe you should try sticking your head between your legs.~~

~~ADAM. How about I stick it back up my ass? Where it's been for the past six years. *(He wanders over to the ledge and looks at the street below.)* She went to school with me. Belinda. The girl with the book.~~

LUKE. Oh.

ADAM. We were in the same writing program.

LUKE. I get it.

ADAM. I was the one with all the promise, and she was the one destined to...

LUKE. ... write books on breastfeeding?

ADAM. I guess... *(Luke sidles up next to him.)*

LUKE. I have a confession to make.

21

Blocking:

1 \heartsuit stops, M $\$$

2 M $\$$ 5 R

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Props ENT/EXT:

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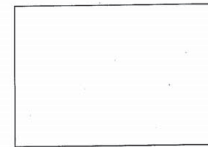
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Stage Pics:



Blocking:

1 D \times 5 L, M \emptyset \times D

2 A $\$$ E, \heartsuit $\$$ 3

3 D ENT OR,

4 D $\$$ 1

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Props ENT/EXT:

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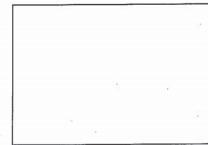
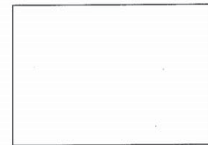
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Stage Pics:



ADAM. What's that?

LUKE. I didn't really think you were choking when I gave you the Heimlich.

ADAM. No?

LUKE. I just wanted to get my arms around you. You looked so cute all doubled over like that.

~~ADAM. You should see me when I think I'm passing a kidney stone. *(Luke moves a little closer.)*~~

ADAM. We better get back down there.

LUKE. How about grabbing a drink later?

ADAM. I don't think so.

LUKE. Why not?

ADAM. Well, I could be your grandfather, for one.

~~LUKE. Okay, now you're really making me horny. *(Luke flashes him a killer grin, then exits. Adam takes out the postcard, hopeful.)*~~

Scene 3

The waiting room. Holly peruses a Newsweek magazine. Brandon talks on his cell phone.

~~BRANDON. No, the 730 Rivington offer is way too low ...~~

~~Look, I'm gonna be able to give this my full attention tomorrow.~~

~~Could you please deal with it for now? It's email just pretend you're me. Thanks. *(He hangs up and looks at Holly.)*~~

~~HOLLY. They found a new missing link.~~

~~BRANDON. Holly?~~

~~HOLLY. In Ethiopia. This one's sixty thousand years older than the last one. That's encouraging. *(Adam enters with a cup of coffee.)*~~

ADAM. Well, my luggage arrived safely.

HOLLY. Thank God.

ADAM. In Pittsburgh.

HOLLY. Pittsburgh?

ADAM. Don't ask. *(He plops down on the couch, exhausted.)* God, that was awkward.

HOLLY. I thought you handled it pretty well.

22

ADAM. Are you kidding, it was a train-wreck.
HOLLY. You're right.
ADAM. And you were the conductor.
HOLLY. Butch sure is a pistol.
ADAM. Yeah, and I'm sure he owns several, too.
HOLLY. He's way sexier than I imagined.
ADAM. I'm ignoring you.
HOLLY. He's just not as straitlaced as I thought he'd be. I expected him to look more like one of those TV preacher guys.
ADAM. Yeah, well, you don't see me in a thong on a float, but I'm still a fag.
HOLLY. True.
ADAM. God, I hate hospitals. It'll be a miracle if one of us doesn't ~~leave here with a simple infection.~~ Where are they, anyway? (Holly and Brandon exchange a glance.)
BRANDON. With Luke.
ADAM. What?
HOLLY. The surgeon said it was okay, sweetie.
ADAM. When?
HOLLY. Like ten, fifteen minutes ago.
ADAM. Why didn't anyone come get me? (Adam rises, incredulous, and starts off.)
BRANDON. Family only, Adam. (Adam stops in his tracks.)
ADAM. What?
~~BRANDON. They asked if I was family only.~~
~~ADAM. Who did?~~
~~BRANDON. The surgeon.~~
ADAM. For now, sweetie. He seemed pretty adamant.
~~ADAM. Family only?~~
HOLLY. I don't think they can have too many people in the room. He just went through major surgery.
ADAM. Yeah, well, I'm not people, Holly.
HOLLY. I know.
ADAM. Who do you think he's been living with for the past four years?
HOLLY. I know, Adam. I know.
BRANDON. But it's not like they're strangers.
~~ADAM. Excuse me?~~
BRANDON. They said family only for now, so his parents went in. I mean ...

23

Blocking:

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3 H P

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Props ENT/EXT:

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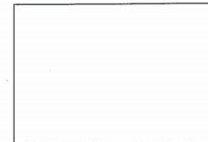
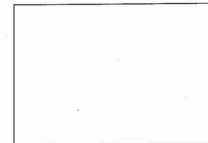
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Stage Pics:



ADAM. Okay, got it, Brandon. We know whose side you're on.
BRANDON. I'm not on anyone's side.
HOLLY. He's not Adam. He's really not.
BRANDON. I just don't think this is the time to be getting all bent out of shape about it.
ADAM. I'm not getting bent out of shape? (To Holly) Am I bent out of shape?
BRANDON. It's not about you right now. That's all I'm saying. It's not about any of us.
ADAM. What are you talking about?
HOLLY. Guys —
BRANDON. Luke needs us, Adam. He needs all of us together.
ADAM. You don't think I know that?
BRANDON. I'm not gonna argue with you.
ADAM. I am family, Brandon! I don't care what anyone says. I'm going in there! (He starts off again. Holly chases after him.)
HOLLY. But they don't know about you, sweetie.
ADAM. Oh, believe me, I'm well aware of that.
HOLLY. For a reason. (He stops and turns.) There's a reason Luke's never told them.
ADAM. Yeah, because he's a wimp. He's a scared little coward who should've told them a long time ago.
~~HOLLY. That may be, but~~
~~ADAM. What, Holly? What?~~
~~HOLLY. I'm not sure it's your place to tell.~~
~~ADAM. Oh, and what place would it be?~~
HOLLY. ~~Just think about it for a minute, that's all I'm asking.~~ When Luke wakes up. Is that really what he needs to deal with? On top of everything else? (Butch enters, sensing the tension.)
BUTCH. Everything okay in here?
HOLLY. We're fine, aren't we, guys?
BRANDON. I am.
HOLLY. How's Luke doing?
BUTCH. Alright, I guess. They had to clear us out of the room for a bit.
HOLLY. What for?
BUTCH. More tests.
~~HOLLY. Okay.~~
~~BUTCH. They've got some monitor thing hooked to his head.~~
~~Specialists monitoring in and out every five minutes. It's hard to keep~~

24

Blocking:

1 D x SL

2 H x D, D -

3 T ENT SL -

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Props ENT/EXT:

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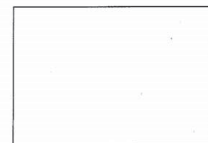
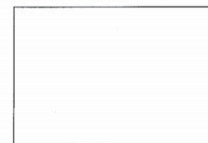
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Stage Pics:



~~back of what all's going on in there.~~
HOLLY: ~~Previous. (Butch sits on the couch and pulls out his cell phone.)~~
BUTCH: They had to remove a piece of his skull.
HOLLY: His ...
BUTCH: It's common, I guess. Because of the swelling. Epidural hematoma. That's what they're calling it.
HOLLY: Okay ...
BUTCH: Something about his fall. After the cab hit. ~~The timing of it all. The way his head struck the pavement. You would think~~
~~mean anything was wrong when they first brought him in. That's~~
~~what the nurse told me. It was just like he was sleeping.~~
HOLLY: Is there anything we can do?
BUTCH: Just sit tight. Like the surgeon said. ~~He doesn't seem~~
~~quite as hopeful as some of the folks around here. (Butch starts~~
~~dialing.)~~
ADAM: ~~(Trying to be polite.)~~ And so this ... um ... The family-only request ... How long do you think that will, you know, be in effect?
BUTCH: Not sure.
ADAM: Hours? Minutes? Days? What?
HOLLY: Adam ...
ADAM: I'm just ... We'd like to see him, right, guys? Even for a second.
HOLLY: We're just feeling a little out of the loop, is all.
BUTCH: Well, they can't have us clogging up the room. They need to be able to get in and out of there and do whatever it is they do. ~~(Snapping phone shut.)~~ Shoot, still no service. ~~(Butch grabs Arlene's purse and starts digging through it.)~~
ADAM: So, what's next then? Assuming all goes smoothly.
BUTCH: Next? I don't know. ~~Physical therapy, I suppose.~~
~~Rehabilitation.~~
ADAM: ~~And how much of that do they think he'll need?~~
BUTCH: They, who?
ADAM: ~~The surgeons, they? I don't know. Whoever's in charge?~~
HOLLY: ~~Surgeon.~~
ADAM: ~~Months? A year, maybe? Longer?~~
BUTCH: Nobody's saying much of anything right now, son. We probably won't know what's what for sure until we get him back home.
HOLLY: Home?
BUTCH: There's a brand new facility just outside Tallahassee.

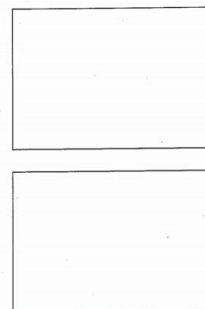
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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



State of the art, from what I hear, and booked up like a five-star hotel. I've got a couple strings I can pull. See if we can't get him in there. ~~(Butch moves on to Arlene's coat.)~~
ADAM: Is that wise?
BUTCH: Wise?
ADAM: Transporting him like that? I mean, he just went through major surgery.
BUTCH: I'm not sure if it's wise or not, but that's what I'm gonna do.
ADAM: It's just ... Head trauma can be pretty serious, from what I understand. Has anyone determined if there's been any ...
BUTCH: No one's determined anything yet. ~~(He pulls out a bottle of pills and examines the label.)~~ We all just have to sit tight. ~~(A look of disappointment crosses his face, then he pockets them.)~~ And try not to worry.

Scene 4

Adam's apartment. Five years earlier. Luke, in his boxers, prepares breakfast.

LUKE: Wait 'til you taste these tomatoes. They're fierce.
ADAM: ~~(Offstage.)~~ Fierce? Tomatoes aren't fierce. Lions are. Whitney Houston is. Tomatoes are just ... tomatoes.
LUKE: Where you been, Grandpa? Whitney Houston hasn't been fierce in years. She's a crackhead. ~~(Adam enters in his boxers with a big smile on his face.)~~
ADAM: I know I said it already, but you were really amazing last night.
LUKE: You mean it?
ADAM: When you told me you were the Stage Manager, I didn't realize it was an actual part.
LUKE: The lead part.
ADAM: You were brilliant. The whole production was. I cried.
LUKE: I know, I heard you ... Everyone in the audience heard you.

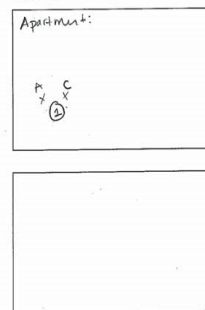
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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



ADAM. I'm having a mid-life crisis. It was ~~entirely~~ ~~(Adam is in~~
~~house of a plan of eggs. Looks delicious.~~

LUKE. To the best I could do with what you had in your fridge.

ADAM. I didn't even know I had a fridge.

LUKE. Didn't I give you one?

ADAM. I think the only one who cried more than me was that weird lady in the turban.

LUKE. That was my mother.

ADAM. Did I say weird? I meant eccentric.

LUKE. Turbans are her thing right now. Last year it was tracksuits. The year before it was chunky jewelry. *(Adam starts eating.)*

ADAM. And your dad?

LUKE. He was a no-show. Still mad I dropped out of law school, I guess. It's just as well. He gets kind of cranky whenever he and my mom are in the same room together. The "Arlene Show" can be a little exhausting after twenty years.

ADAM. How long have they been divorced?

LUKE. Twenty years. He kind of turned his life around after they split up. It was just me and him for a while there. I was like his little security blanket. He dragged me everywhere.

ADAM. So, that must have been challenging. Your folks divorcing when you were so young.

LUKE. I was just glad the craziness was over.

ADAM. What kind of crazy?

LUKE. Like waking up in the middle of the night to a house full of pot smoke, Pink Floyd on the stereo, the front door wide open and nobody in sight.

ADAM. Sounds like my entire four years of college.

LUKE. Well, it's no fun when you're in kindergarten, trust me. ~~On~~
~~this day, she smell of patchouli oil and she was~~ *(Adam watches, curiously, as Luke closes his eyes for a moment, prays, then opens them again and digs in.)*

ADAM. What was that?

LUKE. What was what?

ADAM. Where'd you go just then?

LUKE. I was praying.

ADAM. You mean, crystals and chakras? Like a Deepak Chopra kind of thing?

LUKE. Not really.

ADAM. Then, who were you praying to?

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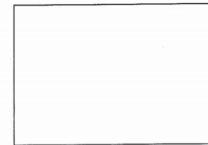
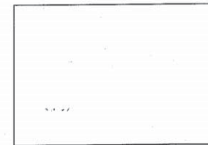
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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



LUKE. God.

ADAM. Oh. *(The honeymoon just ended.)*

LUKE. Yum.

ADAM. Is that an everyday occurrence?

LUKE. Pretty much.

ADAM. So, you're what, then ... You're — a ...

LUKE. Christian.

ADAM. Okay. *(Adam tries to proceed with breakfast as usual.)*

LUKE. Does that freak you out?

ADAM. Does it freak me out?

LUKE. Yeah.

ADAM. Why would it freak me out?

LUKE. No reason ... Why? What are you?

ADAM. What am I?

LUKE. Besides a vampire.

ADAM. Nothing ... I don't know. I didn't really grow up with a religion. *(Luke stabs a tomato and pops it in his mouth.)*

LUKE. These tomatoes are fierce. I don't care what you say. *(Adam looks at him, suspiciously.)*

ADAM. You're gay though, right?

LUKE. Uh ... whose lips do you think you were mackin' on all night?

ADAM. I know, but don't Christians consider that a sin?

LUKE. Uh-huh.

ADAM. So, how does that work, then?

LUKE. How does what work?

ADAM. Being gay and... you know ...

LUKE. This is gonna be a problem, isn't it?

ADAM. No ... I'm ... I just ...

LUKE. We're all sinners, Adam. We all struggle with one thing or another. This one just happens to be mine.

ADAM. Do you atone, then? Is that what you do?

LUKE. You really want to talk about this?

ADAM. Sure. *(Luke indulges him.)*

LUKE. You accept Christ as the Son of God. That He died on the cross for all your sins.

ADAM. That's it?

LUKE. Pretty much.

ADAM. And you'll go to heaven?

LUKE. If you believe. If you truly believe.

