

Bottle of Scotch

**By:
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Cast of Characters

MORGAN (She/Her): Mid-to-Late 20's, the oldest child

TAYLOR (He/Him): Early-to-Mid 20's, the middle child

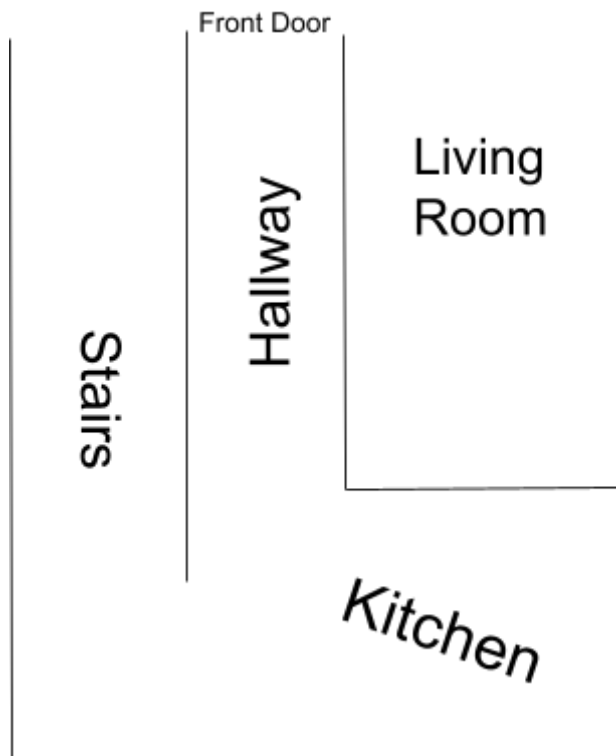
ALEX (He/Him): Late Teens-to-Early 20's, the youngest child

CYNTHIA (She/Her): Late 40's-to-Early 50's, the mother

GABRIEL (He/Him): Late 50's-to-Early 60's, the father

Setting

A kitchen sits stage left, a hallway center stage that leads to the entrance to the house upstage, and a staircase stage right of the hallway. Directly behind the kitchen is the family living room, we probably can't see it since the kitchen wall blocks it, but maybe we can. There's a small light that sits above the kitchen table. The kitchen has withstood the test of time. The kitchen space consists of old styled tile flooring, pine wood cabinets, and a fridge with "ABC" magnets that hold family photos. The hallway has wooden flooring, plain colored walls, and wooden trim that matches the floors. The staircase is something out of a *Southern Living Magazine* from the 80's, it's very old and very squeaky. When people walk on the staircase it's almost alive with moans that could be thought of as ghosts if you didn't know any better. All that is heard is the low hum of the fridge and the wind whistling through the drafty windows. A full bottle of scotch sits at the top of the fridge. The set's layout should look something like this:



Playwright's Notes

Scenes don't really exist in this play, the idea is to move seamlessly through one moment to next while the lights slowly fade as the sun sets and then slowly come up as it rises. Perhaps the lights inside the house get brighter as the sun sets and dimmer as it rises. If you don't have running water then just use sound effects or maybe even there's a pitcher in the sink to use. Or maybe there's a tub of water where dishes just sit and get washed in the entire show! You can rotate the set however you please, however, the staircase is very important to be seen so do with that what you will. As you will learn, gender is important in this play and the casting should reflect that. Lastly, feel free to play with what is personal to you when staging this play. For example, if the actor playing CYNTHIA has a recipe for vegetable soup, use the ingredients for that recipe instead of the one I wrote in.

Slashes (/) indicate overlap in dialogue, while dashes (-) indicate a full stop. An ellipses (...) signifies a character's speech trailing off.

Silence is a very important part in this play. If there is a signified beat then take no longer than five seconds for that moment. If there is a signified silence, however, please take at least fifteen seconds to even a minute if it feels right. The exploration of silence and what it means to sit with your feelings is significant. Of course, if it's not working then find your rhythms. But, I encourage you to think of the times when you personally have a lot to think about after someone says something life changing. How long do you need before you respond?

The card game that is played in the beginning is Canasta, it's a card game that was taught to me by my family. Please do look up the rules for they can be fairly complex even though MORGAN and CYNTHIA hardly get into the game. A good website is canasta101.com, their rules are easy to understand. I will say, my family has an extra rule that is in the play which is where if you deal exactly the right amount of cards you receive an extra 100 points. If your family plays this game, maybe you can add your own house rules!

Thank you for reading.

Act 1

(Morning. CYNTHIA is cleaning the kitchen table as she waits for someone. She has dusted, wiped, and bleached everything at least once or twice. We watch her meticulously move through the kitchen with surgical-like cleaning precision. The only thing that she doesn't touch is the Bottle of Scotch that sits on top of the fridge. This goes on for a while until we notice that this is a ritual spawned through anxiety. CYNTHIA is wearing nice looking pants, but not slacks. A nice shirt, but not something with buttons. Her hair is up in a clip or a bun of some-sort. She has on house slippers and jewelry which is of sentimental value that she never takes off. These items of jewelry may include a wedding ring, a charm bracelet, diamond earring studs, and a locket around her neck that holds a picture of her family. There's a subtle knock at the door. CYNTHIA then responds, her voice is calm yet assertive. It's a voice that belongs to a caregiver for many years, after all she is the matriarch of the family.)

CYNTHIA

(Still cleaning the kitchen)

Come in, it's open

(MORGAN walks in, she is wearing wide-leg jeans with comfortable tennis shoes. She hides her torso with an oversized hoodie. Her hair is up in a ponytail while she wears a baseball cap. Trails behind is her suitcase. Big enough for about a week's stay. The suitcase should make a repetitive sound as she moves down the hall.)

MORGAN

Hey Mom.

(CYNTHIA finally breaks away from cleaning after hearing her voice)

CYNTHIA

I thought you weren't coming till later. If I knew you were coming early, I would've waited to clean.

MORGAN

That's why I came early.

CYNTHIA

I should've known... You were always a Momma's boy.

(CYNTHIA pats MORGAN'S hand that's resting on the table. It's almost as if the word "boy" took the air out of MORGAN'S lungs. CYNTHIA doesn't notice anything's wrong.)

Well, your room is the same as you left it.

(CYNTHIA gives MORGAN a kiss on the forehead, and moves to the kitchen to start making dinner. She starts making homemade soup for a family of five.)

Dad's upstairs asleep, try not to wake him as you're bringing your suitcase up.

(MORGAN stays seated, almost frozen, silence fills the air as CYNTHIA starts to cut up some celery)

Will vegetable soup be okay for dinner tonight?

(No answer from MORGAN. CYNTHIA is waiting for a response, even though there is only one option)

I asked you a question, Morgan.

MORGAN

Sorry

Beat

That's fine with me

(CYNTHIA lets silence fill the air while she continues to cook, we watch her. She has the same precision as she did when she cleaned. Maybe MORGAN takes out her phone, maybe she just takes everything in. She then makes a louder than average chop)

CYNTHIA

So! Why don't you take your suitcase up and get unpacked, whenever you're done come down and help me with dinner.

MORGAN

Will do. Love you.

(MORGAN then heads upstairs with her suitcase, as CYNTHIA continues to cook. We watch CYNTHIA get out the rest of the vegetables from the fridge (*this could include carrots, onions, fresh garlic, peas, corn, green beans, and other vegetables that could be in your mother's vegetable soup. Be specific for the actor playing CYNTHIA so it's personal to her when she makes this soup*), the generations old cooking pot, two-three large bottles of V8 juice (*or tomato sauce, my family just uses V8 juice*), all the spices she needs, and anything else imaginable for the generational old veggie soup. After CYNTHIA gets most of the things out, down comes MORGAN. Ready to help cook her favorite vegetable soup.)

CYNTHIA

(Gesturing over for MORGAN to help)

So, have you heard from your brothers at all? Do you know when they're coming?

MORGAN

I've talked to Taylor recently.

(Takes over CYNTHIA's job of cooking the food. MORGAN holds the knife in a more delicate fashion than CYNTHIA. Her cuts are not as forceful, making a conscious effort to be quiet. CYNTHIA watches MORGAN through the sides of her eyes and the back of her head like a Mother does, correcting every mistake MORGAN makes without saying a word)

CYNTHIA

What about Alex?

MORGAN

I haven't talked to him in a while

CYNTHIA

And why's that?

MORGAN

I've been busy

CYNTHIA

But you're not too busy to talk to Taylor?

Beat

CYNTHIA

Well... Did Taylor say when he was coming in?

MORGAN

No, he didn't mention it.

CYNTHIA

Well, what if you just guessed?

MORGAN

I don't know Mom, maybe tomorrow? Maybe tonight? You never really know with Taylor.

(Starts to cook with more force)

Do you know when Alex is coming in?

CYNTHIA

Hopefully soon. I don't know how much longer your father has.

MORGAN

Is it that bad?

CYNTHIA

Well, the doctors say it'll be soon but, I've seen cases way worse than his and they all lasted months even years. So, I don't really know.

(MORGAN goes back to cooking while CYNTHIA fiddles with either her jewelry or whatever is on the table. CYNTHIA looks around the kitchen taking in the memories that are stored within the walls. She looks at the pictures on the fridge and walks over to get one of them. She studies it, you hear the sounds of a gas stove, the fridge, and the beginning of night. *(This could be frogs, the subtle sound of bugs, deer rustling in the tall grass, anything you associate with "night")* All the sounds become slightly overwhelming until)

Do you remember this day?

(Shows MORGAN the picture. MORGAN briefly glances at it while cooking is still her number one priority)

MORGAN

You know my memory's not the best

CYNTHIA

(Pushes against MORGAN a little)

Oh, come on

(Trying to jog MORGAN's memory)

You *have* to remember this, just look... please.

(Waiting for MORGAN to answer but gets nothing in return.)

Alex was about three or four, Taylor was about eight, and you were/

MORGAN

/I was ten.

CYNTHIA

/ten! Yes!.

It was a fun day wasn't it? Alex went on the swing for the first time, Taylor was chasing lizards, and you were... I actually don't remember what you were doing.

MORGAN

That's because Dad and I left to get ice-cream while you were playing with them.

CYNTHIA

That's right, you and Dad went on a walk and all of a sudden came back with ice-cream, I was so confused on where that ice-cream came from. I had no idea that there was a place so close to the park.

MORGAN

It was good ice-cream. I think I got pistachio and Dad got vanilla...

(stops for a moment)

Dad always gets vanilla. I've never seen him eat anything other than vanilla

CYNTHIA

(Noticing MORGAN stopped cooking)

Here, let me finish this.

(Goes to grab the knife on the cutting board but gets stopped by MORGAN)

MORGAN

(Stopping CYNTHIA, breaking out of the mini trance she fell into)

No Mom, it's fine. I'm almost done.

CYNTHIA

(Backing off)

Okay

(CYNTHIA places the picture where MORGAN can still see it. The sounds of the kitchen and night fill the air again. This time a little louder than before. We hear the last *plop* of the veggies going into the soup and the lid enclosing the food casket to cook. MORGAN)

MORGAN

Finished

CYNTHIA

Thank you for that. It means a lot to me that you're willing to help your aging mother. Come sit. I wanna know what's going on in your life. I miss our talks.

MORGAN

I don't know Mom, I'm really tired. I just drove about eight hours and I just kinda want to get to sleep.

CYNTHIA

So, you're gonna come all this way early in the morning, do all the cooking and not even let me fix you breakfast? Not to mention to leave me tending the soup all by myself... waiting to see if either of your brothers are going to show-

MORGAN

Okay

(Goes and sits next to CYNTHIA)

So, what do you wanna talk about?

CYNTHIA

Oh, I don't know.

(Beat)

Whatever you want to talk about.

MORGAN

You know I'm not good at picking a topic.

CYNTHIA

Neither am I

MORGAN

I know you want to ask me something

CYNTHIA

I don't know

MORGAN

It's fine, ask whatever you want

CYNTHIA

Since you insist... How's work going?

MORGAN

(Relieved it's nothing more serious)

Oh, it's fine. Fairly boring. Trying to sell women clothes they don't need is always an experience.

CYNTHIA

I wish you were doing more than just working in retail. You have so much potential, you always did great in math and science. Yet you're selling clothes eight hours away from us, why did you even move there to begin with?

MORGAN

Mom, you know I don't want to talk about this.

CYNTHIA

Okay.

(The sounds of bubbling soup, the hum of a fridge, and night invade our ears again. CYNTHIA gets up to stir and check on the soup. She then moves to a drawer nearby to get out a deck of playing cards.)

Here, let's play Canasta

MORGAN

Sure, I'll keep score

CYNTHIA

(Grabs a pen and notepad from the same drawer and moves to the table)

You always do

(Slides the notepad and pen over to MORGAN. She begins to write, setting up the time-honored tradition of cards.)

I'll deal first

(Starts to shuffle like a poker dealer)

I always forget, how many cards do I deal out?

MORGAN

Fifteen

CYNTHIA

And I get 100 extra points for dealing exact?

(MORGAN makes a sound of confirmation, or maybe a word, CYNTHIA then sets the pile down in the center of the table and starts to eye-up the deck of cards.)

CYNTHIA

At least I remembered something

(Picks up what she believes is a total of thirty cards and deals. She starts to count to herself while dealing. Going back and forth with her numbers)

One... one. Two... two. Three... three.

(Continuing on this way until she hits fifteen. She also notices that she still has cards left in her hand. Let's a little sigh and places the unused cards back on the deck)

No extra hundred for me.

MORGAN

Maybe you'll get it next time.

(They both start to pick up their cards, MORGAN with a more delicate hand while CYNTHIA picks up her hand as she has for the past decades... deliberately)

Got one

(Places a red three down in front of her. She then quickly finishes putting her hand together. If MORGAN doesn't have any red three's then the previous line is cut and the following line is replaced with "Got any red threes?")

Do you have any?

CYNTHIA

(If CYNTHIA does have a red three then the following line is replaced with "My luck never fails" and perhaps CYNTHIA and MORGAN can banter about who gets more red three's depending on who did. The back and forth of the red three's will always be slightly improvised because it depends what got dealt to them)

Sadly not

(MORGAN draws from the top of the pile and places that card in her hand. CYNTHIA then flips off the new top card and the game commences. Heard are the sounds of cards flipping, soup bubbling, and night air. After a move or two CYNTHIA says)

So, are you seeing anyone right now?

MORGAN

No, why do you ask?

CYNTHIA

I just want to know if someone's taking care of you

MORGAN

I do have friends you know

CYNTHIA

I know but...

MORGAN

What?

Nothing
CYNTHIA

You can ask me anything
MORGAN

Don't you want kids?
CYNTHIA

I don't know, maybe one day
MORGAN

Beat
Do you wanna be a Grandmother?
CYNTHIA

It would be nice
MORGAN

I didn't realize you wanted grandkids
CYNTHIA

I mean, there's plenty of time.
MORGAN

You're right.
Beat
You know I don't need to be married to have kids right, maybe I'll just adopt on my own one day.
CYNTHIA

You can't raise a family by yourself. The whole point of a family is to have a mother, a father, and children... A single Dad isn't a good look.
MORGAN

I don't think that's exactly the whole point of a family.
CYNTHIA

Maybe not... but you should have a wife and then kids... not the other way around... anyways, I'm sure Alex will have kids one day
MORGAN

What makes you say that?
CYNTHIA

I just know
MORGAN

But *how* do you know? Because in my mind Alex is just a kid never wanting to grow up. If anything he might have a kid by accident-
CYNTHIA

You shouldn't say that about your brother. Why would you even think that?

MORGAN

I just know

CYNTHIA

Besides your brothers, you find someone to take care of you even if you don't want kids

MORGAN

Why? I don't need anyone to take care of me, I can do that myself

CYNTHIA

But don't you want that? Someone to come to at night? Someone to share your day with?

MORGAN

But I have that with my friends, how does making it romantic make it more desirable? I have people that love and care about me and want to know what happened to me during the day. They love me just as much if not more than a *lover* could.

CYNTHIA

Maybe I just don't understand...

MORGAN

I know this just comes from a place of worry but you don't need to do that to yourself. I'm okay. You have enough to worry about with Dad and beavis and butthead coming in today.

CYNTHIA

You're right... and I thought you stopped calling them that a long time ago.

MORGAN

I thought it would make you laugh a little

CYNTHIA

It did

MORGAN

And I love you... but

(MORGAN lays down a concealed of any set of cards (*this can be faked by just taking 7 cards together and putting them down in a pile with any spade or club on top*) and discards a black three, if MORGAN doesn't have a black three in her hand the CYNTHIA's next line changes to just "Aren't you lucky?")

CYNTHIA

Look at you, a concealed and a black three. Aren't you lucky?

MORGAN

It's not luck when you have skill

(They both chuckle at the sarcastic remark like old times, they continue to play for a few rounds and then MORGAN breaks the silence)

MORGAN

I bet the soups done, I'm gonna go check

(starts to get up)

CYNTHIA

Make sure you double check because you've been known to undercook the vegetables in the past.

(MORGAN sits back down)

MORGAN

Well, why don't you go check it then.

CYNTHIA

(Looking at her hand and playing the game)

No, if you say they're done then they must be done.

MORGAN

(Contemplating whether to keep playing)

You know, it's been a long night. I don't think I can finish the game.

(MORGAN starts to get up)

CYNTHIA

(Gesturing to MORGAN)

Don't go to lay down yet. You haven't eaten. Please just stay down here with me a little longer.

Let me get you some breakfast

(CYNTHIA gets up to go and makes a bowl of yogurt and fruit for herself and MORGAN. While CYNTHIA is making the bowls MORGAN puts the cards away)

MORGAN

(While packing the cards away)

Sorry I couldn't finish the game.

CYNTHIA

(Bringing the bowl over, with a spoon already in it)

It's okay, I'm just glad you're here early. You don't know how much it means to me.