28

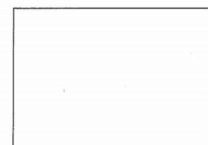
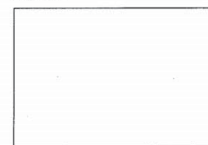
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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



ADAM. And you do?
 LUKE. Uh-huh. *(Luke refills Adam's coffee.)*
 ADAM. Then how come you continue to sin? I mean, and don't get me wrong, that was some amazing sinning we just did, I look forward to more, but you sinned a lot. You sinned more than I did.
 LUKE. I was hoping we could sin again after breakfast.
 ADAM. You didn't answer my question.
 LUKE. It's human nature, Adam. We can't escape it. But as long as you've accepted Christ ... *(A beat.)*
 ADAM. Is that why you didn't introduce me to your mom last night?
 LUKE. I didn't?
 ADAM. Nope.
 LUKE. Might have had a little something to do with it. *(Luke rises and starts clearing the table.)*
 ADAM. So, let me see if I got this right. I'm assuming sin is sin. And if your sin is having sex with men, and my sin is, say, *killing* men who have sex with men, then as long as I've accepted Christ as my Savior, I'll go to heaven with you?
 LUKE. ~~Killing men who have sex with men? You mean, like Jeffrey Dahmer?~~
 ADAM. Yeah ... Well, no. Because he killed them, then he ate them. Plus, he had sex with them too; so no, not him.
 LUKE. Like who, then?
 ADAM. The guys who killed Matthew Shepard. *(A beat.)*
 LUKE. Technically, yes.
 ADAM. Not only that, but I can continue to kill men who have sex with men, much as you continue to have sex with them, every day for the rest of my life, and still go to heaven?
 LUKE. Well ...
 ADAM. It's just a hypothesis.
 LUKE. I know it sounds terrible, but ... yes.
 ADAM. Huh. *(Can't quite let it go.)* So, then, if Matthew Shepard hadn't accepted Christ before he died, he's in hell, and his killers who, say, have, are going to heaven? Is that what you're saying?
(Luke stands there with his arms full.)
 LUKE. Can we change the subject?

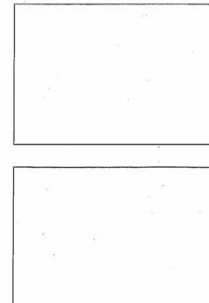
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Blocking:
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 2 M \$ A

Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



Scene 5

Adam and Luke's new apartment. A year later. Holly, Chinese food and a housewarming gift in hand, stands amid a stack of unopened boxes as Luke pries something off the door frame.

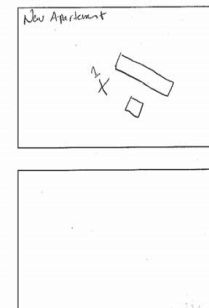
~~HOLLY. And I thought my place was small.~~
~~ADAM. (Offstage) I will you.~~
~~LUKE. (Offstage) I will you.~~
~~HOLLY. I just don't know where you're gonna put everything.~~
~~ADAM. (Offstage) I like my old place better.~~
~~LUKE. Would you relax. (Adam enters with a bottle of wine and two glasses.)~~
 ADAM. That kitchen is minuscule.
 LUKE. Wait 'til I unpack everything and put it in its place. It'll look like a palace.
 ADAM. What are you doing?
 LUKE. Trying to get this thing off.
 ADAM. What thing?
 HOLLY. The mezuzah.
 LUKE. Ma-wha-wha?
 ADAM. Mezuzah. It keeps evil spirits out of New York apartments.
 HOLLY. Actually, I think it protects your first born from being slaughtered.
 LUKE. We don't have a first born.
 ADAM. It's good luck, babe.
 LUKE. It's ugly.
 ADAM. Luke!
 LUKE. Alright, already ... Jeez. *(Luke rolls his eyes and pockets his screwdriver.)* I don't see how a little metal thing's gonna ward off evil spirits anyway.
 ADAM. Yeah, well, I don't see how a golden trumper's gonna signal the end of the world, so we're even. *(Luke disappears into the kitchen. Adam pours the wine.)* He literally believes that, you know. That people are gonna just start floating up to heaven.

Blocking:
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 3 M EXT SL w/ P1

Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



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LUKE. (Offstage.) I never said "float."

ADAM. That, like, ~~Don't be serious, some~~ dead trumpet, is gonna blow his horn three times —

HOLLY. Gabriel.

ADAM. Yeah, him. And in the blink of an eye —

LUKE. (Offstage.) Twinkling.

ADAM. Whatever.

LUKE. (Offstage.) Get it right, sister.

ADAM. All believers will just disappear.

LUKE. (Offstage.) It's true. (A beat.)

~~HOLLY. Don't Severin is dead. (Luke reenters.)~~

ADAM. You should have heard him on the phone this morning. Giggling with his friend Jill.

~~HOLLY. What's Jill, the beard?~~

~~LUKE. She's more like a soul patch.~~

ADAM. Hysterically laughing about all the wacky things people will be in the middle of when it happens. Tickled to death at the thought of me being on a plane with a Christian pilot, because the plane will crash and I'll go down with it. (Luke takes a sip of Adam's wine and giggles.) See! This is funny to him.

~~LUKE. This is the thirty-nine-dollar bottle of merlot we just bought?~~

~~ADAM. It was running low, so I mixed in a little of our wine cellar.~~

~~LUKE. So, it's a twenty-nine-dollar bottle now.~~

ADAM. It's woody ... muddly ... stinky. Just drink it. (Holly raises her glass.)

HOLLY. Cheers, guys. To your new place.

ADAM. (They clink glasses.)

HOLLY. And a little something ... (Holly pulls an orange candle out of her gift bag.)

LUKE. Look, babe, it's pumpkin.

HOLLY. Didn't wanna come empty handed.

LUKE. It's sweet, thank you. (Luke gives Holly a kiss and gets back to work.)

HOLLY. So, you really think this thing's gonna happen, Luke?

LUKE. Uh-huh.

HOLLY. Like, in our lifetime?

LUKE. Maybe.

ADAM. And he and all his cohorts will float, or fly, or "beam," or

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Blocking:

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Props ENT/EXT:

1 wine glass

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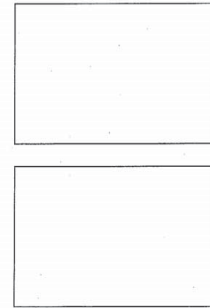
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Stage Pics:



whatever, up to heaven while the rest of us go to hell.

LUKE. That's not exactly how it works.

ADAM. All the agnostics and atheists. The Muslims and the Buddhists. The Hindus. The Jews. Three quarters of the world's population, all going to hell.

HOLLY. You mean, I'll finally get a decent apartment?

ADAM. No, you're going too, missy.

HOLLY. What about David? (Holly checks out the kitchen.)

ADAM. That asshole! You're still obsessing over him?

HOLLY. (Offstage.) He's a Scientist.

ADAM. Especially him. (She reenters.) Anyone who doesn't truly believe.

HOLLY. Even the Mongolian-goatherder?

LUKE. The Mongolian-who?

ADAM. (Singing) High on a hill lived a Mongolian goatherder ...

HOLLY. You know, the guy who's been nothing but saintly to his family and fellow villagers his whole life. Tending in the fields, tending his flock. Who's never even heard of Jesus. Is he going, too? Or his infant son, who can't even crawl yet? Or Rachel?

LUKE. The bang lady?

HOLLY. Her last name's Rosenberg. They're all gonna burn?

LUKE. Not the goatherder and his son.

HOLLY. Why not?

LUKE. Infants and retarded people are exempt.

ADAM. She said Mongolian, not mongoloid. (A beat.)

LUKE. Oh ... Then, yeah. He'll burn with Rachel ... Unless, of course, you know.

HOLLY. But what if you have your own set of beliefs? Beliefs that are equally as valid?

LUKE. I just know it's going to happen, you guys. It's kind of hard to explain.

ADAM. Try us. (Luke engages.)

LUKE. It's like ... Imagine if you were a cancer patient, and they discovered a cure, but you're so pissed off you got sick in the first place, you refuse to take it and you die.

ADAM. I have no idea what he's talking about.

HOLLY. Going to hell is cancer, bozo. And Jesus is the pill.

LUKE. Like that, yeah.

ADAM. But I don't believe in hell, so why should I care whether I burn in it?

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Blocking:

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Props ENT/EXT:

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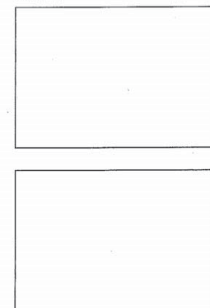
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Stage Pics:



LUKE. Because I do! *(Luke tears a box open.)*
 ADAM. Don't get defensive, babe.
 LUKE. Whatever.
~~ADAM. Tell her about the seven years.~~
~~LUKE. I'm not talking about this anymore.~~
~~HOLLY. What seven years?~~
~~ADAM. Apparently, there's a seven-year period when we'll all get~~
~~a chance to, you know, swallow the pill.~~
~~HOLLY. I thought everything happens in the twinkling of an eye.~~
~~ADAM. That's how long it'll take them to disappear, but the rest~~
~~of us go some more years before you know who arrives.~~
 HOLLY. Mal Gibson?
 ADAM. Close enough.
~~HOLLY. Well, I tell you what, Luke. If a third of the world's popu-~~
~~lation suddenly disappears, I guarantee you, we'll accept Jesus.~~
~~And it won't take seven years, it'll take more like seven seconds.~~
~~ADAM. Amen to that. *(Adam and Holly clink glasses.)*~~
 LUKE. But what if you die before it happens? *(A sobering*
moment.)
 HOLLY. Wait a minute. What?
 ADAM. He's afraid I'll die before I get a chance to, you know,
 "accept Christ," and then we won't be able to be in the afterlife
 together.
 HOLLY. That's so sad.
 ADAM. Not really. We're not allowed to be gay there, so what dif-
 ference does it make?
 HOLLY. That's true.
 ADAM. No pets, either.
 HOLLY. Sounds like my last co-op meeting. *(Luke drops a box on*
the floor, and lays into Adam.)
 LUKE. Why are you mocking me?
 ADAM. I'm not mocking you.
 LUKE. Yes, you are, Adam. You're being a jackass.
 ADAM. We're joking, babe. Lighten up.
 LUKE. Is it so wrong of me to want you to go to heaven? I mean;
 what's the big fucking deal?
 ADAM. Yes, because I don't believe in it, Luke. Not your version.
 It's too exclusive. Too many rules.
 LUKE. Fine. Then I'll believe. For both of us. *(He continues*
unpacking.)

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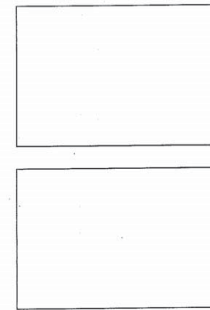
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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



ADAM. If you can believe so strongly, then how come you don't
 want me telling anyone you do?
 LUKE. It's nobody's business. It's not something I go shouting
 from rooftops.
 ADAM. You're embarrassed, Luke. Admit it.
 LUKE. I just don't like being judged, Adam. And that's what
 everyone does. Before they even get a chance to know who I am,
 they all have this predisposed disdain.
 ADAM. Who does?
 LUKE. You do! You never would've even considered dating me if
 you knew when we first met.
 ADAM. The only reason anyone judges you is because you go
 around judging everyone else. You guys are all about judgment.
 You even have a whole day named after it.
 LUKE. I don't judge anyone. It's not my place to. I'm just here to
 tell you there's a heaven. Whether you listen or not, that's up to
 you.
 ADAM. Oh, I'm listening, babe. Believe me. And if you and all
 the other freaks are going to be the only ones up there, then no
 thanks, I'd rather burn. *(Luke is speechless. He looks at Adam like he's*
a complete stranger all of a sudden, then gets up slowly and heads out
the door.)
 HOLLY. Awkward.
 ADAM. The afraidifs. Can you believe that shit?
 HOLLY. Like you don't have enough problems in this one.
 ADAM. The stories these people have been fed, the antiquated
 bullshit. It's mind boggling. I swear, if I hear one more parable
 about a flock of fucking sheep. It's like Shakespeare. Why are we
 still doing him after all these years?
 HOLLY. Yeah, what a hack. *(Adam sits on a box.)*
 ADAM. Am I crazy? Does everyone think I'm nuts?
 HOLLY. Not everyone.
 ADAM. Martin and Bobby? Steven?
 HOLLY. They do. Yes.
 ADAM. Please. Steven's been doing abusive shit for years and
 Martin and Bobby may as well be roommates.
 HOLLY. They're just not sure what you're getting out of it, cosmic.
 Besides, the fact that not young and hot Bobby thinks maybe it's
 just you, once again, falling for someone who's unavailable. And if
 it's the only he thinks you've hit the jackpot.

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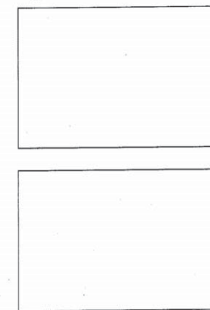
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Stage Pics:



~~ADAM: Yeah, well, I think Bobby might be a little bit blowing his train if he's gonna throw a tantrum that close to the door. Mommy pays for.~~
HOLLY: They're offended, Adam. Knowing how Luke feels. It's like an indictment of who they are.
ADAM: But he loves those guys!
HOLLY: Yeah, and he still thinks they're going to hell. It's self-loathing. And you're self-loathing by association.
ADAM: But it's all he knows. It's what kept the front door locked and the Pink Floyd off the stereo all these years.
HOLLY: Yeah, but at a certain point, you just have to break away from Mommy and Daddy and become your own person. I mean, I did. And my parents were big old Catholics.
ADAM: Not your dad.
HOLLY: Okay, but you can't get more Catholic than my mom. I mean, where did she take me for my sweet sixteen?
ADAM: The Vatican.
HOLLY: I'm just saying, there's a point when you just gotta wake up and smell the coffee. *(A beat.)*
ADAM: What about Belinda? What does she think?
HOLLY: There are lots of gays in her church, and none of them think they're sinners. She doesn't get it either.
ADAM: Yeah, well, I don't get why she named her kid Mustard Seed.
HOLLY: Saffron.
ADAM: Parsley, Tarragon, Bouillon-Cube, whatever. It's weird.
HOLLY: I agree. She looks more like a root vegetable. *(Another beat.)*
ADAM: And you?
HOLLY: Me?
ADAM: Yeah. What do you think?
HOLLY: Trash?
ADAM: Yes, trash. No one calls me anymore.
HOLLY: What do you care what I think? Look within, sweetie. That's what my yoga teacher says.
ADAM: The one with the card percent body fat?
HOLLY: It's a genius.
ADAM: Having a 29 inch waist and being able to breathe through your nose does not a genius make. *(Holly sits down next to him.)*
HOLLY: Remember when you first started working at the shop? We'd hang out all the time. Couldn't get enough of each other. And

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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:

at the end of the night, you'd walk me home. But only halfway. Maybe a block or two further, if I begged. But as soon as we hit 74th and Columbus, you'd turn around and leave me there. It used to piss me off. I don't know why. I just felt like you should've walked me all the way. ~~But you'd only go to five and then you'd make me wait you to even more.~~
ADAM: Yeah. So?
HOLLY: Well, a few weeks ago, after that weird benefit for Katrina victims or, no, the kids with the club feet —
ADAM: Cleft palates.
HOLLY: — Cleft palates, right. And you were walking me home, telling me that story about how Luke dropped a fan on your face in the middle of the night —
ADAM: — I had Honeywell branded on my forehead for over a —
HOLLY: — and there we were, suddenly, coming up to that same damn corner. I could just feel the dread rising in me. Old, stupid feelings, irrational ones, I know, but there they were again. Well, we hit 74th and you kept walking, past 75th and 76th, and before you know it, you'd walked me all the way to 82nd street, and you hadn't even noticed.
ADAM: I did? *(She looks at her watch.)*
HOLLY: Shit, I gotta run.
ADAM: You can't leave me like this.
HOLLY: I have to, sweetie. I'm late for my chanting group.
ADAM: Oh, Christ. What are you chanting for this week? A new boyfriend? A lot of good it's done you so far.
HOLLY: *(Sung.)* Thanks.
ADAM: I'm sorry. That was mean.
HOLLY: At least I'm trying. At least I'm open to it.
ADAM: I know. I'm a jerk.
HOLLY: You're always so good at figuring out exactly why something's not gonna work. This one's too this or that one's too that. These poor guys. It's like, they're all doomed from the get go.
ADAM: I'm usually right, though. I can't help it.
HOLLY: Did you ever think that maybe, in the end, you just don't have faith that any of them will stay? *(A beat.)*
ADAM: I'm still stuck on the whole walking-you-home analogy.
HOLLY: You're going places you've never been before, dummy. Who cares what the rest of us think. Let yourself go. *(She gives him a peck on the cheek and heads for the door, stopping before she*

36

Blocking:

1 OP 9 P1
2 EXT SL
3 _____
4 _____
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Props ENT/EXT:

1 POISE
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____
5 _____
6 _____
7 _____
8 _____
9 _____
10 _____

Stage Pics:

~~exits.) Are fag bags allowed in heaven? Not that I care or any-
thing, just curious.~~
~~ADAM: I don't see why not. No crime in being a fag bag.~~
~~HOLLY: Aiding and abetting?~~
~~ADAM: True. (Holly goes, leaving Adam to take in the men
around him.)~~

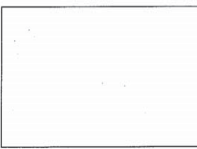

Scene 6

The waiting room. Butch flips through the Newsweek.
Arlene paces on her cell phone.