(Sets the yogurt down in front of MORGAN)

Here. Eat.

(Gives MORGAN a slight shoulder rub and moves to her chair and soup)

MORGAN

Thanks Mom

MORGAN

Aren't you going to eat? I'm sure you're hungry, worrying can take it out of you.

CYNTHIA

I just don't really have an appetite anymore

MORGAN

At least try

CYNTHIA

I already ate breakfast earlier

MORGAN

Really?

CYNTHIA

Promise

MORGAN

What'd you have?

CYNTHIA

Just some eggs and toast

MORGAN

Well, just eat half of the yogurt

(Tries to push the bowl over to CYNTHIA)

I don't want the rest

CYNTHIA

No, I'm fine, I promise.

(Pushes it back)

You need to eat more than me.

MORGAN

I'm not going to eat the rest... please

(Pushes back one more time)

CYNTHIA

No. If you're not going to eat it then I'll just put it away

I'll clean it up, don't-

MORGAN

I got it.

CYNTHIA

(Grabs the bowl and just throws it in the trash, the bowl shatters in the trash can)

MORGAN

Mom... why'd you do that?

CYNTHIA

I don't know... I'm going to check on your father. Can you please take the trash out?

(Starts to go upstairs)

MORGAN

Sure... love you.

(CYNTHIA leaves upstairs and MORGAN then takes the trash out the front door and comes back in and puts in a new trash bag. She then stirs the soup, turns the heat down and heads upstairs. After a beat CYNTHIA comes back down stairs and stirs the soup, checks the trash, and then prepares a protein shake for GABRIEL. CYNTHIA heads back upstairs with the shake. The sun starts to set and MORGAN comes back down and checks the soup. She grabs a spoon and tastes it. Decides to turn it off and starts trying to find some wine in one of the cabinets. Down walks CYNTHIA)

CYNTHIA

Have a good nap?

MORGAN

Yeah... it was nice to sleep in my bed

CYNTHIA

Good

Beat

What are you looking for?

MORGAN

I was looking for something to drink

CYNTHIA

You won't find anything

MORGAN

I didn't know if you had an emergency wine somewhere like you used to

CYNTHIA

I haven't had an emergency wine since you were a kid... but I do have emergency chocolate. Check the drawer next to the stove/

CYNTHIA

No, I'm sure you're right.

Beat

You've just been known to undercook vegetables is all

MORGAN

Then try it, you can just turn it back on if they're not cooked

CYNTHIA

No, I trust you

MORGAN

Okay... well... are you ready to eat?

CYNTHIA

The chocolate didn't ruin your appetite?

MORGAN

No, it was just some chocolate, I'm still hungry for dinner. Don't worry

CYNTHIA

Then let's eat

MORGAN

I'll make the bowls

(MORGAN makes the bowls of soup and brings them to the table.
MORGAN begins to eat the soup with much enjoyment. CYNTHIA just watches while MORGAN eats with the longing eyes of a Mother. Perhaps she's seeing a younger version of MORGAN eating the soup)

Aren't you going to eat? I'm sure you're hungry, I know you haven't eaten since this morning.

CYNTHIA

(Starts to just stir and smell the soup)

How do you know I didn't eat lunch

MORGAN

Because you just told me. I know you Mom.

CYNTHIA

I just... haven't had an appetite since your father got sick.

MORGAN

But Mom... you need to eat, you can't take care of Dad if you're not taking care of yourself first.

CYNTHIA

Just looking at food makes me upset... I look at it and think of how your Dad's only eaten protein shakes for the last year and what it would be like to only be able to eat those horrid things for a year and I just get so violently sick that... I just can't eat anything.

MORGAN

At least try

Beat

For me... please.

(Silence, they both look at each other. Finally, CYNTHIA submits to the soup in front of her. MORGAN watches to see how CYNTHIA likes the soup)

Do you like it?

CYNTHIA

(Only half enjoying the soup)

Could've been cooked longer... some of the veggies are still a little crunchy

MORGAN

Go figure.

Beat

I'm going to bed. I love you, Momma.

(Gives CYNTHIA a kiss on the top of the head and starts to head to up the stairs)

CYNTHIA

Morgan. Don't be like that. I was only kidding.

MORGAN

(Stops on the stairs and sighs)

I know... I'm just tired.

Beat

I love you. Sleep sweet.

CYNTHIA

You too sweetie

(MORGAN heads up the stairs to leave CYNTHIA alone in the kitchen. The sounds of night, bubbling soup, and the fridge fill the air again. CYNTHIA falls back to her ritualistic cleaning habits. Making sure the soup bowls in the sink are clean, the table is wiped down, no soup droplets are left on the counter, the cards and notepads are put away in the correct drawer, and

anything else she did at the start of the play. Once everything is the way it needs to be then she grabs a notepad and pen, one for writing notes not keeping score, and sits at the table. She writes a note to her sons and lets them know that there is soup on the stove for them when they get here. She also lets them know that MORGAN is upstairs asleep and that their rooms are just as they left them. Once she is satisfied with the note, she turns the kitchen light off and heads upstairs)

Beat

(The sound of two people struggling with keys starts to come from the front entrance, a slight sound of their voices in an argument over who's doing it right and who's doing it wrong. In walks ALEX and TAYLOR. ALEX has a short 1920's timeless business haircut while TAYLOR is sporting a mullet, or wolf-cut, or something in that same essence. The two are basically like the north and the south poles, both a pole, but two very different sides of the Earth. ALEX is wearing a university shirt or sweater of some kind, perhaps he has Greek letters on. He also wears basic blue jeans and something like a *Nike* shoe. TAYLOR has a black tank top on with a modern punk-inspired jacket and black jeans. His shoe choice resembles that of *Converse* or maybe *Doc Martins*. TAYLOR may have tattoos, piercings, sunglasses, any other accessories that are associated with the "rock/punk" aesthetic. ALEX would blend in with a crowd of many, TAYLOR would not. TAYLOR carries a black duffle bag that has seen many travels, this can be showcased by different pins on the strap or maybe just the wear and tear of the bag itself. ALEX has a sleek school backpack on him and nothing else.)

TAYLOR

(In a whispered yet aggressive tone)

Shut up, you know Mom's asleep.

ALEX

(Not caring about who's upstairs)

She's probably not, you know she waits up for us when we come back

TAYLOR

But maybe she's asleep this time

(TAYLOR turns on the kitchen light, puts his duffle bag on the kitchen table, sees the note, and reads it aloud for ALEX)

Dear Alex and/or Taylor, I hope you made it home okay. I don't know if you're coming tonight but I made dinner for you. It's vegetable soup. Please be quiet coming in, your Dad's sleeping. Morgan's already here and in his room, there are fresh sheets on your beds. Hope you had a safe trip, I'll see you in the morning. -Mom.

beat

See, I told you she was asleep.

ALEX

You don't *know* that Taylor. You know how she is.

(ALEX has already put his stuff down while TAYLOR was reading the letter, perhaps he's sitting already. No matter the case on where he has wandered to, he goes for the soup now)

Might as well get some soup

(Pulls out one extra-large bowl and starts to ladle it in)

You hungry?

TAYLOR

Maybe, give me a minute, I still feel like I'm driving

ALEX

Your loss

(Pours himself an extra-large serving for his extra-large bowl. Then grabs a spoon and sits down, making a little too much noise)

TAYLOR

Is all that necessary?

(Starts to rummage in his duffle bag)

ALEX

(Takes an extra big slurp of soup)

Yes

(TAYLOR just rolls his eyes and scoffs at ALEX. TAYLOR then pulls out a bottle of whiskey. One small enough that it's easily hideable, but one large enough that he can drink off of it multiple times while he's home. ALEX spies the bottle)

Is *that* necessary?

TAYLOR

Of course.

beat

Where's yours?

(Goes to get a glass for his whiskey, making some clinking noise, he pulls out a beautiful crystal glass and pours himself an extra-large drink)

ALEX

I stopped drinking

TAYLOR

You *stopped*? You sure?

(Waves the glass or bottle in ALEX's face)

ALEX

Yes.

TALYOR

Whatever, it never really agreed with you anyways

(TALYOR returns to his seat, starts to sip on his drink)

ALEX

So, do you want some or not?

TAYLOR

Yeah, I guess so

(ALEX pulls out another bowl and prepares another serving for TAYLOR, the two are silent while ALEX finishes the bowls of soup. He brings over silverware, napkins, and the soup all at one time. He serves TAYLOR like a waiter would for their customer at a restaurant)

Thanks.

ALEX

No problem

(Both of them start to eat their soup. ALEX slurps the soup while TAYLOR barely takes a bite)

Do you like it?

TAYLOR

Eh, it's a little undercooked

ALEX

What do you mean it's *undercooked*? How can soup be undercooked?

TAYLOR

Well, the carrots and celery are a little crunchy.

ALEX

Yeah, it's a little crunchy but that's how soup is supposed to be

TAYLOR

No, soup is supposed to be soft and *mushy*

ALEX

Mushy?! I don't want mush for soup. Soup is supposed to have some umph to it

TAYLOR

What *umph* should soup have?