ARLENE: Oh, for Pete's sake, how many did she eat? ... The
whole box? ... Well, how the heck did that happen? Uh-huh ...
Uh-huh ... Uh-huh ... (She exits down the hallway as Adam enters
with some vending machine candy. Butch tosses the Newsweek down.)
BUTCH: Porn.
ADAM: (Completely confused.) What was that?
BUTCH: What was what?
ADAM: You said, "porn!"
BUTCH: Oh, I'm just goofing. (Holly enters, in her coat.)
HOLLY: You guys should really get outside for a bit. The air is gor-
geous. (She hangs it up.)
HOLLY: They're still not letting anyone in?
ADAM: Nope.
BUTCH: How about a game of cards, Holly?
HOLLY: Me?
BUTCH: A little five-card stud?
HOLLY: I'm not really big on cards.
BUTCH: No?
HOLLY: I've got this weird competitive streak.
BUTCH: Is that right?
HOLLY: It isn't pretty.
BUTCH: Come on, I'll go easy on you.
HOLLY: I don't think so.
BUTCH: You sure?

Blocking:
1 T \$ G, D \$, 7
2 T \$ x \$ 1 0
3 ENT SR, X 0
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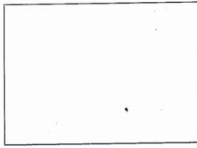

Props ENT/EXT:
1 magazine
2 cards
3
4
5
6
7
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9
10

Stage Pics:



HOLLY: Pretty sure.
BUTCH: Some gin rummy, maybe?
HOLLY: Don't tempt me.
BUTCH: Nickel a point. Jokers are wild.
HOLLY: Okay, you're on, mister.
BUTCH: 'Atta girl. (Butch pulls out a deck of cards and starts shuf-
fling. Holly takes a seat next to him.)
HOLLY: I'm a little rusty, so let's take it slow.
BUTCH: Don't worry, I'll be gentle. We'll play the seven-card
stud. (Adam picks up the Newsweek Butch just tossed down, and
points to the prehistoric man on the cover.)
ADAM: This guy, here?
BUTCH: What's that?
ADAM: The missing link?
BUTCH: Oh, huh?
ADAM: You find him pornographic?
BUTCH: I find it irresponsible, that's all.
ADAM: Funny, I look at him and I see my fifth-grade gym
teacher.
BUTCH: Looks like an ape to me.
HOLLY: My fifth grade gym teacher was way hairier than that.
Handsome woman. Looked just like a sheepdog. (Holly and Butch
pick up their cards.)
BUTCH: Don't forget now, jokers are wild.
HOLLY: Got it.
ADAM: But don't apes and humans have a very similar genetic
makeup?
BUTCH: I wouldn't know.
ADAM: We do. We're, like, one gene apart. I'm almost positive.
BUTCH: If you say so.
ADAM: You'd think there'd be some kind of correlation.
BUTCH: I'm feeling lucky, Holly.
ADAM: I mean, I'm not Einstein or anything. Just seems like a
given.
BUTCH: Apes don't have souls, son. How can something without
a soul morph into something with one? (Arlene reenters, snapping
her cell phone closed.)
ARLENE: Well, Frieda shit all over the apartment.
HOLLY: Your housekeeper?
ARLENE: My dog. I don't have a housekeeper. That's Lynn,

Blocking:
1 V x A, T moves @
2 V moves A, D \$ x D \$ P1
3 D pairs \$ G
4 ENT SR -
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Props ENT/EXT:
1 magazine
2
3
4
5
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Stage Pics:



remember? Butch's new and improved wife.
 BUTCH. The one who doesn't talk so much.
 ARLENE. No, I never had that luxury, did I, Butch? You were broke when we were married, weren't you, hon? *(She perches behind him and checks out his hand.)*
 BUTCH. I told you not to get that damn dog. You can't take care of yourself, let alone a four-and-a-half-pound Chihuahua.
 ARLENE. Oh, would you hush. The neighbor's got it all under control. She's gnawing on a bull penis, right now. The dog, not the ... She'll be fine. She survived the streets of San Juan for eight months, she can crap on my carpet for another couple nights.
 HOLLY. I'm sorry ... bull penis?
 ARLENE. They advertise it as beef tendon, but the Oriental lady at the pet store gave me the real skinny.
 BUTCH. Sounds like what they served on the plane.
 ARLENE. *(Re-cards.)* I wouldn't play that if I were you.
 BUTCH. Do you mind?
 ARLENE. Okay, buster, but don't say I didn't warn you. *(She scans the room for her purse.)*
 ADAM. What about bats?
 ARLENE. Bats?
 ADAM. Rats with wings, right? There's gotta be some morphing going on there, don't you think?
 BUTCH. ~~Were back on that, are we?~~
 ADAM. ~~Or Giegick and Roy? They morphed one species and came up with a tiger. How do you explain that?~~
 ARLENE. ~~How do you explain Giegick and Roy?~~
 BUTCH. Must have been on the ark at the same time, that's how. I don't believe one morphed ~~into the other~~.
 HOLLY. Aces are low, right?
 BUTCH. Yup.
 ADAM. The ark? See, now, there's a concept I've never quite been able to wrap my head around.
 ARLENE. Anyone seen my purse?
 ADAM. All those animals on one little boat? I mean, does anyone else think that's a little over the top, or is it just me?
 BUTCH. Says so right there in the Bible.
 ADAM. I know, but the whole Bible sort of feels that way to me, with the parting of the seas and the walking on water.
 HOLLY. Adam ...

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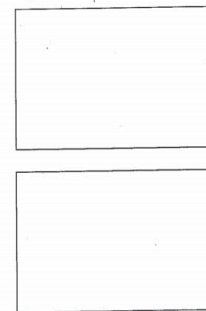
Blocking:

1 ~~VJ x 89~~
 2 ~~VJ paces for PL~~
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Props ENT/EXT:

1 ~~purse~~
 2
 3
 4
 5
 6
 7
 8
 9
 10

Stage Pics:



ADAM. I don't know. It all seems a little Vegas, for my taste.
 BUTCH. ~~I'm not the one who brought up Giegick and Roy.~~
 ARLENE. My purse, people. Who's got my ... Oh. *(Arlene finds her purse and starts rooting through it.)*
 ADAM. Might just be me though. I mean, I didn't grow up with the Bible, so I've never really had any sort of connection to it.
 BUTCH. *(Re-cards.)* You're killing me, here.
 ADAM. In fact, I could probably wipe myself with it today, and wake up tomorrow with a clean ass and a clear conscience. *(The game, the conversation, everything comes to a crashing halt.)*
 ARLENE. I could have done without that visual.
 ADAM. *(Backpedaling.)* Sorry. I was just trying to, you know, illustrate my point.
 ARLENE. Oh no, hon, we got it.
 ADAM. I'm just saying. Give me an argument that means something. Give me science.
 BUTCH. Science isn't all it's cracked up to be, son. They told us the world was flat for centuries. Sometimes it's just a tool used to disprove the word of God. Says so in the Bible. If you weren't so busy wiping your ass with it, maybe you'd know that. *(The two men stare at each other. Holly lays her cards down, awkwardly.)*
 HOLLY. Gin. *(Butch throws his cards in.)*
 BUTCH. Beginner's luck. Double or nothing. *(Arlene gently tries to tug her coat out from underneath him.)*
 BUTCH. Would you knock it off?
 ARLENE. You're on my coat, Butch. *(He grabs hold of it.)*
 BUTCH. What do you need it for?
 ARLENE. What do you mean, what do I need it for? I'm cold.
 BUTCH. Don't show me, Arlene.
 ARLENE. I'm not showing you.
 BUTCH. Bullcrap.
 ARLENE. ~~Nobody's showing anybody.~~ Butch. Let go.
 BUTCH. You want me to let go?
 ARLENE. I mean it.
 BUTCH. Oh, I know you do.
 ARLENE. Butch! *(Butch lets the coat go. Arlene falls backward, and lands on her ass. It's a startling moment. Adam and Holly aren't quite sure what to do as Butch pulls her bottle of pills out and holds them in the air.)*
 BUTCH. Is this what you were looking for? *(He tosses them at her.)*

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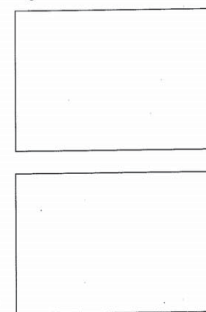
Blocking:

1 ~~VJ - next to 8~~
 2 ~~VJ 8~~
 3 ~~VJ x 1~~
 4 ~~VJ go PL F~~
 5 ~~T 8 - P2 @ VJ~~
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Props ENT/EXT:

1 ~~coat~~
 2 ~~pills~~
 3
 4
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 10

Stage Pics:



It took you five years to get off that crap, and five hours to get back on it.

ARLENE. Butch ...

BUTCH. Don't "Butch" me. Our son's in a coma, sweetheart. *Start dealing with it. (Butch storms out of the room. Adam and Holly look at each other uncomfortably as Arlene slowly picks herself up off the floor.)*

ARLENE. *(Trying to recover.)* Boy, oh, boy. That was like Jerry Springer time, wasn't it? *(She pockets the pills and hangs her coat back up.)* Don't mind him. He's just ... upset, is all. *(She straightens her skirt.)* Better go see if I can ... calm him down. *(Brandon enters, a concerned look on his face.)* Brandon?

BRANDON. It's Luke ... They need you in there. *(Arlene holds her hand to her heart, then rushes offstage.)*

HOLLY. What's going on, Brandon?

BRANDON. I'm not sure ... He's ... Something's changed. *(Holly looks to Adam helplessly as the lights fade.)*

End of Act One

41

Blocking:

1 TEXT SR

2 KJ x SL IN PJ on 9

3 KJ x SR, A ENT SL

4 KJ runs EXT SL

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Props ENT/EXT:

1 Coat

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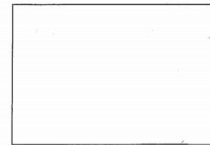
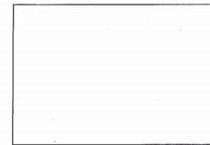
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Stage Pics:



ACT TWO

Scene 1

The waiting room. Brandon sits alone. Holly enters, in a daze.

BRANDON. How's everyone holding up in there?

HOLLY. I don't know. Okay, I guess. You going back in?

BRANDON. I don't. I'll stay out here for a while.

HOLLY. Me, too. *(Holly puts on a sweater.)*

BRANDON. Has Adam talked to them yet?

HOLLY. There hasn't exactly been a good time. He spoke to the surgeon though.

BRANDON. And?

HOLLY. He thinks Adam should do whatever he can to persuade Butch and Arlene to, you know, do "the right thing." How do you make that call?

BRANDON. Yeah.

HOLLY. There's an organ-transplant representative lurking around, smiling at everyone. Which is creepy. *(A beat.)* Would that be considered murder in their eyes, Brandon? I mean, what's the general consensus?

BRANDON. It's different for everyone. Butch and Arlene? Who knows where they stand?

HOLLY. Yeah, well, I know where I stand. Life's grand and all, but no thank you. *(Another beat.)* At least, I think that's where I stand. I mean, it's one thing to say it, but to actually have to ... The whole thing is so confusing all of a sudden.

BRANDON. Yeah. *(Holly notices Brandon's empty-handed.)*

HOLLY. Do you mind if I take a look at your ... uh ... Never mind.

BRANDON. Bible? *(She nods sheepishly.)* Arlene has it.

HOLLY. It's funny ... Moments like this ... How ingrained this stuff becomes ... I mean, I sell candles for a living. I've been to fucking ashrams and silent meditation retreats. I've got like five

42

Blocking:

1 A & G

2 ENT SL & D

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Props ENT/EXT:

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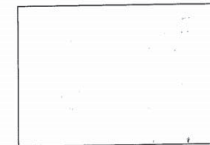
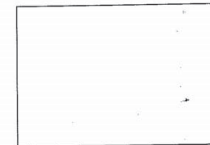
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21

22

Stage Pics:



yoga mats in my closet... But I haven't stopped crossing myself since I got here. *(They sit in silence.)*
 HOLLY: What about you, Brandon?
 BRANDON: Me?
 HOLLY: Yeah, where do you stand?
 BRANDON: I think I probably feel the same way Adam does.
 HOLLY: Really?
 BRANDON: But for different reasons.
 HOLLY: How so?
 BRANDON: When it's your time, it's your time. That's what I believe. There's a plan for Luke. A perfect one. And I don't believe in getting in the way of that.
 HOLLY: I guess.
 BRANDON: But it's not really for me to say. *(Holly thinks about this for a moment, then ...)*
 HOLLY: Do you think it's for Adam to say?

Scene 2

Adam and Luke's apartment. Three years earlier. Adam enters through the front door, and turns off the Christian rock that Luke's got blaring.

LUKE: *(Offstage.)* Babe?
 ADAM: Hi.
 LUKE: *(Offstage.)* What are you doing home?
 ADAM: My leg's bothering me. I hope I'm not getting a clot or something.
 LUKE: *(Offstage.)* A clot?
 ADAM: Yeah, like what that cute reporter in Iraq died from?
 LUKE: *(Offstage.)* Thrombosis.
 ADAM: He had a wife and kids and everything, poor guy.
 LUKE: *(Offstage.)* You don't have a thrombosis, Adam.
 ADAM: I hope not. *(Adam opens the closet door and a bunch of crap falls out. Unphased, he hangs his coat up, stuffs the crap back in, and heads for the kitchen.)* I'm making tea. Want some? *(Luke rushes in*

43

Blocking:

1 D ENT SL
 2 M ENT SL w/ PJ
 3 M EXT SR, D EXT SL
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Props ENT/EXT:

1 sheets
 2
 3
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Stage Pics:



from the bedroom.)

LUKE: Will you help me get rid of this thing in the bedroom?
 ADAM: *(Offstage.)* What thing?
 LUKE: The ass photo.
 ADAM: *(Offstage.)* My Mapplethorpe knockoff? It cost me a fortune. Why would I wanna get rid of it?
 LUKE: Never mind. *(On a mission, Luke starts plucking books off the bookshelf. Adam reenters, with his pants rolled up.)*
 ADAM: Does my left calf look bigger than my right?
 LUKE: *(Not looking.)* No.
 ADAM: It feels bigger. *(Adam sits, examining his calf.)*
 LUKE: How long does it take to get here from JFK?
 ADAM: I don't know. Forty-five minutes, depending on traffic. Why?
 LUKE: My dad just called.
 ADAM: So?
 LUKE: From JFK. He's on his way over. *(Luke grabs the books and makes a beeline for the closet.)*
 ADAM: Wait a minute. What?
 LUKE: Hasn't thought about New York in thirty years and all of a sudden he's nostalgic.
 ADAM: You mean I finally get to meet him?
 LUKE: Not if I can help it. *(Luke opens the closet door and the crap falls out again.)* Would you mind giving me a hand here? We don't have much time.
 ADAM: To what?
 LUKE: De-gay the apartment. *(Luke shoves all the crap back in, heads into the bedroom.)*
 ADAM: *(Panicked.)* Your father's coming?
 LUKE: *(Offstage.)* Like any minute.
 ADAM: What's he in town for?
 LUKE: Some auction. I don't know. The whole thing was very last minute. Very spontaneous. Very, you know, psychotic. *(Luke reenters with a Tinky Winky doll and tosses it into the closet.)* He wants to check out my apartment while he's here.
 ADAM: Our apartment.
 LUKE: Yeah, well he doesn't know that. Are you gonna help me with the ass photo or what?
 ADAM: I like that ass photo. It took me three years to pay for it.
 LUKE: Well, I don't want it hanging over the bed when he gets here.

44

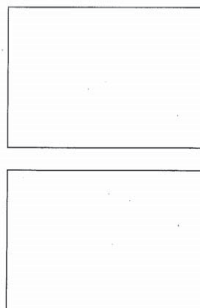
Blocking:

1 D ENT SL, 3 R, M ENT SR w/ PJ
 2 M PJ 1
 3 M EXT SR
 4 M ENT SR w/ PJ 2
 5 M EXT SR
 6 M ENT SR w/ PJ
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Props ENT/EXT:

1 empty box
 2 books, pictures
 3 books, photos
 4
 5
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Stage Pics:



ADAM. How about I hang you over the bed?

~~LUKE. Looks at a Capote book on the top shelf. (Luke matches it off the bookshelf and tosses it onto the couch.)~~

ADAM. Why don't you grow some hair on your balls and just tell him already?

LUKE. (Offstage.) Are you nuts? I told you what he said when I quit law school.

ADAM. No, you didn't.

LUKE. (Offstage.) He said he'd never let me speak to my little brother again if he ever found out I was gay.

ADAM. And you don't think he knows? All those years you were doing splits in your backyard in your little Richard Simmons shorts? Just tell him, already.

LUKE. (Offstage.) I will. I promise. (Luke reenters with an armful of framed photos, and heads for the bookshelf.) Next fall. When Ben's in college. I figure by then he'll be old enough to decide for himself.

ADAM. Now what?

~~LUKE. Photos.~~

ADAM. Luke!

LUKE. Just the lovey-dovey ones ... I'm gonna put a few of my old ones up just to, you know, sell the place a little more. (He takes some photos off the bookshelf, and replaces them with new ones. Adam grabs one and looks at it.)

ADAM. Who's that?

LUKE. My little brother.

ADAM. Looks like Adolf Hitler as a young girl. (Luke matches it back, cleaning it with his shirt sleeve.)

LUKE. I can't believe how filthy these got.

ADAM. You know, one of these days, it's all gonna come crashing down on you.

LUKE. Yeah, like today, if you don't start giving me a hand.

ADAM. And I ain't gonna be around to pick up the pieces.

LUKE. Windex. We need Windex. Would you mind running down to the deli?

ADAM. Absolutely not.

LUKE. Adam?!

ADAM. No, Luke. I refuse to participate in this homophobic bullshit.

LUKE. Then would you please start thinking of someplace to go, because I can't have you around when he gets here. (Luke selects a few photos, picks the box up and stands. The bottom of the box breaks,

45

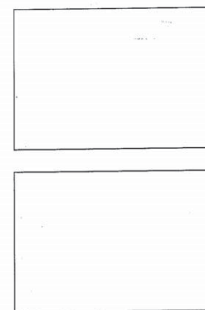
Blocking:

1 M x SL
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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



LUKE. Fuck! (He gets on his hands and knees, desperately trying to collect them all.) This would be so much easier if you'd just give me a fucking hand.

ADAM. Look at you.

LUKE. What, Adam? What?!

ADAM. You're like an animal in a trap trying to gnaw your own leg off. (This hits Luke for a moment, but then he quickly springs back into action.)

LUKE. Fine. I'll get it myself. (He leaves the mess on the floor and bolts for the front door.) But I want you out of here when I get back. I'm serious. Just for an hour or two. (Pleading.) Please. (He exits, leaving the door slightly ajar. Adam crosses over and yells after him.)

ADAM. I ain't going anywhere, sweet tits. You'll have to stuff me in the closet with the rest of the incriminating evidence. (He looks at the photos on the floor, then at the box, and picks one up.) I didn't realize, even this vacation, I'd tosses it back into the box. Picks up another, and tosses it in. And before you know it, he's cleaned up the entire mess. (Cuddling the Capote book and placing it against the wall, he picks up the box, and exits into the bedroom. There's a knock at the door.)

BUTCH. (Offstage.) Hello? (Butch pokes his head in, then enters, tentatively.)

ADAM. (Offstage.) I can't believe you took this thing down. What, the man's never seen a big black ass before? (Adam comes out of the bedroom, the ass photo in his arms. He stops short when he sees Butch standing there.)

BUTCH. I'm sorry. I must have the wrong apartment.

ADAM. No ... um ... He's ... He went to the deli.

BUTCH. I see.

ADAM. For Windex.

BUTCH. Okay.

~~ADAM. I can't believe you took this thing down.~~

~~BUTCH. (Offstage.) Hello?~~

ADAM. Excuse me, for a minute. (Adam exits back into the bedroom with the photo. Butch takes the place in. He hears a loud crash. Offstage.) Shit. (Adam returns, flustered.)

BUTCH. Everything okay in there?

ADAM. It's fine. (They stand there, awkwardly.)

BUTCH. I'm Luke's dad:

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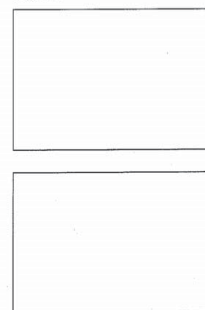
Blocking:

1 M x PL, books fall on ground
2 M k
3 M EXT SL
4 D x PL k f PL x SR
5 T ENT SL
6 D ENT SR
7 D owns SR
8 D ENT SR
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Props ENT/EXT:

1 box w/ books
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Stage Pics:



ADAM. From Florida.
 BUTCH. Tallahassee, right.
 ADAM. You're in for an auction?
 BUTCH. I am.
 ADAM. Cool. *(Adam's teakettle whistles.)* My water's boiling.
 BUTCH. Do what you gotta do. *(Adam starts off, then turns.)*
 ADAM. Would you like some?
 BUTCH. Some?
 ADAM. Tea?
 BUTCH. Sure. What the heck. *(Adam exits into the kitchen. Butch checks out the pad.)* Swanky place.
 ADAM. *(Offstage.)* Yeah, it's ... you know ... serviceable.
 BUTCH. How long's he been living here?
 ADAM. *(Offstage.)* Who?
 BUTCH. Luke.
 ADAM. *(Offstage.)* Oh ... Um ... two years, I guess?
 BUTCH. Two, really? How about that? *(He wanders over to the window and stares out. Adam reenters with two cups of tea.)*
 ADAM. Here you go.
 BUTCH. They're gone.
 ADAM. Excuse me?
 BUTCH. The towers. You can't help but notice on the way in from the airport.
 ADAM. Oh, yeah. If you look down to your right there, you can see where they were.
 BUTCH. I spent a semester here in college. The year they started construction on them. I used to go down once or twice a month, to check out the progress. Watch them work their way into the sky. Made me feel proud to be here New York. Like I was part of something.
 ADAM. Honey? *(Adam holds up a honey bear.)*
 BUTCH. Straight's fine. *(He hands Butch his tea.)* Nice cups. *(They blow on their tea.)* Dainty.
 ADAM. So, you spent a semester here?
 BUTCH. Working for Carl Randolph, yeah. They're auctioning off his entire estate this afternoon.
 ADAM. You're going to the Carl Randolph auction?
~~ADAM. Uh-huh.~~
~~ADAM. I'm not sure I like it.~~
 BUTCH. He was sort of a mentor to me.
 ADAM. That's, like, the hottest ticket in town.

47

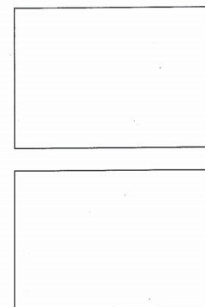
Blocking:

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 2 T paces
 3 D ENT SL w/ P2 1/2 D
 4 T S L
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Props ENT/EXT:

1 tea tray
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Stage Pics:



BUTCH. I've got my eye on a set of books. *Hardy Boys*. First editions. Fifteen, maybe twenty volumes. All signed and in pristine condition. He kept them on display in his office. As a reminder, I guess. Of his childhood. His youthful aspirations. That always sort of stuck with me, and I thought I might like to have them.
 ADAM. Carl Randolph? God, he was, like, huge in the eighties. He made Donald Trump look like, well, Donald Trump. I used to see him on the subway, once in a while. No entourage. No bodyguards. Just him. And I thought that was so cool. I mean, there he was, acting like he was one of us, when really he was, you know, Carl Randolph. *(Butch smiles.)*
 BUTCH. And who are you?
 ADAM. Who am I? *(That hangs in the air for a second, until Luke enters, instantly thrown when he sees Butch standing there.)*
 LUKE. Dad!
 BUTCH. Hello, son.
 LUKE. That was quick.
 BUTCH. Saheed was a yakker with a lead foot.
 LUKE. And ... so ... you're having tea? *(He sets the Windex down and quickly cates the joint.)*
 BUTCH. Your friend here made it.
 LUKE. Then you two have met?
 BUTCH. We were just getting to that.
 LUKE. This is Adam, Dad. We work together.
 BUTCH. At the flower shop?
 ADAM/LUKE. Candles.
 LUKE. Adam's been there longer than I have.
 ADAM. Too long. I'm trying to move on.
 LUKE. For two years he's been saying that.
 ADAM. Not two. Besides, I had a teaching interview today, and —
 BUTCH. So, this is it, huh, kiddo? *(Butch meanders around the place.)*
 LUKE. This is what?
 BUTCH. Your bachelor pad. *(Luke avoids Adam's look.)*
 LUKE. Yup. This is it.
 BUTCH. How about that? *(Luke spots the Capote book, picks it off the shelf, glares at Adam as he heads into the bedroom.)*
 LUKE. So, how was your flight?
 BUTCH. Easy. Quick. Your mom thinks I've lost it.
 LUKE. Well, it is a little out of the blue, Dad.

48

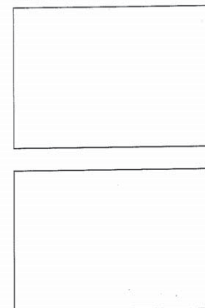
Blocking:

1 M ENT SL 1
 2 T X M hug
 3 T X SR
 4 M EXT SR
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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



BUTCH. I know, but what the heck. Life's short and then you die. *(A beat.)*

ADAM. And then what happens? *(Butch turns from the bookshelf. Adam smiles, innocently.)*

LUKE. *(Offstage.)* Oh, no! What happened to the ass pho ... the Mapplethorpe knockoff.

ADAM. I broke it.

LUKE. *(Offstage.)* Babe! *(Adam blanches at Luke's faux pas. Luke reenters, white as a sheet. Butch turns from the bookshelf. He's hard to read.)*

BUTCH. Where's the bathroom?

LUKE. In there.

BUTCH. Excuse me, men. *(Luke watches, mortified, as his dad exits into the bathroom.)*

LUKE. I can't believe I just said that.

ADAM. I don't think he heard.

LUKE. Are you crazy? Of course, he heard.

ADAM. And, so what if he did?

LUKE. This is unbelievable.

ADAM. Come on, babe. He knows. He called our cups "dainty."

LUKE. Well, they are dainty.

ADAM. He thinks you work at a flower shop. He likes the *Hardy Boys*. He knows. He knows.

LUKE. Somebody shoot me.

ADAM. He worked for Carl Randolph, Luke. The guy was his mentor.

LUKE. So?

ADAM. So? Carl Randolph was gay.

LUKE. No, he wasn't. He had a wife and kids.

ADAM. He was a big old leather queen. They wrote about it in *Vanity Fair* last month.

LUKE. Oh, my God.

ADAM. Just tell him, already. I'll tell him with you. We'll hold hands and walk into the fire together.

LUKE. Or I could pretend the whole thing never happened. I'm good at that.

ADAM. Come on, Luke. You don't want to end up like one of those people.

LUKE. What people?

ADAM. Who wake up in the middle of the night ... Screaming. *(They hear the toilet flush.)*

49

LUKE. Okay, but if I'm gonna walk into the fire, I'm gonna do it alone. Just me and him. *Mano a mano.*

ADAM. You want me to go?

LUKE. Yes. Please. Quick. Before I change my mind.

ADAM. I'm so proud of you. *(They go to kiss, but quickly think the better of it.)* I'll be on my cell if you need me. *(Adam scoots out the door. Luke takes a deep breath as Butch reenters from the bathroom.)*

BUTCH. Tight squeeze in there.

LUKE. Yeah ... you know ... New York.

BUTCH. I like how you've got all those pictures on the wall. Gives you something to look at while you're on the crapper.

LUKE. *(Bracing himself.)* Dad? *(Butch hands over a framed photo.)*

BUTCH. This one must have fallen.