ALEX

Like *umph!* I don't know

TAYLOR

You're telling me you can't define the umph

ALEX

I can, I just don't want to

TAYLOR

(starts to laugh)

Of course you don't

ALEX

Dude.

TAYLOR

What?

ALEX

Don't laugh at me

TAYLOR

Come on, don't be like this, I'm just poking fun

ALEX

You always poke fun at me

TAYLOR

I don't *always* make fun of you

ALEX

Well, you do it enough

TAYLOR

Okay. I'll stop.

Beat

But you gotta admit that soup shouldn't be crunchy

ALEX

A soup can be crunchy! That's the UMPH!!

(CYNTHIA, dressed in her nightgown, has slowly managed her way down the stairs during the end of the soup argument. She interrupts them with a

calm yet assertive voice. Once CYNTHIA speaks, TAYLOR makes a quick attempt at hiding his glass)

CYNTHIA

Boys. Are we really up this late arguing about soup?

ALEX

Taylor was making fun of me because I like my soup to have some crunch to it

TAYLOR

I wasn't making fun of Alex, I just find it funny the way he describes soup.

CYNTHIA

(Coming all the way down the stairs)

Look. I don't really care about crunchy soup or not crunchy soup, I'm just happy you're both home.

(Gives ALEX a kiss on the forehead, then puts her hands on his shoulders)

How was the drive?

TAYLOR

It was fine, nothing crazy

CYNTHIA

That's good

(Silence)

ALEX

So how's Dad?

CYNTHIA

Oh, I don't feel like getting into it tonight

ALEX

Sure

Beat

CYNTHIA

Well, I'm gonna finally go and get some sleep knowing all my boys are under the same roof.

(Starts to head upstairs)

Taylor, if you don't mind, could you make sure everything's clean before you head up?

TAYLOR

Why me?

CYNTHIA

(As she's heading upstairs)

Because you're drinking

Beat

Goodnight boys

ALEX

'Night Mom

(TAYLOR finishes whatever's left of his drink, pours himself another one)

Shouldn't you save some of that for later this week?

TAYLOR

I'll be fine

(Downs the drink in one gulp)

ALEX

Well! I'm gonna head up

(Starts to get his things together, leaving TAYLOR to do the cleaning)

See you in the morning

(Goes upstairs without saying another word, he's heavy with his steps)

TAYLOR

(Under his breath)

See you in the morning asshat

(Waits a second and looks up the stairs to make sure no-one is watching, pulls out his whiskey and takes one last sip from the bottle, bypassing the glass this time. He then puts the bottle back in his bag, starts cleaning, leaves the soup in the pot on the stove and heads upstairs with his bag. Before he leaves, he makes sure all the lights are off. He walks much more gingerly than ALEX does)

(We all sit in the darkness for a beat, then the squeaks of the stairs start up again. Down walks MORGAN wearing a silk pajama set, something feminine and relaxing. She turns on a light that casts a dim hue over the kitchen, maybe it's the light over the stove. She finally makes herself a bowl of soup and begins to eat. After she eats a few bites, takes out her phone and a pair of headphones and starts to play *Fancy* by Reba McEntire. Maybe we hear it in the audience or maybe MORGAN starts to hum/sing the song, no matter what the song fills the void of silence. After the song settles in her body she gets up and fully cleans everything. She takes out some tupperware to put the soup away in. She cleans and washes everything that's left in the sink, including the soup pot. Once everything is washed, dried, and put away she starts to wipe all the counters down just like CYNTHIA did in the opening scene. This scene should not take longer than the length of Reba's *Fancy*, however, it can take the whole song if needed. Before the song ends the stairs start to creak. Down walks ALEX. He is fully dressed, ready to go somewhere. MORGAN doesn't notice him until he says)

ALEX
What are you wearing?
MORGAN
(startled)
Shit- I didn't know you guys came in
ALEX
And I thought you were asleep
Beat
I guess we're both surprised
MORGAN
Where are you going?
ALEX
Why do you care?
MORGAN
Because I'm your sibling
ALEX
And when did that actually make you care about me?
MORGAN
I've always cared for you
ALEX
Sure...
MORGAN
I was literally there when-
ALEX
Don't bring that up when Mom can hear
MORGAN
She's asleep, she can't hear us.
ALEX
We both know that's a lie. I'm pretty sure she keeps microphones hidden in every part of the house so she can listen back and catch us talking about all our secrets
MORGAN
Mom's not a spy
ALEX
And how do you know that?
MORGAN
Because she's not
ALEX

But what if she lived a completely double life, had an entirely different family, husband, kids, everything. How would you know?

MORGAN

I guess I wouldn't know unless I found out.

ALEX

Exactly, so you actually have no idea if Mom's an undercover spy or not.

MORGAN

Okay... if she *was* an undercover spy... do you think we're the first or second family?

ALEX

What do you mean?

MORGAN

Like... are we the family that she had first? Or are we the cover family? Like, does she only stay with us because her target is the neighbor.

beat

ALEX

Oh... I don't know. I'd like to think we would be the first family.

MORGAN

But how would you know?

(The stairs start creaking again, they sound extra ghost-like this time. MORGAN and ALEX freeze in fear thinking CYNTHIA just heard their conversation. Instead, TAYLOR walks down wearing an oversized band shirt, sweatpants, some kind of slippers. He's carrying his flask. He immediately heads towards the fridge. A bright light fills the room from the fridge)

TAYLOR

What the hell are you talking about?

ALEX

We're debating whether Mom is an undercover spy or not.

TAYLOR

(laughs at the thought)

She's definitely not. If anyone is a spy here it's Dad

ALEX

I mean, yeah... but Dad's almost dead so it can't be him.

Beat

MORGAN

Alex, this was a hypothetical... why did you have to mention the fact-

ALEX

That Dad's dying?

Beat

Because it's true.

Beat

TAYLOR

Yeah but you didn't have to say that

(ALEX's phone buzzes, he checks it)

ALEX

Well, my rides here. See ya in the morning

MORGAN

Where are you going?

ALEX

Answer my question and I'll answer yours.

MORGAN

Shoot.

ALEX

What the hell are you wearing?

Beat

That's what I thought...

(ALEX leaves the house from the front door. TAYLOR finally gets some water out of the fridge and begins to pour himself a glass. We sit in silence while he does this. Once he gets his glass he sits down with MORGAN)

MORGAN

Are you okay?

TAYLOR

Yeah

MORGAN

Are you drunk?

TAYLOR

Yeah

(Takes a sip of his flask)

Want some?

(Offers the flask to MORGAN)

MORGAN

Why not?

(TAYLOR and MORGAN start to pass the flask back and forth)

You know I was looking for wine earlier and forgot that Mom doesn't hide them anymore... all she hides anymore are chocolate bars under oven mitts and in spinach bags

TAYLOR

Spinach bags? Think there's one in the spring mix in the fridge?

MORGAN

Maybe

TAYLOR

Well... let's find out

(checks the lettuce in the fridge and pulls out a bar of chocolate)

Booyah.

(they fall into a brief moment of silence while they share the chocolate and whiskey)

MORGAN

So... what's new?

TAYLOR

Not much, you?

MORGAN

Not much... just figuring it all out...

TAYLOR

That makes two.

MORGAN

Are you still in that band?

TAYLOR

No, we broke up. Jack and Sydney started dating which made Kelly jealous because they've had a crush on Sydney since freshman year of high school and Jack *knew* that but didn't care. And so they started fucking each other up on purpose during rehearsal, we tried to talk it out and that seemed to fix it or whatever for a while but, at the next gig Kelly decided to cut one of Jack's guitar strings before the show which caused Jack to smash his guitar into Kelly's drums and the rest was history.

MORGAN

Yeah... can't really come back from that

TAYLOR

Not at all.

MORGAN

Well... maybe you can go solo. Do you still write?

TAYLOR

Not really, it's been hard since the band broke up and Dad got sick.

MORGAN

Makes sense... Well, are you dating or anything? Hopefully without the instrument destroying

TAYLOR

Where's this coming from? We never talk about dating. Anytime I ever tried to talk to you about girls you just shut me down.

MORGAN

Well... you know why

TAYLOR

I know but... we've just never talked about who we're fucking/

MORGAN

/I didn't ask who you were *fucking* Taylor.

TAYLOR

/Why now?

MORGAN

Mom asked me earlier tonight and I can't shake it. She mentioned she wanted grandkids... I never thought Mom would want to actively feel older

TAYLOR

Maybe she just knows she's going to get bored once Dad goes

MORGAN

Maybe... but she mentioned that she knows Alex will have kids if we don't

TAYLOR

She doesn't think I'm going to get married?

MORGAN

That's basically what she said about both of us
(TAYLOR takes a drink of his flask)

TAYLOR

Bitch...