LUKE. Oh, thanks.

BUTCH. These are the folks you did that Huck Finn play with, right?

LUKE. Yeah.

BUTCH. You were good in that. *(Pause.)* You all were.

LUKE. Really?

BUTCH. Well, most of you ... I mean, I'm no patron of the arts, but ... this play ... that was ... something.

LUKE. Are you kidding me?

BUTCH. Am I wrong?

LUKE. No, it's just ... I'm just a little shocked, that's all.

BUTCH. Listen, I know I'm not the most supportive parent in the world. I thought it was a big mistake when you left law school, I'm not gonna lie to you. But that play ... I don't know, I guess I kinda started to see how the acting thing might be something you could be proud of someday.

LUKE. Wow ...

BUTCH. I mean, money isn't everything, right?

LUKE. Totally. I love it. *(Butch sits with his tea. Luke joins him, forgetting for a moment, the task at hand.)*

BUTCH. I remember some jerk was sitting in front of me. Yakin' the whole time, buggin' everyone, so I start shushing him, telling him to be quiet, and he turns around, like, what's your problem, and I say, "That's my son up there, and if you don't start paying attention, I'm gonna box you one." And boy, if that didn't shut him up. *(The two men share a laugh, connecting finally, like old pals. Luke feels comfortable enough to continue.)*

50

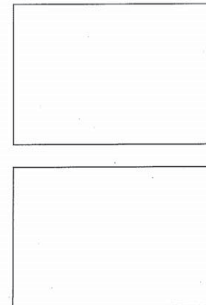
Blocking:

1 T \$ 1, P P2
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3 T EXT SR, M L 1
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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



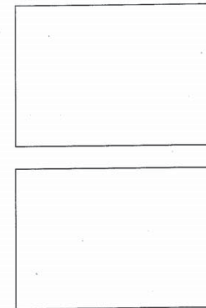
Blocking:

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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



LUKE. Listen, Dad ...
 BUTCH. Let me ask you something though, kiddo. And this is something I was always curious about.
 LUKE. Sure.
 BUTCH. (*Curious.*) Was the nigger a fag?
 LUKE. Excuse me?
 BUTCH. This guy here. The one who played the slave. He was a fag, right? (*Butch points to the photo.*) He was kinda swishy, that's all. Like I said, I don't know my ass from my elbow when it comes to this acting stuff, I just thought it would have been nice to have someone a little more ...
 LUKE. White?
 BUTCH. Manly ... in the part. (*Butch gives him a wink.*) But what the heck do I know? (*He rises.*) So, where'd your friend go?
 LUKE. (*Completely stunned.*) Oh, his leg hurt. Thrombosis or something.
 BUTCH. Thrombosis?
 LUKE. I don't know. There's always something going on with him.
 BUTCH. Okay, well, come on then. Let's eat. (*Butch makes his way to the door. Luke just sits there, completely sucker-punched.*)

Scene 3

Adam's apartment. A year later. Adam, in his underwear, sits in front of his laptop, the glow of the screen illuminating his face.

LUKE. (*Offstage.*) Adam?
 ADAM. (*Busted.*) Yeah?
 LUKE. (*Offstage.*) What are you doing?
 ADAM. Nothing. Go back to sleep. (*Adam goes back to the screen.*)
 LUKE. (*Offstage.*) Are you on that website, again? (*Adam looks up again, guilty.*)
 ADAM. What website?
 LUKE. (*Offstage.*) The brain tumor website. (*Adam quickly snaps the laptop shut, as Luke enters from the bedroom, half asleep.*) You promised.
 ADAM. I know I did. (*He joins Adam on the couch.*)

51

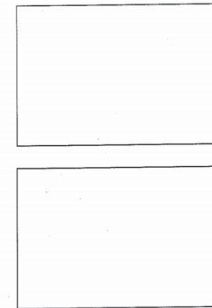
Blocking:

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 2 T EXT SL
 3 D [X] w PL
 4 M ENT SR
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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



LUKE. Tell me what the doctor said again.
 ADAM. (*Obsessed.*) It could be a sinus infection, some kind of vertigo thing, a virus ... He doesn't know.
 LUKE. He said it wasn't a brain tumor, Adam.
 ADAM. He said he didn't think it was a brain tumor. He can't say for sure.
 LUKE. You're still feeling dizzy?
 ADAM. Not dizzy ... Fuzzy. Like my brain is swollen or something.
 LUKE. What about the headache?
 ADAM. It's more like my hair aches. Like my follicles are sore. (*Luke stares at Adam, blankly.*) And now the ache is back to back.
 LUKE. Okay, you need therapy.
 ADAM. It got so distracting I had to cancel my AP English class this afternoon.
 LUKE. Please, don't sabotage this teaching stuff, Adam. It took you so long to finally make the change.
 ADAM. I can't help it! The fuzziness. The ringing. It's not normal.
 LUKE. You're telling me?
 ADAM. I'm serious! (*Adam gets up and starts pacing. Luke sees that he's really spiraling this time.*)
 LUKE. Why don't you go get an MRI then? Come on, babe, I'll go with you. So we can know it's not a brain tumor, once and for all, and relax.
 ADAM. But what if it is?
 LUKE. You have to stop, Adam. Seriously. When there are so many people who really do have something to worry about?
 ADAM. I know.
 LUKE. You have so much to be thankful for.
 ADAM. I know. I know.
 LUKE. Then why do you keep trying to fuck it all up?
 ADAM. It's not like I'm trying. It's not like I'm thinking. "Huh, life's pretty good right now. Maybe I should give myself a brain tumor."
 LUKE. You're unhappy, babe.
 ADAM. I know I'm unhappy. My fucking head hurts! You'd be unhappy, too!
 LUKE. In life ... It's like you don't feel you deserve to be, or something. Like the minute you actually do, it's all gonna be taken away from you. I mean, what are you so afraid of? (*A beat.*)

52

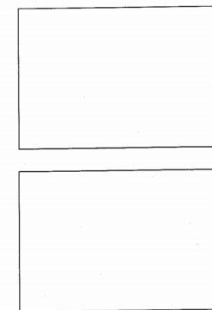
Blocking:

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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:

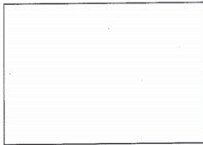
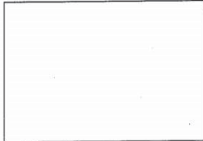


ADAM. Oh, God. We're gonna go there, aren't we?
 LUKE. Where?
 ADAM. To Jesus land. Go ahead. I know you want to.
 LUKE. I didn't say anything.
 ADAM. (*Helpless.*) Why is it every time I reach out to you, every time there's some kind of crisis in my life, this is the only thing you have to offer?
 LUKE. What are you talking about?
 ADAM. It is, Luke.
 LUKE. I don't know what you're talking about, Adam.
 ADAM. Like when my dad died.
 LUKE. I was there for you.
 ADAM. Come on.
 LUKE. I was fucking there for you, Adam! I flew halfway across the country to be there for you. I held his ashes in my lap on the way home from the service. I mean, what more do you want?
 ADAM. That's not what I'm talking about.
 LUKE. I sat in a different pew because you didn't want anyone to feel uncomfortable. I took communion while you and the rest of your family just sat there like idiots. I practically wrote his whole fucking eulogy for you. Don't tell me I wasn't there, Adam. I was there.
 ADAM. Before, Luke. I'm talking about the night he died. We were lying in bed together. And you looked at me, all of a sudden, with this, it was almost smug, Luke. This holier-than-thou look of pity on your face —
 LUKE. — I was trying to comfort you!
 ADAM. It didn't mean anything! Don't you get it? You may as well have been speaking a foreign fucking language! And for that to be the only thing you have to offer, at a time when I needed you the most. I'm sorry, but I've never felt so alone in all my life.
 LUKE. Well, what did you want me to do?
 ADAM. Hold me! (*A beat.*) I just wanted you to fucking hold me, Luke! Is that so hard to understand? (*Another beat.*)
 LUKE. A little.
 ADAM. Forget it.
 LUKE. I'm sorry, but it is.
 ADAM. I don't even know why I bothered to bring it up.
 LUKE. Because I'm not afraid like you are, Adam. When the time comes ... I welcome it. (*Gentle.*) You could, too.

53

Blocking:
 1 M.S. ☒
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Props ENT/EXT:
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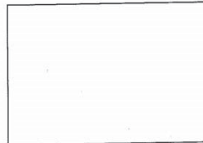
Stage Pics:



ADAM. You're doing it again.
 LUKE. I just hate to see you in pain like this.
 ADAM. Listen, I would love that, believe me ... It's like the one thing I envy you for ... To know everything's gonna be alright ... No matter what ... To feel ... safe like that? It would almost be worth it.
 LUKE. It is worth it, Adam. It's so worth it.
 ADAM. But I've never had that in my life, so how would I know for sure I wasn't the one sitting in my dad's Chrysler LeBaron when the white light —
 LUKE. — It wasn't a white light.
 ADAM. The warmth, the peace, whatever it was —
 LUKE. Home, Adam. (*A pause.*) I felt home. For the first time in my life ... It's there, babe. You just have to be open to it. (*Adam sits, completely lost.*)
 ADAM. This all started back in college. I had mono and thought for sure it was AIDS. It was before there was even a test, remember?
 LUKE. I was right.
 ADAM. Well, it was horrible, trust me. And I remember being convinced, at the time, that it was, like my punishment.
 LUKE. Punishment?
 ADAM. For being gay.
 LUKE. Punishment from whom?
 ADAM. Oh, I don't know ... God, I guess. (*A beat.*) You don't have to believe in hell to walk around feeling like you're gonna burn in it. (*Another beat.*)
 LUKE. What if He wasn't a punisher? (*Luke moves closer.*) You mentioned your soul the night we first met.
 ADAM. I did?
 LUKE. You said it was fat. That's how I knew we were meant to be. (*He wraps his arms around Adam.*) You believe, Adam. I know you do ... And I knew that night on the rooftop ... whether you had or you hadn't yet ... I knew that one day you'd see. (*Adam closes his eyes.*) Please, Adam ... For me. (*He sits there, open for something to happen. Nothing. So, he squeezes them tighter, desperately trying to feel the warmth, something. Still nothing. He gives it one last shot, his face softening this time, and there's a peace that washes over him. A calm. Then, after what seems like an eternity, Adam opens his eyes again, and finds himself back where he started.*)
 ADAM. I'm gonna get a sleeping pill. (*He gets up and heads for*

54

Blocking:
 1 M.S. ☒
 2 D.S. ☒
 3 D.S. EXT SR
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Props ENT/EXT:
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Stage Pics:



the bathroom.)

LUKE. (*Crestfallen.*) Make it two.

ADAM. ~~Can we wear our new sleeping masks?~~

LUKE. Sure... ~~As long as it doesn't, you know, make your hair hurt.~~

(*Luke opens the laptop and stares at Adam's madness on the screen.*)

Remember that huge fight we had a few years back?

ADAM. (*Offstage.*) About the rape?

LUKE. And I said that thing about the cancer patient, and the pill and all that? (*Adam reenters and hands over a sleeping pill.*)

ADAM. Vaguely. (*Luke holds the pill up for Adam to see, then pops it in his mouth and swallows.*)

LUKE. See? (*Adam considers this for a moment.*)

ADAM. Yeah, but come on, babe. If it were that easy, who wouldn't swallow it? (*He picks up his laptop and exits, leaving Luke there in limbo.*)

Scene 4

A small makeshift temple in Beth Israel. Arlene sits quietly, Brandon's Bible in her lap. Adam enters, tentatively. Arlene scoots over to make room. He braces himself and joins her.

ARLENE. Quiet, isn't it?

ADAM. Yeah ... (*They take the place in. Torahs. A huge Star of David. Prayer shawls. A bowl of yarmulkes, maybe.*)

ARLENE. They have this elevator here, some nice lady was telling me, it automatically stops on every floor. And I thought, new what on earth would you want that for? Turns out they're not supposed to use electricity on weekends—Jewish people. It's against their religion.

ADAM. I think it was about energy, originally. You weren't supposed to exert any on the Sabbath. Sort of like an "And on the seventh day He rested" kind of thing. But then, I guess, as time went on and technology advanced, it included all the new and improved gadgets that made life easier.

ARLENE. I see ... Well, I guess they're allowed to use all of that now, they're just not allowed to push any buttons. (*She stares some*

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Blocking:

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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:

Chapel

~~more at her surroundings.) So many things to consider.~~

ADAM. I'm sure.

ARLENE. And never having been in this position before.

ADAM. Of course.

ARLENE. Just need a little more time to ...

ADAM. Sort things out?

ARLENE. Pray. (*Adam notices the Bible in her lap.*) I'm one, too. Does that surprise you?

ADAM. Me? No. I'm ... No, not at all.

ARLENE. At least I think I am. Who knows anymore. But then I grab hold of this thing. So familiar. Like an old friend. I read a passage I've read a thousand times before ... It gives me comfort somehow. Butch is a whole other story. He really clings to the damn thing for dear life, poor guy ... I'm sure that's my fault, too. Just another victim of Lung Lady's evil ways.

ADAM. Lung Lady?

ARLENE. Oh, that's just something I started calling myself after we split.

ADAM. Were you a big smoker?

ARLENE. No. Well, yes. I was. But that's not why. (*A beat.*) I used to be a bit of a loose cannon. We both were. Butch and me. Couple of crazies. But at a certain point, Butch had enough, pulled himself together, and I just sank further into it all. I'd disappear for days at a time. Weeks even. Then six months in jail. For selling pot. Not even selling, really. Oh, it's a long stupid story, involving my ex-best friend, a one-eyed prostitute from Shreveport. I kid you not, but I was just a fool. Mad at the world and no one was gonna tell me otherwise. Not even this sweet little kid. When I got out, I was so determined to make it up to him, I scraped together some cash and bought him a bicycle. It had the sparkly tassels, the wicker basket, and everything just like he wanted, and he wouldn't look at the damn thing. Just sat in his sandbox, ignoring me. So, I started stomping my foot and screaming at the little shit. "Now, you listen to me, young man." Like, all of a sudden, I'm gonna be a mother, right? Well, Luke's not having it, and he shouts back, "No, you listen to me, lung lady." And we just glare at each other for a minute, like a couple of mules, then I fell out laughing, and I thought, you know, he's right. That's what I've become. One of those evil cartoon characters. Flames bursting out my metallic bustier ... With dad and mysterious powers no one would ever understand.

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Blocking:

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Props ENT/EXT:

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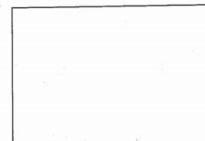
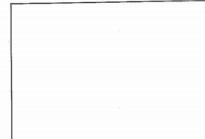
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Stage Pics:



ADAM. Lung Lady.
 ARLENE. Of course, that's not what he meant, but the name sorta stuck. Eventually, I worked my way into the sandbox with him. He's sitting there all angry and defiant, just like his mama. And all of a sudden I can't speak. Afraid I might break him. Or lose him. He wiggles his little toes up against mine and asks if people can glue their feet together. And I say, "Well, now, why would anyone wanna do that?" And he looks up at me with those big, blue eyes and says, "So no one can ever separate us." *(It all comes flooding back to her.)* Well, that just took my breath away. And I realized I had to leave again ... So, Lung Lady crawled back into her hole for another ten years until she was ready to resurface. Butch met Lynn not long after, so Luke finally had some ... stability. Of course, who can recognize her now, with all the work she's had done, but she's a good mom. Gave him a little brother who adores him. And me ... *(Arlene takes out a Kleenex and blows her nose.)* Better see how Butch is doing. *(She rises.)*
 ADAM. Um ...
 ARLENE. Yes?
 ADAM. Luke and I ... We're ... *(Adam rises, not quite sure how to proceed.)* He means so much to me ... *(A beat.)* All of us, really ... But especially ... *(Another beat.)* He's always loved his life ... Just as it is, you know? And now ... Well, I can't imagine he'd be happy any other way ... He just wouldn't ... I know it.
 ARLENE. I suppose you're right. *(They stare at each other for a moment.)* You know, I got a chance to speak to the EMT guy when we first got here. A young black man. Very nice. Apparently, Luke went into shock right away, so there wasn't any pain, thank God.
 ADAM. Yes.
 ARLENE. But he kept asking for someone, just before he lost consciousness. It was faint, apparently, a little difficult to decipher, but the name, it sounded a lot like yours. *(Brandon enters.)*
 BRANDON. Your husband is asking for you.
 ARLENE. Thank you, Brandon. *(Arlene gives Adam's hand a squeeze.)* I'll see what I can do. *(She hands Brandon his Bible, and turns to Adam one last time.)* Butch wasn't with me when the EMT guy told me all that, and I don't think I'll mention it to him. He's a good man, Butch, but he's not perfect. *(She exits, leaving Adam and Brandon alone for the first time.)*
 BRANDON. They're getting a hotel room.
 ADAM. Oh, yeah?

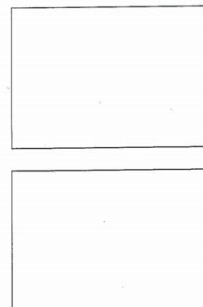
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Blocking:
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 3 KJ makes D
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 5 KJ H PL A
 6 KJ EXT SR
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Props ENT/EXT:

1 Bible
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Stage Pics:



~~BRANDON. Butch says he'll check houses if he has time for a few hours.~~
~~ADAM. Probably a good idea. (A beat.)~~
 BRANDON. Adam ...
 ADAM. You were his emergency contact.
 BRANDON. His ...
 ADAM. In his cell phone ... You were the first one they called.
 BRANDON. *(Embarrassed, almost.)* Oh ... Yeah.
 ADAM. *(Searching.)* I always thought he would change that, but ... I guess ...
 BRANDON. Might be a good time for you to be alone with him. I'll keep an eye out, you know. Just in case.
 ADAM. *(Wary.)* Why are you doing this?
 BRANDON. Don't ask why, Adam. Just go ... Go. *(Adam looks at him for a moment longer, then exits. Brandon takes the place in. He picks a yarmulke out of the bowl and stares at it.)*

Scene 5

Central Park. A year ago. Adam waits near a bench. Brandon joins him with two cups of coffee.

ADAM. Is this okay?
 BRANDON. Sure. *(He hands one over.)*
 ADAM. This is, like, the fourth cup I've had today. What do I owe you?
 BRANDON. Please, it's on me.
 ADAM. Thanks. *(They sit.)* So ... Long time, huh?
 BRANDON. It has been.
 ADAM. I read that article in the *Times* a few weeks ago. About the big merger. Congratulations.
 BRANDON. Thanks. Things are ... I just got promoted, too, so ...
 ADAM. Fantastic! Should've gotten a Venti.
 BRANDON. And you?
 ADAM. I left the candle shop a while back. I think you knew that.
 BRANDON. I think I did, yeah.

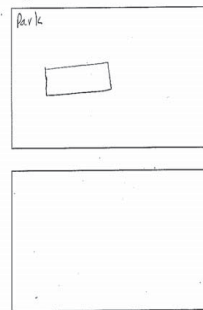
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Blocking:
 1 D 9 X, A x D
 2 D 9 EXT SR
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 4 D ENT SR 9 X
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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



ADAM. It was time, you know?
 BRANDON. Are you liking it? Teaching?
 ADAM. Sure. You know, you get the summer off. The kids are great. It's all good.
 BRANDON. Good. (*Awkward smiles.*) Hey listen, do you want your rug back?
 ADAM. My rug?
 BRANDON. The purple one with the frayed edges?
 ADAM. Oh, God. No. Please ... We don't have room for it. Consider it permanently on loan ... For now.
 BRANDON. Well, anytime you want it.
 ADAM. I don't even like that rug.
 BRANDON. *Oh.* (*More awkward smiling.*) How's Luke?
 ADAM. Good. He's ... That's actually why I called.
 BRANDON. I figured.
 ADAM. Right? I mean, it's not like we, you and I, it's not like we ever ...
 BRANDON. Yeah ...
 ADAM. And I feel bad about that. I do. I mean, I always hoped we'd be friends, but that never quite happened, did it?
 BRANDON. Not really. No.
 ADAM. And I never understood why. Or why you and Luke stopped hanging out, for that matter. I have an idea. I mean, we've all been in that position before, right?
 BRANDON. What position is that?
 ADAM. Oh, you know, having a friendship, a close friendship. Maybe there's an unrequited thing, maybe not, I don't know. Whatever. Then someone else enters the dynamic and fucks it all up.
 BRANDON. Uh-huh.
 ADAM. It's painful to be around. I get it. I'd do the same thing.
 BRANDON. Would you?
 ADAM. But it's been like three years, Brandon.
 BRANDON. Adam ...
 ADAM. I'm sorry.
 BRANDON. It's just kind of between Luke and me.
 ADAM. No, you're right. (*A beat.*) Then, I guess, you coming for Thanksgiving. I guess, that's not gonna ...
 BRANDON. I don't think so.
 ADAM. It would mean so much to him. He's deep-frying a

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turkey. He's making sweet potatoes and collard greens, and all this Southern shit.
 BRANDON. Um ...
 ADAM. Never mind. (*Another beat.*)
 BRANDON. So is that all you wanted to talk about?
 ADAM. I guess so. Yeah.
 BRANDON. Because I've got an appointment. I've got to ...
 ADAM. Actually, there is something else ... Do you have a second?
 BRANDON. Sure.
 ADAM. God, this is awkward ... Is it okay if I just sort of dive in here? Okay ... So, Luke and I have been together a little over four years now —
 BRANDON. Four? Wow!
 ADAM. I know, who would have thunk it, right? And things are great, all things considered. More than great, really. I mean, we've got our issues, but who doesn't, right? Like, he's still not out to his parents, which is just sort of boring at this point, but frankly, they don't seem like the kind of folks I really want to spend a holiday with, so ... Plus, he's out everywhere else in life, so it's mostly normal. It's a negotiation, like any relationship. He lets me watch CNN 24/7, I let him watch that show where people hop across the big rubber balls and fall into the mud. He puts up with my tirades about the health care reform. I put up with his Martha Stewart magazines all over the place. He drops a fan on my face in the middle of the night, I —
 BRANDON. Got it, Adam.
 ADAM. We make compromises, that's all I'm saying. He's not even that extreme as far as all the Jesus stuff goes. He's pro-choice. He believes in stem-cell research. I think he might even vote for a Democrat in the next election.
 BRANDON. Someone you can bring home to mom, I get it.
 ADAM. And I have. Many times. And she loves him. Oh, and we're talking about having a baby now, too. Well, I'm talking, but he's nodding his head a lot. So, it's mostly good.
 BRANDON. Great. So, what's the problem?
 ADAM. The praying after sex. (*A beat.*) That's the one little quirk I'm still having a hard time with. (*Another beat.*) I know we've never talked about this kind of thing before, you and I. I mean, I don't even know if you're openly gay ... Or unopenly gay, even. I assume you're gay ... Or gay-ish. Gay, I think, at least. So, if you are ... and you're gay ... I mean, is that something you do, too? Pray after sex?

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(Brandon's speechless.) You don't have to answer. I'm sorry. It's just something that's really been bugging me lately. I mean, it's not like I see it. It's not like he's kneeling at the side of the bed flogging himself with a leather switch or anything. I wish, right? No, it's more like he feels dirty and silently asks for forgiveness. And it's not like it's all the time either. In fact, he hardly ever does it. But still, it's like, really? That's what you have to do? I mean, all the other stuff I can sort of deal with, but the praying after sex? It just sort of makes everything feel a little tainted somehow. I mean, how am I gonna feel loved for real with, you know, all that in the way? (Adam slugs back the rest of his cappuccino.) Okay, I'll stop. You talk. If you want to. I know I'm sort of dumping this all on you there, so... But, please, if you have any... pearls... I'd be glad for anything. (Brandon looks like Adam just puked all over him. He takes a moment to gather his thoughts, then speaks.)

BRANDON: I like black men.

ADAM: Excuse me?

BRANDON: Black men?

ADAM: Uh-huh.

BRANDON: I like them. That's all I've ever been attracted to. I don't know why it is just is.

ADAM: Men that are black.

BRANDON: Yes.

ADAM: (Ensure where this is headed.) And you're telling me this because...

BRANDON: Luke's not black.

ADAM: I see.

BRANDON: I was never in love with him, Adam! Our friendship ended because we both chose for it to. There was nothing "unrequited" about it.

ADAM: Gotcha.

BRANDON: I've been struggling with this stuff my whole life. When I met Luke, it was like, finally someone who understood. Finally someone I felt safe with. But somewhere along the line things started to shift. When you two were just hooking up, it was one thing, but when it turned into something, well, more... Look, I understand the need to act on the urges, believe me, but to choose the lifestyle! To live like it was... right, I guess? Well, that's where we go our separate ways.

ADAM: So, you're saying there was a line and, at a certain point,

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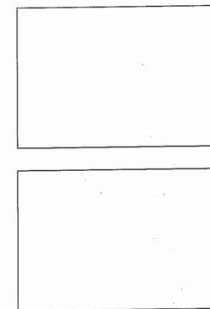
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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



Luke crossed it?

BRANDON: Moved it.

ADAM: So, it's okay to do... whatever it is you do... but when it comes to actually loving, that's where the line's drawn?

BRANDON: My line.

ADAM: At love? You draw your line at love, Brandon? Loving is too much of a sin?

BRANDON: If that's how you want to see it.

ADAM: That's not how I want to see it. That's not how I want anyone to see it. And I can't imagine that's how God wants us to see it either.

BRANDON: Well, it's how I see it. And Luke understands that. It took us a while, but we've made our peace. (A beat.)

ADAM: What about that guy in the chat room?

BRANDON: What guy?

ADAM: The married one... Luke told me you really liked each other.

BRANDON: (This stings.) Oh, yeah? What else did he tell you?

ADAM: That he misses you.

BRANDON: (This stings even more.) Well, I miss him, too. And I'm sorry I can't support the two of you together. It just doesn't feel right. (Brandon stands.) So, I don't think I can help with the whole praying-after-sex thing.

ADAM: I guess not.

BRANDON: Give him my love, will you?

ADAM: You sure that's allowed? Not gonna get struck by lightning or anything, are you?

BRANDON: (Genuine.) You're funny, Adam. I'll give you that. I wish we could've gotten to know each other better, too.

ADAM: Oh, well. Maybe in our next life. Oops. Sorry. Guess not. (A beat.)

BRANDON: I don't know if this helps any, but... he chose you, Adam. When he moved the line. That's got to have cost him, you know? And maybe praying after sex is the price he has to pay.

ADAM: Maybe.

BRANDON: Still... He chose you... Isn't that enough? (Brandon leaves Adam alone to contemplate.)

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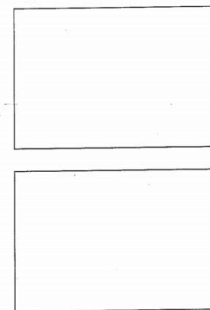
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- 2 A x SL
- 3 A EXT SL
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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



Scene 6

Luke's hospital room. The fluorescent lights are off. Adam's asleep, curled up against Luke. All is quiet except for the eerie sound of a machine that breathes.

After a few moments, the door opens. Adam wakes with a start, sitting bolt upright as Butch flips the lights on.

BUTCH. What's going on in here?

ADAM. Oh ... I ... uh ...

BUTCH. That's a hospital bed, son.

ADAM. Must have ...

BUTCH. I know you're jetlagged, but ... *(Adam hops off the bed, a little disoriented.)*

ADAM. What time is it?

BUTCH. A little after three.

ADAM. ~~Brandon said you were getting a hotel room?~~

BUTCH. ~~Couldn't sleep. (Butch walks over and examines the machinery.)~~ I didn't mess anything up over here, did you? ~~These things are ...~~

ADAM. I don't think so.

BUTCH. ~~You sure? One flip of the switch and the whole thing can just ...~~ *(Realizing he has no idea what he's talking about, Butch slumps down on the edge of the bed. He looks like an old man suddenly.)* There's a mother of three in Pennsylvania. Won't make it through the next twenty-four hours without a heart. *(He smooths his son's covers.)* A pair of eyes to Albany. A kidney to White Plains. Everyone needs something.

ADAM. Yeah ... *(The machine breathes.)*

BUTCH. You wanna make sure you're doing the right thing ... You look for some kind of sign ... Something to let you know ... And then ... Just like that ... *(Butch looks up at Adam.)* New Hope.

ADAM. Excuse me?

BUTCH. That's where she's from ... The mother ... Irony, isn't it? *(He looks back down at his son.)* If you don't mind, I'd like to be

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alone with him. *(Adam doesn't move.)*

ADAM. Um ...

BUTCH. Yes?

ADAM. I'm not quite done yet.

BUTCH. What's that?

ADAM. I'd like a little more time, if that's alright.

BUTCH. Time?

ADAM. If that's alright, yeah. *(Arlene enters, sensing trouble.)*

ARLENE. What's going on, fellas?

BUTCH. He wants time, Arlene. With Luke. He wants more of it.

ARLENE. Time?

ADAM. It's not ... under the circumstances ... I don't think that's a lot to ask. *(Butch slowly rises.)*

BUTCH. Is that right?

ADAM. Look, I don't wanna play this game anymore.

BUTCH. What game?

ADAM. You know what I'm talking about.

BUTCH. There's a game?

ADAM. Yes, and I'm not playing it.

ARLENE. Butch, maybe we should —

BUTCH. I wasn't aware of any game, Arlene, were you?

ADAM. Ten minutes ... Just give me ten more minutes and I'll be out of here.

BUTCH. Ten minutes?

ARLENE. Come on, Butch. We can —

BUTCH. I'm not going anywhere.

ADAM. *(Exploding.)* I WANT MORE TIME, ALRIGHT? I'M NOT ASKING ANYMORE, I'M TELLING YOU. *(Holly rushes in from the hallway.)* Now, I've been trying to be decent about all of this, but none of you are making it easy.

BUTCH. Who the heck is this guy?