Beat

MORGAN
So... are you seeing anyone?
TAYLOR
No... no one's interested
MORGAN
I'm sure there's someone interested, you're just not interested in them.
TAYLOR
Well/
MORGAN
See! I knew I was right
TAYLOR
/There's this guy interested in me and I-
MORGAN
Are you gay?
TAYLOR
No. I'm not gay.
MORGAN
Oh.
TAYLOR
Why do you sound disappointed?
MORGAN
I'm not, it just would've been nice.
TAYLOR
Well the thing is, I don't know if I'm straight.
MORGAN
Elaborate.
TAYLOR
It's just, I don't like *anyone*. I try to think back to whenever I've had a crush or wanted to fuck someone and literally nothing comes up.
MORGAN
I mean have you ever like...
TAYLOR
Masterbated?
Beat
Yeah.
MORGAN
Well... what got you going?

TAYLOR

Literally nothing. It wasn't that I was horny, it was just the fact that it felt like I had to pee but it wasn't pee if that makes sense.

MORGAN

Kind of.

TAYLOR

So... what do you think it means?

MORGAN

I don't know, it could mean you're asexual, it could mean you have a serious libido problem that you may want a doctor to look at, or it could mean you haven't found the right person, who knows Tay. I'm no expert.

TAYLOR

Do you think I need to take like... Viagra

MORGAN

Are you having trouble getting hard?

TAYLOR

No...

MORGAN

Then probably not but... Maybe? If you want to? But if I was a betting person... I'd say you're just asexual

(TAYLOR takes a long drink of his flask)

Hey... maybe you should slow down.

(TAYLOR finishes his flask)

TAYLOR

Fuck

MORGAN

Are you okay?

TAYLOR

No.

(TAYLOR quickly stands up, MORGAN stands with him, TAYLOR rushes over to the sink and throws up. MORGAN puts her hand on his back and rubs it. Once he's down she starts to lead him upstairs. She grabs his water on the way past the table)

MORGAN

Let's get you to bed

TAYLOR

I love you sis

MORGAN

I love you too

(They both finish walking upstairs, after a beat MORGAN comes back down stairs and finishes her cleaning ritual, taking extra care of the sink. Once MORGAN is done cleaning she quietly turns off all the lights and delicately walks upstairs in her PJ's. The front door slowly opens and we see ALEX enter, slightly stumbling and goes straight upstairs. Slowly we hear sounds of robins, cardinals, sparrows, and the morning doves fill the house. Dawn is rising in the kitchen with glows of morning light, it's very peaceful through the kitchen windows. It's the next day. Once this new time is established in the space, CYNTHIA makes her way down the stairs with her nightgown and morning robe on, she walks out the front door to briefly grab the morning newspaper and any mail from yesterday. She then comes back into the kitchen with her mail and newspaper, she sets it on the kitchen table in a neat fashion and goes to make a pot of coffee. As the coffee is starting she sits down and looks through the mail, she opens the important ones, sets aside the unnecessary ones. Once she's done with the mail she dissects the newspaper like a surgeon, pulls out each section to reorganize it into something easier to read once she's ready. She then takes in the space around her, she feels the weight of the world and collapses in her chair under it. While she's processing reality an alarm is heard from upstairs. It's startling to CYNTHIA, however, it causes her to collect herself. She then pours herself a cup of coffee, with a splash of cream, then she starts to read the mail and newspaper. As she's reading it down walks MORGAN in a different attire than her PJ's, she's wearing jeans and loose fitting sweatshirt)

MORGAN

Good morning Mom

CYNTHIA

Good morning

MORGAN

(goes to make herself a cup)

Thanks for making coffee

CYNTHIA

No problem, just make sure you leave enough for your brothers incase they want any

(MORGAN nods and makes her coffee, she hunts for the sugar and can't seem to find it)

Sugar is in the cabinet to the right of the fridge

MORGAN

Thanks, you've moved it since last time I was here

CYNTHIA

A lot of stuff is different since the last time you were here

MORGAN

I know

Beat

How's Dad this morning?

CYNTHIA

The same

MORGAN

Do you need me to do anything for him this morning?

CYNTHIA

No, I'll take care of it, I've been doing it for the last couple of years... it's a habit now, wake up, get the mail, make coffee, take care of him, repeat.

MORGAN

Yeah, I guess it would be

(Finishes making her sweet cup of coffee and puts everything back, sits down across from CYNTHIA)

Do you mind if I-

(Gestures to the newspaper)

CYNTHIA

Go ahead, just make sure it's in the same order as it was

MORGAN

Yes Ma'am

(As the two sit in silence down walks TAYLOR wearing a different oversized band shirt, sweatpants, some kind of slippers)

Morning Tay, how are you?

TAYLOR

Fine, still tired. But what's new

CYNTHIA

There's coffee if you want some, just leave some for Alex incase he wants any

(TAYLOR pours himself a cup of coffee, doesn't add creamer or sugar, stays standing by the counter)

TAYLOR

How's Dad today?

CYNTHIA

He's fine, don't worry about him, drink your coffee

TAYLOR

Anything newsworthy today?

MORGAN

Oh, not really, same old small town news like always

TAYLOR

(moves to over MORGAN's shoulder)

Come on, there has to be *something* good.

(Both of them look through the newspaper together)

MORGAN

Apparently "Local Troopers Hoping to Win Best Looking Cruiser Contest" is front page news

TAYLOR

You're shiting me

(CYNTHIA makes a quick but noticeable glare at TAYLOR for his language)

Sorry

(MORGAN refocuses the conversation. TAYLOR and MORGAN are deeply invested in the news now)

MORGAN

It looks like you can vote online through the American Association of State Troopers for the best looking cop car

TAYLOR

What do they get if they win?

MORGAN

According to the article "the winning photo becomes the feature image on the cover of AAST's yearly calendar."

(both end up laughing at this news, almost forgetting CYNTHIA is there)

TAYLOR

I mean... it *is* a pretty little cop car

MORGAN

A *very* pretty little cop car

TAYLOR

Who would want a calendar filled with State Trooper Cruisers

MORGAN

Who knows

(Both still slightly chuckling at this news)

CYNTHIA

You know your Dad would probably liked it

(Both stop laughing, unsure of what to do now MORGAN puts the newspaper back to the original order, sets it next to CYNTHIA and gets up, she moves to the fridge. Silence. TAYLOR takes her seat and pulls out his phone to fill the silence)

MORGAN

What can I make for breakfast?

CYNTHIA

I usually don't eat breakfast and Dad just has a protein shake

MORGAN

Can I make it for him today?

CYNTHIA

There's nothing to make, it's just a premade thing that the doctors recommended

TAYLOR

(a little confused)

Like the ones they recommend for sick kids?

CYNTHIA

Yeah, like that

(Done with the mail and news, she gets up and pulls the shake out of one of the cabinets, grabs a straw and starts to head upstairs)

Don't worry about it, I'll take care of him, he's probably up anyways

MORGAN

I can do it Mom

CYNTHIA

(Still moving towards the stairs)

I got it.

MORGAN

Please, let me help

CYNTHIA

(stops in her tracks to look at MORGAN)

No. I got it, if you want to help make your brothers breakfast. I'll take care of him.

MORGAN

Yes Ma'am.

(Both TAYLOR and MORGAN watch as CYNTHIA leaves)

I don't know what to do here Tay

TAYLOR

I don't know

MORGAN

We're here to help but she won't let us do anything. I've been trying to get her to talk about Dad or anything but, she's giving me nothing.

TAYLOR

I wish I had an answer for you, but I've never been able to read Mom and I never will

MORGAN

I just wish there was a clear answer about what to do

TAYLOR

Try not to stress too much, it'll all work out

MORGAN

I don't know if it will this time

(A brief moment of silence, down walks ALEX wearing basketball shorts, a sports t-shirt, white Nike-like socks, and slides of some kind. He has the most cheery disposition out of the three of them)

ALEX

Good morning party people, how we feeling today?

TAYLOR

Just fine

ALEX

Fair enough

MORGAN

Mom made coffee if you want any

ALEX

Thanks, not sure if I'm feeling it this morning

(ALEX sits at the table, grabs the newspaper)

Anything in the news today

TAYLOR

A local state trooper is trying to win the best looking cruiser contest

ALEX

Let's take a look

(ALEX flips through the newspapers to find the article)

Ya know, his cruiser does look pretty sweet

TAYLOR

I mean... it's not bad but you can't take this seriously

ALEX

Of course not, this is almost as stupid as that time Mom tried to submit our family picture to appear in the paper for "Best Family of the Year"

MORGAN

Yeah, that was pretty rough

TAYLOR

And we all had to wear those stupid little suits-

ALEX

With the matching boutonnières... I remember it too well

MORGAN

I kind of miss it though

TAYLOR

Me too

ALEX

I definitely don't, the next time I'll wear a suit like that is at the funeral

TAYLOR

Dude, he's not even dead yet.

ALEX

Well, we all know it's coming or we wouldn't be here

TAYLOR

Yeah but you don't have to bring it up

ALEX

Well, there's no point in denying that he's going to die any day now. You'd be stupid if you think that's not the reality we're in

MORGAN

... I guess you're right

Beat

What do y'all want for breakfast?