ARLENE. Butch, please.

BUTCH. Walking in here like he owns the place.

ARLENE. Let's just —

BUTCH. I don't even know who you are, son.

ADAM. You don't know who I am?

HOLLY. Okay, everybody —

BUTCH. I could have your ass thrown out of here.

ADAM. I'm sure you could.

BUTCH. And there wouldn't be a damn thing you could do

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Blocking:

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Props ENT/EXT:

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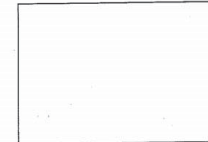
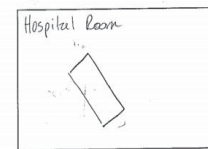
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Stage Pics:



Blocking:

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3 T X D

4 T X M

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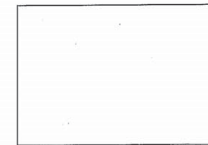
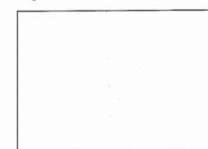
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Stage Pics:



about it.
 HOLLY. Sweetie, maybe we should —
 BUTCH. Coming in here, disrupting my family.
 ARLENE. Okay, now. Stop it, Butch.
 BUTCH. You've got a lot of nerve, son.
 ADAM. I'm not your son.
 BUTCH. No, you're not, are you? *(Just as it looks like the two men are about to strangle each other, Luke opens his eyes.)*
 HOLLY. *(Gasping.)* Adam?! *(He's staring right at Adam. Adam is speechless.)*
 ARLENE. Luke? *(Arlene leans in and touches her son's face.)* Can you hear me? It's me, Luke. It's Mama. *(Then, just as quickly, Luke's eyes close again.)*
 BUTCH. Someone get a doctor.
 ARLENE. Luke? Sweetheart? *(Holly runs off, leaving Adam there, frozen.)*

Scene 7

Adam's apartment. Yesterday. A weekend bag rests on the coffee table.

ADAM. *(Offstage.)* Is there anything I own that doesn't make me look like a lesbian from Scranton? *(Adam enters with a pile of clothes, and starts sorting through them.) I mean, seriously. Since when did I start dressing like Paula Poundstone? (Luke enters with a deli sandwich.)*
 LUKE. Where's my cat?
 ADAM. I have no idea.
 LUKE. She was in here a minute ago.
 ADAM. ~~The cat is dead. I should go and find it. It's radioactive.~~
 LUKE. ~~For the first few days, it's been over a week.~~
 ADAM. ~~I'm not taking any chances.~~
 LUKE. ~~Adam?~~
 ADAM. He's in the bathroom.
 LUKE. She's not a he, you animal! *(Luke puts his sandwich down*

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Blocking:

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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



and heads for the bathroom.) Patches?
 ADAM. Did I snore again last night?
 LUKE. *(Offstage.)* Like a buzz saw.
 ADAM. God, I'm becoming my father. I always thought I'd become my mother.
 LUKE. *(Offstage.)* You got her hips. *(Luke reenters.)* You should see her. All curled up like a biscuit sandwich in there.
 ADAM. You sure you can't come, babe? I've got a ton of miles I can cash in.
 LUKE. Positive.
 ADAM. It would just be so much more fun if you were there. I'm staying at my brother's, and you — *(Luke's dying to eat, but needs to pray first. Adam sees this, gives him his moment, then continues, a shorthand between them now.)* I'm staying at my brother's, and you love my brother.
 LUKE. Believe me, there's nothing I'd rather do than sit around with a bunch of old farts comparing salaries all weekend.
 ADAM. And hush. And potatoes.
 LUKE. I'd love that, really I would. But I've got a ton of auditions this week. I'll go to your next reunion, I promise. I'll push your wheelchair.
 ADAM. Fine, then don't forget to recycle when I'm gone. I mean it. I'm tired of seeing your Dr Pepper cans in the trash.
 LUKE. Alright, already. Jeez, what crawled up your ass?
 ADAM. Sorry, I'm just a little testy about having to fly in a business-class jet.
 LUKE. ~~What business?~~
 ADAM. ~~I don't know. There must be some hurricane heading our way. Don't see them once a week now, thanks to you and all your conservative Republican friends?~~
 LUKE. ~~George Bush did more for the EPA than Bill Clinton.~~
 ADAM. Says who?
 LUKE. ~~I don't know. I read it.~~
 ADAM. Where, in the Bible? *(Luke chuckles.)* You've ruined air travel for me, you know? Ever since you taught me about the Rapture, I start flop sweating if the pilot wears a cross or speaks with a Southern accent.
 LUKE. Well, you know the solution.
 ADAM. Yeah. Fly El-Al.
 LUKE. Okay, Buster, but don't say I didn't warn you. *(Adam gives him a sweet kiss.)*

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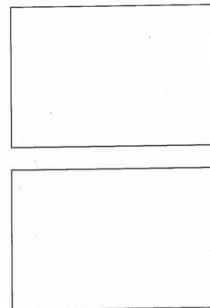
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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:



ADAM. Why would I need Jesus to save me when you already did?

LUKE. What's that thing on your face?

~~ADAM. What thing?~~

~~LUKE. That line thing.~~

~~ADAM. It's still there. (Adam stops everything and waves the mirror.)~~

~~LUKE. What is it?~~

~~ADAM. A bed crease. I woke up with the fucking thing like five hours ago.~~

~~LUKE. Go!~~

~~ADAM. Well that didn't happen in my dinner. I'd wake up, and an hour later my face would spring back to normal. I've had this goddamn thing on my face for half a day now. (Adam looks up.) It's not funny, Comedians, you'll look back, even fifteen years from now, when you've moved on to someone else.~~

~~LUKE. Someone more age appropriate.~~

~~ADAM. Yes ... And you'll get a crease that takes half a day to go away and your heart will break for me.~~

~~LUKE. And where will you be when that happens?~~

~~ADAM. Back. (Adam throws some more stuff into the bag.) Wrong. Wrong. Wrong. (He collapses dramatically on the couch.) Please submit me for one of those makeover shows. I am begging you. (Luke pulls the sweater we've seen Adam wearing in the waiting room scenes out of the pile.)~~

LUKE. Here, wear this. You always look so handsome in periwinkle.

ADAM. Thanks. *(He helps Adam pull it on.)* I can't believe I'm going to this thing.

LUKE. It's just a reunion, babe. What's the big deal?

ADAM. What's the big deal?

LUKE. Oh, my God. You just vamped. You haven't done that in ages. You must really be freaked out.

ADAM. It's just ... This is the first time I'm going back as a teacher. Before, I was a writer. Not a very successful one, but still ... It just feels like a bit of a disappointment, that's all ... Like I've let the home team down.

~~LUKE. You're gonna look ten years younger than all of them.~~

~~ADAM. My body maybe, but not the rest of me. I've got lines and creases. My hair's dry. It doesn't shine anymore. It's like someone took my head off and stuck it on a young man's torso. It's miraculous.~~

LUKE. Would you stop.

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Blocking:

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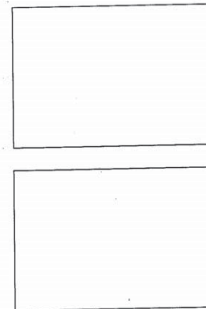
22

Props ENT/EXT:

1 periwinkle sweater

2 duffel

Stage Pics:



ADAM. I should either stop with the treadmill, and let myself go completely, or cash in my IRA and get a face, brow and a neck lift.

LUKE. You don't need a neck lift. *(Adam glares at him playfully as he zips up his bag.)*

ADAM. Okay, I'm outta here.

LUKE. Will you crack my back before you go?

ADAM. I don't like cracking.

LUKE. I bet the cute new stock boy at the candle shop does.

ADAM. You want it cracked or broken? *(Adam pushes Luke down on the couch. Luke puts his head in Adam's lap, and Adam starts cracking.)*

LUKE. No, not like that ... Yeah ... A little higher. *(Adam spots something.)*

ADAM. Is that a gray hair?

LUKE. Where?

ADAM. It is! Oh, my God! Thank you, Jesus! *(Luke tries to break free, but Adam starts tickling him. The playful wrestling eventually subsides, until they're lying on top of each other, out of breath and totally in love.)* I don't want to go. *(Luke wraps his arms around Adam.)*

LUKE. I love you.

ADAM. I know you do.

LUKE. *(Sensing hesitation.)* But?

ADAM. *(Sheepish.)* I want you to love me more than Him. *(Luke grins.)* I'm serious. *(The grin disappears.)*

LUKE. I know you are. *(Luke pushes Adam off. They both sit up, on opposite sides of the couch. The divide between them, once again, seemingly insurmountable. They sit there in silence for a moment.)*

ADAM. Did you ever think that maybe you were the crazy one?

LUKE. Not really, no ... Once, maybe ... for a moment ... but then, you know ... *(Some muffled music from the apartment above.)*

ADAM. The NYU kids are back ... From summer.

LUKE. Yeah.

ADAM. How long's your brother been at Georgia Tech? He's a sophomore now, right?

LUKE. Uh-huh.

ADAM. *(An epiphany.)* It's never gonna change, is it? *(A beat.)*

LUKE. I'm not sure. *(They sit there a minute longer, one looking more miserable than the other, until Adam rises, grabs his weekend bag, and walks to the door.)*

ADAM. I don't think I can do this anymore. *(And with that, he walks out the door, leaving Luke sitting there as the NYU kids grow louder.)*

68

Blocking:

1 D x SL w/ PL

2 M lays [] D x M

3 D [] x

4 D x EXT SL

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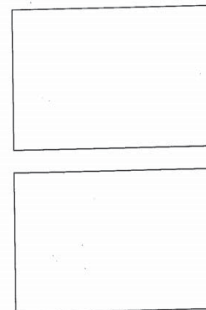
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Props ENT/EXT:

1 duffel

2

Stage Pics:



Scene 8

The waiting room. Brandon and Holly sit side by side. The mood is somber, reverent.

HOLLY: Have you ever sat shiva, Brandon?

BRANDON: No.

HOLLY: Wonder if this is what it feels like.

BRANDON: I'm not even really sure what shiva is.

HOLLY: Me neither. (Arlene and Butch enter. Adam's not far behind. Arlene walks to the couch and sits next to Holly. She has a certain peace about her. Butch doesn't. Holly looks at Adam. He seems miles away.)

ARLENE: So ... That's it. He's ... It's ... over. (Arlene takes hold of Holly's hand.) I keep thinking about that play Luke was in, Brandon. That *Our Town*. Little images keep popping into my head. An ice cream parlor. Two giant step ladders. A cemetery made of chairs. I remember there wasn't much scenery to speak of, but somehow they made you see everything.

HOLLY: It was a beautiful production.

ARLENE: Yes, it was. (A long silence.) But I can't quite remember what it was about. (Holly and Brandon exchange a glance.)

HOLLY: Well, there was this girl in a small New England town.

ARLENE: Back in the olden days, right. I remember that.

HOLLY: Uh-huh. And she dies. Gets consumption, or dies in childbirth or something, which happened a lot back in those days, I guess, and just ... dies. But she's allowed to go back and revisit one day of her life, and all the people she loved. And she's feeling so much for them. Because she's ... But they don't know she is, and they take her for granted. And each other. And she sees how sad that is ... and was ... even before she died, and she wonders if anyone ever realizes how wonderful life is. How precious. Even as they're living it. (A beat.)

ARLENE: That's right. Now, I remember. (Arlene looks to Butch.) Butch?

BUTCH: They take the organs out before they pull the plug ... I never knew that.

ARLENE: Why don't you come sit with us?

69

BUTCH: Pack it all up in little coolers ... Like they're off to a picnic or something.

ARLENE: Sweetheart?

BUTCH: I can't feel anything, Arlene.

ARLENE: Come here, hon.

BUTCH: My fingers ... My arm ...

ARLENE: Butch ...

BUTCH: They keep it so damn cold in here. How's anyone supposed to ...

ARLENE: Do you want me to get the pastor?

BUTCH: The pastor? No, I don't think I want a pastor right now.

ARLENE: How about a walk then? Maybe we should go for a walk, hon. Just you and me. How about that? (Butch looks down the hallway.)

BUTCH: Another blanket ... He needs another ...

ARLENE: Sweetheart? (He starts towards Luke's room, stopping when he realizes Luke's no longer there. He lingers for a moment, then collapses out of nowhere. Adam is able to catch him before he hits the ground. Everyone is stunned. Butch more so than anyone else. Together, he and Adam look like some sort of strange Pietà. He lays there, completely confused for a moment, then hides his face in Adam's chest and begins to weep. Adam looks at the others, unsure what to do, until, finally, he finds some inspiration for all of them.)

ADAM: Luke wasn't afraid. That's what he told me. He said the place he was going was gonna be so beautiful. He was certain of it. And he knew ... that everyone he loved ... most everyone ... would, one day, be there with him. (Adam's words seem to provide some momentary comfort. Butch slowly pulls himself together, rises to his feet, and stares at him.)

BUTCH: Carl Randolph.

ADAM: Excuse me?

BUTCH: The day I got my books. That's how I know you. Couldn't figure it out at first, but ...

ARLENE: Why don't we get out of here for a little while, Butch? Go for a walk or something. We'll come back and deal with all the ... with everything later.

BUTCH: A drink.

ARLENE: Whatever it takes.

BRANDON: There's a place around the corner.

ARLENE: Around the corner?

BRANDON: I'll show you.

ARLENE: Thank you, Brandon. (Holly hands Brandon his jacket.)