ALEX

Just a bowl of cereal

TAYLOR

Yeah, I guess that's fine

MORGAN

(starts rifling through the cabinets for the cereal and the bowls)

Okay

TAYLOR

Thanks

(MORGAN starts to make two bowls of cereal, she gets the milk, the spoons, and anything else she may need for. While she's making the cereal ALEX and TAYLOR go back to their phones to preoccupy themselves while the cereal is being made. Down walks CYNTHIA, she looks exhausted, takes a look around the kitchen, moves to give TAYLOR a kiss on the head and then ALEX a kiss on the forehead. MORGAN half watches the interaction, half makes the cereal)

ALEX

Morning Mom

TAYLOR

How's Dad?

CYNTHIA

Oh, ya know

TAYLOR

The same?

MORGAN

(bring the cereal over)

What's going on Mom?

(sets the cereal in front of ALEX and TAYLOR. ALEX starts to eat immediately, TAYLOR is still engaged with CYNTHIA. CYNTHIA notices the cereal)

CYNTHIA

(to MORGAN)

Oh, you got them some cereal, thank you

MORGAN

What's up with Dad?

CYNTHIA

Honest, he's okay, I'm just tired

TAYLOR

Well, that's why we're here, to help you

CYNTHIA

I know, and that's why I'm so grateful for you boys

(MORGAN finds her coffee cup, wherever she left it, and makes another cup, even sweeter than last time)

So, what are y'all up to today?

ALEX

(through his cereal)

Well, I made some plans with old friends from high school

CYNTHIA

That sounds nice, what are you gonna do?

ALEX

I don't know yet

CYNTHIA

Okay

beat

What about you two?

TAYLOR

Nothing much, just staying here in case you need anything

CYNTHIA

Actually, could you go to the store and grab something for dinner

TAYLOR

Sure, I'll head up and get ready to go

(TAYLOR gets up, brings his cereal bowl over to the sink, MORGAN starts to wash it immediately, she was dying for something to do.

TAYLOR then gives CYNTHIA a kiss on the forehead and heads upstairs)

Do you care what I get for dinner?

CYNTHIA

Whatever you want, I don't care. Before you come back down make sure you grab my bag, I want you to take my card.

TAYLOR

Where's your bag?

CYNTHIA

It's in my room

TAYLOR

(while he's heading up the stairs)

Sure thing

(The three sit in silence after TAYLOR leaves, ALEX still deep in his cereal and phone, CYNTHIA finds her way back to the newspaper and mail, MORGAN keeps washing the same bowl over and over again)

CYNTHIA

So Morgan, you haven't mentioned if you have any plans today

MORGAN

My only plan for the day is to stay here with you and Dad

CYNTHIA

You don't have to, you can go out and see some old friends or something

MORGAN

I don't really have any friends around here

ALEX

(still looking in his phone)

Did you ever have any friends from around here?

(MORGAN looks at CYNTHIA for a response but she gets silence from her)

MORGAN

No, not really

ALEX

Didn't think so

MORGAN

Is that really necessary Alex

ALEX

I'm just stating the facts here

MORGAN

If you wanted to start talking about facts we could start by talk about what you-

CYNTHIA

I could use some help cleaning the house today/

MORGAN

Okay

CYNTHIA

/I need to change Dad's bedding today. So while I do that you can clean the floors, do the laundry, dust, and whatever else you think needs done

MORGAN

Sure, I'll start dusting when I'm done with the dishes

Beat

Alex, are you done with your cereal?

ALEX

(starts drinking the milk from the bowl)

Yeah

(MORGAN waits for just a moment to see if ALEX will bring her the bowl, he doesn't, so she walks over to pick up the bowl and starts to wash it. A slight ding from ALEX's phone goes off, he quickly texts back and goes to head upstairs)

CYNTHIA

Where are you going?

ALEX

(as he's going up the stairs)

My friends are on their way, I need to get ready

(As he's going upstairs, down walks TAYLOR wearing an outfit similar, if not the same, as what we first saw him in)

TAYLOR

(while coming down the stairs)

I couldn't find your purse Mom

CYNTHIA

(sighs and puts down her newspaper)

Okay

(Gets up and moves to the go upstairs)

I'll be right back

TAYLOR

Thanks

beat

So, what do you want for dinner?

MORGAN

I don't know, what do you want?

TAYLOR

You know I don't really eat much

MORGAN

I know...

(She finishes up the dishes and attempts to find the furniture/ceiling duster but doesn't know which cabinet it's in. She keeps going through each

cabinet and slams one a little too hard. TAYLOR interrupts her movements)

TAYLOR

Are you okay?

MORGAN

No, I can't find the stupid duster

TAYLOR

Doesn't mean you have to take it out on the cabinets

MORGAN

Can you please just help me find it

TAYLOR

(Gets up and starts looking for it in the cabinets MORGAN has yet to touch)

Of course

(TAYLOR is looking for the duster at a normal pace while MORGAN gets faster and faster until she slams another door a little louder this time than last)

MORGAN

Have you found the damn duster yet Taylor?!

(She turns to look at TAYLOR hoping he found it, he has, TAYLOR stands looking at MORGAN a little worried.)

TAYLOR

Yeah

(MORGAN takes the duster and starts to wipe all the kitchen furniture, countertops, ceiling, anything she can get to. TAYLOR just stands there, not sure what to do)

MORGAN

Thanks

TAYLOR

(Sitting back down)

You're welcome

Beat

Do you want to come to the store with me? Get out for a minute?

MORGAN

(Still cleaning)

No. Mom asked for me to dust, clean the floors, do the laundry today, and *whatever else I think needs done.*

TAYLOR

You know you don't *have* to do that right?

MORGAN

Yes, I do. Who else is going to do it? I know Alex isn't, and now you're going to the store.

TAYLOR

I guess you're right

(MORGAN senses his tone shift and stops cleaning, lets out a sigh)

MORGAN

I'm sorry, I'm just

(Trying to find the right word)

Tired

TAYLOR

Just tired?

MORGAN

Well, you know

TAYLOR

No, I don't know. You never actually say what's wrong and then you just snap at people.

MORGAN

I'm sorry, I just feel like I have to be a version of myself that no longer exists and it's insanely exhausting.

TAYLOR

How do you think I feel?

MORGAN

I know

(Getting back up to start cleaning again)

That's why I'm going to clean and you're going to the store

TAYLOR

Okay

(Starts to look through his phone for dinner ideas)

So, how does spaghetti sound for dinner tonight?

MORGAN

(sigh)

I don't really feel like cooking tonight, why don't you just get some frozen pizzas and some tater tots

TAYLOR

(a slight grin)

I knew you had something in mind for dinner, what kind of pizza do you want

MORGAN

(still cleaning)

Any kind of veggie pizza please and thank you

TAYLOR

(typing notes into his phone)

Okay, I'll get one veggie pizza and one meat lover's pizza

MORGAN

Thank you

TAYLOR

No problem

MORGAN

Love you

TAYLOR

Love you too

(silence falls between the two of them, TAYLOR is occupied with his phone while MORGAN cleans around him. MORGAN starts to dust the stairs and remembers CYNTHIA hasn't returned for a while)

MORGAN

Do you think Dad's okay?

TAYLOR

Well, no... but why are you asking that?

MORGAN

Because Mom hasn't come back down yet

TAYLOR

I'm sure everything's fine, she just can't find her purse

MORGAN

Would you be able to go and check just to make sure?

TAYLOR

Why don't you do it?

MORGAN

Because I'm busy

Beat

Why can't you do it?

TAYLOR

Because I don't want to

MORGAN

It's not that hard, just go upstairs and check

TAYLOR

If it's not that hard than you should just do it

MORGAN

Why don't you want to go check on Dad?

TAYLOR

Because I can't

Silence

MORGAN

Did you even look for Mom's bag?

TAYLOR

No

MORGAN

Why not?

TAYLOR

Because I just can't see Dad like that, he looks like a roasted potato and I can't be in the same room as roasted Dadtato for more than a minute without either breaking down or-

MORGAN

-I get it, I'll go check.

(She moves away from wherever she's dusting and places the duster on the table and goes upstairs. TAYLOR stays at the table with his phone trying to distract himself, he pulls out his mini flask from a pocket or bag and takes a drink. He smoothly puts it back after the one swig. Then down walks ALEX wearing jeans and a sweatshirt of some kind. Similar to what he was wearing when we first saw him. He is also carrying his backpack with him as he's coming down the stairs TAYLOR looks and starts to talk to him)

TAYLOR

Hey, did you see Mom or Morgan upstairs?

ALEX

No, they were both down here when I left

TAYLOR

Well, Mom went to get her bag but didn't come down for a while so Morgan went to check on her and Dad but hasn't come back yet

ALEX
That's weird
TAYLOR
Was Mom and Dad's room open?
ALEX
No
beat
Do you think that means something??
TAYLOR
I don't know
(Alex sits down and puts his bag on the kitchen table. TAYLOR notices there's stuff in ALEX's bag)
Where are you going?
ALEX
To hang with friends, they should be here any minute
TAYLOR
Why do you have your bag?
ALEX
Because I can?
TAYLOR
Okay.
beat
By the way, where were you last night?
ALEX
What?
TAYLOR
I heard the door open late and then heard you stubble upstairs...
ALEX
Oh
TAYLOR
Yeah... I thought you stopped.
ALEX
I did.
TAYLOR
Then tell me what's in the bag
ALEX
Why does this family care so much about what I do?

TAYLOR
Because we care about you

ALEX
Since when?

TAYLOR
Since *always*. Stop being such a dick and tell me what's going on

ALEX
Nothing.

TAYLOR
Fine.

Beat
But if you need to... you can talk to me.

ALEX
I know...

TAYLOR
Good

ALEX
I did have a question though

TAYLOR
Sure

ALEX
What's up with Morgan? He seems different

TAYLOR
What do you mean?

ALEX
I don't know he just seems extra gay, you know

TAYLOR
Well he's not just *gay*

ALEX
What do you mean?

TAYLOR
You know...

ALEX
No... I don't

TAYLOR
I mean... it's all over her instagram and stuff

ALEX
Who's insta?

TAYLOR
Morgan's

ALEX
What's on Morgan's insta?

TAYLOR
Do you not follow Morgan?

ALEX
Yeah, of course I do... it's not like I keep up with his posts but... I follow him

TAYLOR
You really don't know

ALEX
Know what Taylor?

TAYLOR
Maybe I shouldn't be the one to tell you...

ALEX
If the internet already knows then he doesn't care, just tell me.

TAYLOR
Morgan's trans

ALEX
What?

TAYLOR
You know what that means right?

ALEX
Yes, dipshit, I know what that means... I just don't believe Morgan's one of them

TAYLOR
She's not *one of them*, who the fuck taught you to talk like that

ALEX
No one, I just don't really believe in that shit

TAYLOR
Well... it's real and... I really thought you knew... I thought everyone but Mom knew

ALEX
Are you saying that Dad knew?

TAYLOR
Yeah, he was one of the first people she told

ALEX
Oh.

TAYLOR
Yeah.

Silence

ALEX
So that's why there's a bunch of girls clothes in his room

TAYLOR
Did you go through her room?

ALEX
Yeah, and what about it?

TAYLOR
That's a little fucked don't you think?

ALEX
Maybe, but I was curious and I wanted to see what's up

TAYLOR
Ya know, just because you *want* something doesn't mean you can have it

ALEX
So what? Me going through his room doesn't affect you

TAYLOR
Yeah, but it's fucked up to go through your *sister's* room

ALEX
You mean our *brother's* room

TAYLOR
No I mean-

(MORGAN appears at the top of the stairs, who knows how long she's been listening to them. But she interrupts their conversation)

MORGAN
Hey

Beat
Dad's dead

(ALEX and TAYLOR are stunned, at a loss of words, unsure what to do next)

You should probably come say goodbye, this'll be the last time it's just us.

(MORGAN walks back upstairs, ALEX and TAYLOR eventually get up. Maybe one before the other, however they feel. They both then walk upstairs, we sit in the silence for a minute)

Lights Out

End of Act I

Act 2

(The kitchen sits empty, the sun is setting through the windows, the colors of dusk fill the space. The house is quiet. Very slowly, we hear the jingle of keys come from the front door, the clicks of unlocking, and the squeak of the door opening. First walks in CYNTHIA, she is dressed in all black. She looks very formal and feminine. CYNTHIA is also carrying three stacks of aluminum baking trays that are filled with different types of meals. Behind her is MORGAN, she is wearing a wide-legged black pair of slacks, a black turtleneck, simple dress shoes, and perhaps a cardigan or shawl of some kind. Her hair is down and simply styled. She carries two aluminum baking trays in one arm and an arrangement of white chrysanthemums in the other. She is very unbalanced but trying her best to not drop anything. After MORGAN, in walks TAYLOR, he's wearing a black suit, black dress shirt, and a black and white striped tie. The tie matches his out of place white dress shoes. He also dons his punk-rock accessories from when we first saw him. He carries two flower vases, one that is an arrangement of white lilies and the other is a group of green leaves that include traditional ferns, maidenhairs, rosemary leaves, and other lush foliage. ALEX then walks in, he was holding the door for everyone, he's wearing a dark gray suit, a white button down, a black tie, and black dress shoes. He is carrying a vase of white and red roses. As they come in, CYNTHIA places all of the baking trays on the counter. MORGAN carefully sets down the flower vase on the table and then CYNTHIA helps her place the rest of the baking trays on the remaining counter space. TAYLOR places the two flower vases next to MORGAN's and ALEX follows. As everything is being placed CYNTHIA says)

CYNTHIA

I'm going to go change, please do something with all this food.

(CYNTHIA starts to go towards the stairs looking at the flowers)

Morgan, there's larger vases in the hall closet, can you rearrange the flowers into something
(trying to find the right word)

Different.

(MORGAN makes a small confirmation and immediately gets to work,
CYNTHIA goes upstairs)

Thank you

(TAYLOR takes his jacket off and drapes it over a chair. He starts to take his tie and shoes off. MORGAN is standing over all of the flowers and starts arranging them in a way she finds calming and beautiful. ALEX darts to the food as soon as he can, starts to unveil all five different baking trays and organizes them on the counter. They all do this silently for a minute or two)

TAYLOR

(breaking the silence)

So, what's for dinner?

(ALEX has started to get the plates and silverware out)

ALEX

Well... we have one tray of lasagna, a green bean casserole, a thing of mac'n cheese, a mystery meat casserole, and a "Sorry for your Loss" cake.

Beat

What are we feeling?

TAYLOR

What kind of cake is it?

ALEX

Looks like chocolate with buttercream frosting

TAYLOR

Yeah, I'll take a piece of that

ALEX

Morgan, do you want anything?

(MORGAN doesn't respond)

Okay then.

(Cuts out two pieces of cake, sets them on the plate and brings them over to the table. Gives TAYLOR his piece and then sits down to eat)

Do you mind taking the flowers over to the sink?

(MORGAN just glares at him)

I don't want a side of petals with my cake

(MORGAN then takes the flowers over to the sink as fast as she can, she then pulls out a pair of scissors from a nearby drawer and keeps working on the large flower arrangement. Talking through his bites.)

Well, the service could've been better

TAYLOR

What?

ALEX

The pastor did a shit job

TAYLOR

He wasn't *that* bad

ALEX

Yeah, he kind of was. He didn't mention anything about Dad, all he did was recite quotes from the Bible.

TAYLOR

He's a pastor, what do you expect?? Do you think you could've planned a better service?

ALEX

One-hundred percent

TAYLOR

Okay then, let's hear it

(ALEX starts to take off his shoes, jacket, tie, and dress shirt to show an undershirt of some kind on. He makes a slight mess of his clothes in the kitchen)

ALEX

First off, there would've been a different dress code, everyone would've been required to wear sweatpants, t-shirts, and socks and slippers or sandals. No one could say the words "I'm sorry for your loss" or "He was such a wonderful man, husband, father, or wonderful whatever". It also would've been at a bar. And we would've played drinking games and had the local game on the tv, just how Dad and I spent every Sunday.

TAYLOR

I'm sure Mom would've *loved* that

MORGAN

The service went exactly how Mom and Dad wanted it to go, they planned it out when he first got sick

ALEX

I know but they had a pretty shitty plan

MORGAN

How was it a shitty plan when it went exactly how Dad wanted it to go?

ALEX

Because it was boring

MORGAN

It was our fucking Dad's funeral! What more do you expect? This isn't your college frat pa-

ALEX

Why couldn't it have been a party? Aren't we supposed to be *celebrating* that he's no longer in pain instead of wallowing in our stupid grief? That's pretty selfish don't you think Morgan.

MORGAN

What's selfish is the fact that you haven't helped once since you've been home. Taylor and I/

TAYLOR

Don't bring me into this

MORGAN

/Have been the ones helping with Mom, the funeral, the house, literally everything.

ALEX

At least I haven't been keeping a secret from Mom since we've been here

MORGAN

What do you mean? I'm not keeping a secret from anyone

ALEX

(under his breath, to the cake)

If you say so

Silence

TAYLOR

(to MORGAN)

Are you really not going to eat anything?

MORGAN

I'm not that hungry

TAYLOR

But you haven't eaten all day

MORGAN

I've been busy helping Mom

TAYLOR

I know but-

MORGAN

But nothing, I'm fine

TAYLOR

You have to eat

MORGAN

Seriously. I'll eat when I'm hungry

ALEX

You heard him Taylor

Beat

He'll eat when he's hungry

(MORGAN and TAYLOR don't respond to ALEX. MORGAN finishes the flower arrangements, perhaps ALEX gets up for another piece of cake or something else. TAYLOR might have gotten on his phone or something else to distract himself. MORGAN puts the newly arranged flowers on the table. TAYLOR looks intently at them)

TAYLOR

These look beautiful Morgan

MORGAN

Thanks

(While stepping back and looking at the flowers)

I just put them how I think Dad would've like them

(They all stop what they're doing and look at the flowers, maybe

MORGAN places her hands on TAYLOR's shoulders)

ALEX

I think the red roses look stupid.