70

Blocking:

1 ASD, BSG

2 KJ, D, T ENT SL

3 TSL, KJSH, DSG

4 T

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Props ENT/EXT:

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Stage Pics:

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Blocking:

1 TV SL, KJ

2 T, H

3 TV SL, TE, D

4 A, H, KJ, T

5 T

6 KJ, T, X, SR

7 KJ, T, H

8 H, X, O, G, coats, X, back

9 H, distribute coats

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Props ENT/EXT:

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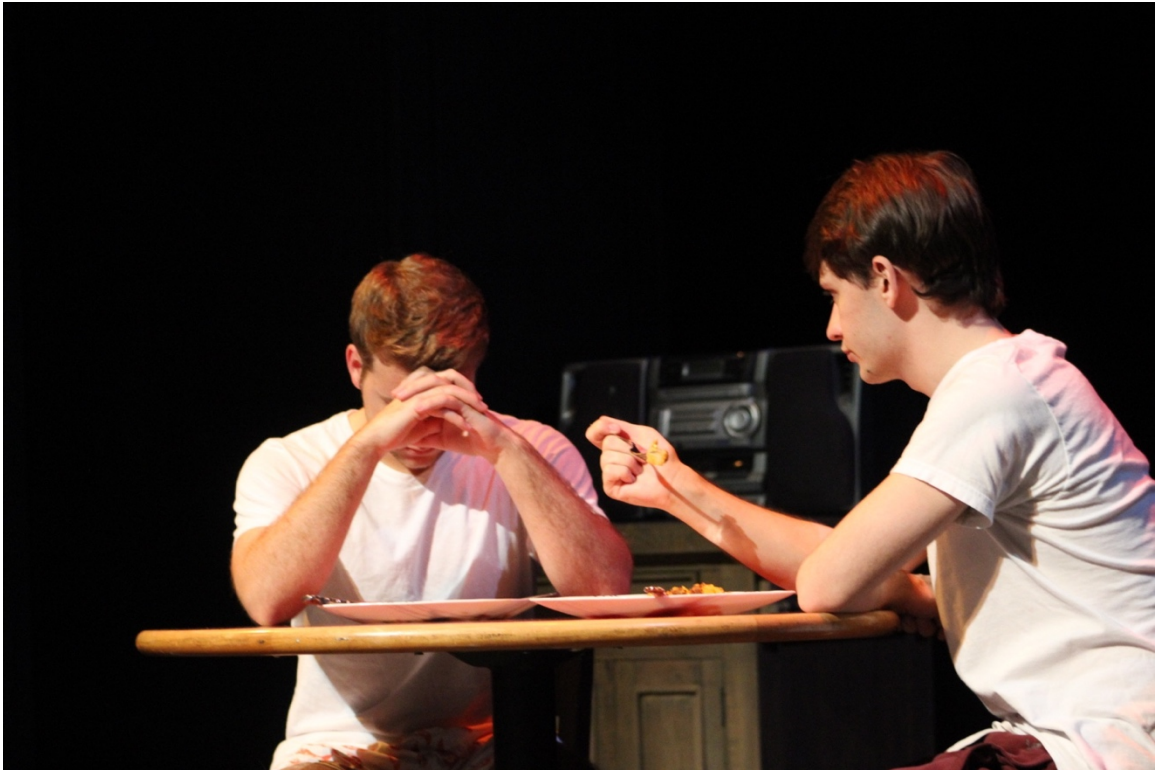
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"I mean, what the heck was I thinking?"



"I just wanted to get my arms around you"



“What was that?”



“Cheers...to your new place.”



“At least I’m trying. At least I’m open to it.”



“Porn.”



“I could probably wipe myself with it today and wake up tomorrow with a clean ass and a clear conscience.”



“You’re on my coat, Butch.”



“Nice cups. Dainty.”



“You don’t have to believe in hell to walk around feeling like you’re gonna burn in it.”



“Eventually, I worked my way into the sandbox with him.”



“He’s not even that extreme as far as all the Jesus stuff goes.”



“Why would I need Jesus to save me when you already did?”



“I don’t want to go.”



“It’s never gonna change, is it?”



“Luke wasn’t afraid.”



“He looked at me.”



“My name’s Adam.”

CHAPTER FOUR

Reflection and Reception

Introduction

Geoffrey Nauffts' *Next Fall* was successfully produced at Baylor University on October 17, 2018 to appreciative audiences. With one invited dress preview and one performance, I was pleased with how many people attended. Response from Baylor Theatre students and faculty was predominantly positive. The chapter that follows explores my own self-reflection on the process, audience and mentor feedback and critiques I received, and final thoughts.

Prep and Expectations

As Chapter 2 exhibits, my pre-production preparations largely consisted of my Hodge play analysis. Through this in-depth examination of *Next Fall*, I was able to more fully grasp the play's themes, character relationships, plot, and structure. I was also able to begin the casting process with a fairly detailed conception of each character.

Unfortunately, I was not able to organize a full-scale audition, but I did reach out to many undergraduate performers and asked them to read for various roles. I selected one small portion of the script per character and met with people individually to have them read character's lines with me. If two actors were available at the same time, I would have them read with one another. I did not get to see much movement in these readings, but it was better than casting blindly. Once I had the list of undergraduates narrowed down, the Advanced Directing Class all cast together. No casts could overlap, so there was some compromise in casting decisions, but ultimately, I was able to cast all my top choices.

After casting, I turned to making cuts within the script. It was hard for me to remove portions of the text, but I was hard on myself—the requirements for the class dictated the performance be roughly 1-hour. I also knew that making the cast memorize new cuts later on would be cruel and difficult.

Because of many different reasons, a primary goal of mine was to make sure the cast was comfortable with the material. The first contributing factor was Baylor itself. *Next Fall*'s content being produced at the world's largest Baptist University could lead to some tension. A second factor was the broad spectrum of religious backgrounds amongst actors. A final area of tension dealt specifically with the actors playing Luke and Adam—one is gay and one is straight.

For me, these tensions meant allowing extra time for table work and making sure all concerns, hesitations, and questions were approached immediately, quickly, and with care. I also knew the short rehearsal period would not allow as much time for character work within rehearsals. I knew the cast would have to dedicate time to their character outside of rehearsal. Finally, again because of time limitations, I knew that I wanted my cast off-book as soon as possible. The best character discoveries, in my experience, happen when the script is out of actors' hands.

Process

I began the rehearsal process with three days of table-work. The first rehearsal was a read-through of the cut script. Despite my merciless edits, it still appeared to be over the time limit. Over the course of the rehearsal process I would make three more rounds of cuts, always underestimating the play's length. The second and third day of rehearsal was discussion of character, relationship, and themes of the play. I specifically had the actors think about and explore their characters.

After the three days of table work, we began blocking rehearsals, the portion of the process in which movement and traffic patterns are determined. I basically blocked scene by scene in order. Many scenes took longer than anticipated because there was more stage action than anticipated. Ultimately, I would have liked time dedicated to blocking—sometimes it felt rushed. We skipped over the intimacy moments between Adam and Luke with plans to focus on those later.

Once the blocking was in place, we had a stumble-through of the show for my faculty advisor. That way, he was able to see the rough, but entire production to give feedback and notes.

After the stumble through, we began working rehearsals. I went back and focused on scenes more in depth, specifically character choices and relationships. This was when I spent nearly a whole rehearsal focused on intimacy. I wanted to make sure I dedicated a good amount of time to those scenes so that both actors were comfortable with it. I had the cast off-book on a rolling basis. If we looked at three scenes in one rehearsal, they would only need to be memorized for those three scenes. Despite only needing to be off-book in waves, memorization was a struggle for all the actors. Another struggle was incorporating transitions into the scenes, especially with limited cast, crew, time, and lighting instruments. Another final realization during these working rehearsals was that there are a lot of props and set pieces in the show that were difficult to acquire and work with.

After a much shorter rehearsal process than I would have liked, it was time for technical rehearsals. I was only allowed three technical rehearsals and would have liked many more. Tech rehearsals were when we added all run crew members, lighting, sound, and costumes. Our first rehearsal was Cue-to-cue of Act 1 where we first ran through all technical aspects. We had to go back and run through many things over and over again to

make sure the technical aspects would run smoothly. The second tech rehearsal we continued our stop-and-start run of Act 2. Before our final rehearsal, many sound and light cues had to be altered. Our final tech rehearsal was a full run of the show like it would be in performance. There were many tech elements that were still fairly shaky, but we had no more time to perfect them. I was both confident and nervous heading into the performance.

Reflection

The performance was a success. There were a few technical errors, but none too glaring or detrimental. I received both critical and complimentary feedback.

The most frequent criticism was about the transitions. I received feedback that they were fairly slow, a bit awkward, and stopped the momentum of some scenes. Going into the performance, I knew I wasn't fully happy with the transitions either. While some transition issues were out of my control, I learned from this weakness that they are often just as important as the scenes themselves. Not only should they link scenes in a way that doesn't hinder the flow of the narrative, but they themselves can be storytelling moments. Transitions are great moments to examine a character's inner life, continue the previous scene's action, or provide context for a subsequent scene. They offer the director moments of nuance to the story, outside of the already written dialogue. In retrospect, I realize I missed out on a lot by not giving transitions proper attention and I know I will focus on them much more in the future.

Another more minor critique had to do with casting, especially the character of Adam. Many commented that the actor's more frenetic energy did not translate well to the calm, collected energy of Adam. While the actor came a long way during the rehearsal process, some remarked he simply didn't come far enough.

Conversely, one main praise I received was the casting. While some commented the actor playing Adam didn't reach the character's full potential, some were pleased with how well he embodied a character so different from himself. Many praised the actor playing Arlene, saying this was the perfect role for her or that it was the best acting they had seen from her. Many people were also impressed with the actor playing Butch, saying his characterization and honesty was better than anything he had done previously. Overall, the feedback I received indicated that the casting and performances were perhaps the most successful part of the production.

Another successful part was the sound design. I worked closely with my sound designer to incorporate music seamlessly into the story. I created a playlist and my designer chose the music that fit the tone of the scene the best. Then we worked to have the music arise naturally in the scenes—actor's listening to their headphones, playing a CD, or noise coming from the apartment above. Even though the scene transitions seemed a bit jarring at times, the music helped to keep the audience engaged in the mood and the story.

Reception

Generally, the reception seemed to be very positive. The audience was moved by the story and many came to me after the performance, eyes red from crying. The story's message and emotional journey seemed to affect most audience members. Many people commented on the content and that it was an important story that needed to be told. Many of my LGBTQ friends were grateful to see such a moving and authentic representation of a queer relationship when usually their voices are underrepresented.

I did receive some unenthusiastic responses, however. A few people approached me, not commenting on the specific production, but rather the content. A few of my religious friends felt as if the play represented Christians in a bad way. Specifically, they

felt that Luke, the character who claims Christianity, portrayed the Christian faith in a warped and problematic way.

This reception was unexpected, especially considering how the play was received in New York. I had the opportunity to talk to the playwright, Geoffrey Nauffts, about his play, writing process, and production experience. The most interesting part was when he talked about the play's premiere—New York audiences had the exact opposite reaction compared to Baylor's audiences. Nauffts said he received feedback that there was excessive evenhandedness in dealing with the Christian character. Many people, he recalls, thought Nauffts extended too much grace toward Christianity. Comparatively, these two negative reactions are interesting to note, although they seem to say more about the audiences than they do the play's content.

Conclusion

Regardless of critical feedback, I believe that I led and directed the best show I was able to. I was excited to realize my artistic vision with thoughtful actors and a hard-working stage manager. Despite limitations on budget, time, resources, and crew, I sat in the audience during the final performance incredibly proud of what I was able to accomplish. The conversations that followed were just icing on the cake.

While I'm not one to fixate on audience reaction or opinions, I had one conversation with a friend that encouraged me. He was wrestling with the portrayal of Christianity along with the play's stance on homosexuality. We had an incredibly meaningful conversation about the play's content and by the end, both of us had been edified and challenged by each other's comments. In this conversation, ideas like 'activating the conscious', 'enhancing the understanding', and 'sharpening the vision' became fully realized for me. I hoped my production of *Next Fall* would do those things, but this conversation allowed them to

literally unfold before me. Even though we both still left with our differences in thought, Our reflective and thoughtful conversation encouraged me in knowing that these differences are not irreconcilable.

I wanted to put on a show that had the potential to “sharpen the vision, quicken the intellect, preserve the memory, activate the conscience, enhance the understanding, and refresh the language.”¹ After having this conversation with my friend, I know I accomplished that goal.

¹ Turner, 78

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Brief Abstracts of the Nine Plays

Embracing

Embracing follows two friends and roommates, Ben and Traci. Both navigate their shifting relationship with faith as Ben journeys through the process of coming out as gay.

Pertinent Characters

- Ben – protagonist, Traci’s roommate, gay
- Traci – antagonist, Ben’s roommate, conservative Christian

Next Fall

Next Fall’s main action takes place in a hospital. Luke is in a coma after having been in a car wreck. This leads those that care about him to gather together—some meeting for the first time. Interspersed with the action happening in the waiting room are flashbacks recounting the progression of Luke and Adam’s five-year relationship. Both Luke and Adam in the flashbacks, and Luke’s parents in the present have trouble reconciling faith with a same-sex relationship.

Pertinent Characters

- Adam – protagonist, Luke’s boyfriend of five years, atheist
- Luke – antagonist, in a coma, Adam’s boyfriend, Christian
- Butch – Luke’s dad, conservative Christian
- Arlene – Luke’s mom, conservative Christian
- Holly – Friend of Adam and Luke

- Brandon – Friend of Luke’s, gay

Love the Sinner

Love the Sinner begins when Anglican clergy gather at an African conference determining whether or not to affirm homosexuality within the church. One member of conference, Michael, has sex with African hotel porter, Joseph, and almost is discovered. When Joseph comes to America seeking refuge, Michael doesn’t want to help him for fear of his secret coming out. Michael sticks Joseph in the basement of his church hoping his problem will go away.

Pertinent Characters

- Stephen – British Anglican clergyman
- Daniel – British Anglican secretary
- Michael – British Anglican layman
- Joseph – young gay African hotel porter, British immigrant

Passion Play

Passion Play follows three different towns in different times and places as the community gathers together to perform a play depicting the Passion of Christ. The play is decisively separated into three segments: Part One in an English town during the Elizabethan era, Part Two in a German town set during Hitler’s regime, at Part Three in contemporary South Dakota.

Corpus Christi

Corpus Christi begins with all the actors coming on stage and explaining that they are going to tell the story of Jesus in their own way. Their retelling takes place in Corpus

Christi Texas in the 1950s with Jesus, called Joshua, and his disciples as a group of gay men. Their storytelling progresses through Joshua's birth and childhood, but mainly focuses on the calling of his disciples, ministry, and passion.

Pertinent Characters

- Joshua – Jesus
- Phillip – prostitute with AIDS that Joshua calls to be his disciple

Bare

Bare takes place at a Catholic high school where Peter and Jason try and hide their relationship. Peter is more comfortable with it than Jason and wants to start telling people. When Peter tells his mom and it doesn't go over well, Sister Chantelle, one of the teachers at the high school, is there to comfort Peter. Jason tries to seek comfort with the Priest, finds none, and ultimately ends up killing himself.

Pertinent Characters

- Peter – Jason's boyfriend
- Jason – Peter's boyfriend, kills himself
- Sister Chantelle – teacher and nun
- Priest – Father that Jason goes to for comfort

High

Father Delpapp assigns drug addict Cody to the care of Sister Connolly, much to her chagrin. Their partnership toward sobriety is rocky, but helpful for Cody. Ultimately, much to Sister Connolly's devastation, Cody overdoses and dies.

Pertinent Characters

- Cody – drug addict, gay
- Sister Connolly – nun, acts as Cody’s sponsor
- Father Delpapp – priest in charge of the church’s sobriety program

Lilies

Lilies begins with Bishop Bilodeau visiting Simon’s prison cell. The inmates act out the story of their childhood and what lead to his imprisonment. The story recounts that Bishop Bilodeau and Simon were part of a gay love triangle, and that the bishop was responsible for the death of Simon’s partner, Vallier de Tilly, many years ago. Since then, Bilodeau has passionately condemned homosexuality.

Pertinent Characters

- Bishop Bilodeau – Simon’s childhood friend, killed Vallier

In Gabriel’s Kitchen

In Gabriel’s Kitchen centers on Gabriel coming to terms with his sexuality and eventually telling his family. They do not take it well and ultimately Gabriel ends up committing suicide.

Pertinent Characters

- Gabriel – coming to terms with his sexuality
- Concetta – Gabriel’s mother, Catholic
- Marco – Gabriel’s brother, Catholic

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