MORGAN

Then you can fix them

(Turns to go upstairs)

I'm going to go change

(As she's going up the stairs)

Have fun with the flowers

(ALEX goes to the flower vase, takes out the red roses and throws them in the trash)

ALEX

Fixed it

TAYLOR

Why did you do that?

ALEX

Because they looked bad

TAYLOR

But you didn't have to be a dick about it

ALEX

Well, I wasn't going to lie.

Beat

Do you want some more food?

TAYLOR

No, I'm fine

(TAYLOR pulls out a flask from inside his jacket pocket that's placed on the chair behind him, he takes a drink, ALEX watches closely)

Do you want any?

ALEX

No thanks.

TAYLOR

You sure?

ALEX

I'm alright.

TAYLOR

What is it?

ALEX

What?

TAYLOR

You're just not willing to drink in front of me but you'll sneak out with your asshole friends from highschool and get drunk with them?

ALEX

You don't know that's what I've been doing

TAYLOR

Then what have you been doing? Fucking eachother? Cause I highly-

ALEX

We're not *fucking* eachother

TAYLOR

Well, if you don't tell me what you *have* been doing then I'm going to think that you're carrying around nine inch dildos in your bag with the intent to shove them up your friend's ass while another one of them sucks your dick like a little fa-

ALEX

We're doing pills!

TAYLOR

What?

ALEX

Yeah.

TAYLOR

Where are you getting pills from?

ALEX

Dad

TAYLOR

What do you mean?

ALEX

I stole Dad's pills that he didn't need anymore... I looked at the pills that were expired and took em.

TAYLOR

I can't believe you

ALEX

Well... he wasn't using them so I thought someone should

(Down walks CYNTHIA, she's wearing a new casual outfit. Something soft and comfortable, perhaps it's pj's, perhaps it's just a very casual outfit. As she moves down the stairs, TAYLOR quickly puts away his flask into a jacket pocket. CYNTHIA is carrying a box of some kind, perhaps it's a shoe-box)

CYNTHIA

Where's Morgan?

ALEX

He went upstairs to change

CYNTHIA

Can one of you go get him?

TAYLOR

Sure

(TAYLOR goes upstairs)

ALEX

What's in the box?

CYNTHIA

It's stuff from your Dad

ALEX

Oh.

Beat

Are you hungry?

CYNTHIA

No.

ALEX

Well, I looked at everything we have and someone gave us a cake if you want any.

CYNTHIA

I know

(CYNTHIA looks at the clothes thrown about)

Can you please clean up your clothes?

(ALEX immediately starts to collect his clothes and moves them to the living room)

ALEX

(from the living room)

I'm just putting them in here for now, I'll get 'em later

(Enters back into the kitchen)

CYNTHIA

As long as you remember

(CYNTHIA notices the flowers and starts to study them)

CYNTHIA

Where'd the red roses go?

ALEX

I threw them away

CYNTHIA

Good. I don't know why your Aunt even bought them, they were so ugly, already wilting.

beat

Why isn't Taylor back with Morgan yet? ?

ALEX

I don't know

CYNTHIA

Can you please go check on them?

ALEX

Yeah

(ALEX heads upstairs. CYNTHIA takes everything in around her. She looks at the flowers, the box, the food, and more importantly the Bottle of Scotch. Maybe she thinks about opening it and taking a drink, but she doesn't. She goes into the living room and grabs ALEX's clothes that he threw in there, she takes them back into the kitchen and folds them nicely and puts them on the first step of the stairwell She also takes TAYLOR's jacket and begins to fold it as well but notices the flask that was hidden in one of the pockets. She takes the flask and examines it, notices the curves and smoothness of the object. It reminds her of something, something important and emotional. It reminds her of GABRIEL. She opens the flask and smells what's inside. She then dumps the contents out in the sink and throws the flask in the trash. After she throws the flask away she moves to the food and decides to eat something, it doesn't matter what she eats but it's only a small portion. After she gets her plate, silverware, and anything else she needs, she sits back down at the kitchen table and eats. As she's eating we notice that the sun is almost set and the kitchen is nearly dark, we hear the fridge start up again, the evening toads, the crickets, and any other sounds that we heard at the beginning of the play. The sounds fill the air and start to become overwhelming, once CYNTHIA can't handle the sounds anymore she shouts upstairs)

CYNTHIA

Boys! Come down! I'm tired of waiting

(MORGAN, TAYLOR, and ALEX all walk downstairs immediately after CYNTHIA yells for them. MORGAN has changed into something oversized and comfortable. She has her hair up in a ponytail. TAYLOR has also changed into a casual outfit that could resemble a black pair of

sweatpants, a band shirt, and comfortable slippers. ALEX exchanged his slacks for a pair of athletic shorts and slipped on a pair of slides instead of dress shoes, everyone comes in and finds a place to anchor themselves in the kitchen. We don't hear the sounds as heavily as before the three of them entered)

TAYLOR

Why are you sitting in the dark?

CYNTHIA

I just didn't get up to turn the light on

(TAYLOR walks over and turns on the overhead light. CYNTHIA grabs ahold of the box)

Dad left you all something, he told me not to give them to you until he passed. It's hard to fully understand why he wanted to give you all these things but you know your Dad...

Beat

You never could predict what he was going to do next or fully understand it but, you always knew he loved you. His heart was filled with so much love for this family.

Beat

So...

(CYNTHIA opens the box and takes out an antique feminine wedding ring)

MORGAN

Is that Memaw's ring?

CYNTHIA

Yes

TAYLOR

Who gets it?

CYNTHIA

Alex does

ALEX

Why would Dad leave me Memaw's wedding ring? I hardly knew her

CYNTHIA

I think he wants you to propose with it to whoever you marry

ALEX

(picking up the ring)

Oh, okay

TAYLOR

But why Alex? Morgan is most likely to get married first

I don't want to get married

MORGAN

And that's why it went to Alex

CYNTHIA

So Dad just didn't even think of me for it?

TAYLOR

I don't know

CYNTHIA

But how is that fair?

TAYLOR

Taylor. I don't know.

CYNTHIA

Beat

We're moving on

(TAYLOR doesn't respond, CYNTHIA then pulls out two signed *Reba McEntire* concert tickets from 2011. MORGAN recognizes them immediately)

Morgan.

(MORGAN grabs the tickets)

I thought he lost these

MORGAN

I didn't know you saw Reba in concert

ALEX

beat

Dad never took me to any concerts

MORGAN

Well, maybe it was because he didn't like your taste in music

ALEX

But he liked Reba?

MORGAN

Yeah, he did

ALEX

I don't believe you

MORGAN

The proof is in my hands Alex. Dad took me to my first ever concert and it was to see Reba.

CYNTHIA

I remember the night you two went, you were both so happy.

MORGAN

We both sang along to almost every song

Beat

Fancy is still my favorite

TAYLOR

You were obsessed with that song

MORGAN

Yeah... I don't really know why

ALEX

Isn't it a little weird you were obsessed with a song about prostitution as a kid

MORGAN

I didn't know what the song was about at first, all I cared about then was...

Beat

Nevermind

ALEX

What? Don't want to tell us the reason you love the song?

MORGAN

No, not really

ALEX

I think you should

MORGAN

I'm not going to

ALEX

Why?

MORGAN

Because I don't-

CYNTHIA

Enough. I'm tired of it. Not to mention your Dad would hate to see you fighting... there's one more thing in here for Taylor.

(CYNTHIA pulls out a keychain with "TAYLOR" written on it, it's one of those really cheesy keychains you would get at an amusement park. She sets it on the table for TAYLOR)

TAYLOR

That's it?

(CYNTHIA nods yes)

He left me something else right?

CYNTHIA

No

TAYLOR

Just look in the box one more time, there has to be something else

(CYNTHIA sets the box on the table but doesn't open it again)

CYNTHIA

You can look again but there's nothing else in there

(TAYLOR grabs the box and opens it, nothing else is inside, he then sets the box back on the table and walks out the front door leaving the keychain behind. The door slams behind him, unsure what to do, everyone stays silent)

Can one of you go and check on him?

(ALEX and MORGAN both go to move to the door)

ALEX

Stay here, I got it

MORGAN

I really think I should go-

ALEX

I said I got it

(MORGAN sits down at the table, ALEX leaves out the front door. MORGAN then picks up the keychain)

MORGAN

He doesn't remember, does he?

CYNTHIA

Remember what?

MORGAN

When we were at Disney, Taylor wanted this keychain more than anything, but Dad said no. He was so upset he didn't get it that everytime Dad suggested we did something Taylor would want to do the exact opposite out of spite. Dad started to catch on and eventually asked Taylor what he was doing, and so Taylor brought up the fact that Dad didn't buy him the keychain. It was his way of torturing Dad for that one small thing and whenever we went to a different theme park, he would try to buy Taylor a keychain but he always refused because it was never this one from Disney.

CYNTHIA

How do you remember all that?

MORGAN

(still holding the keychain)

I don't know...

CYNTHIA

You know Dad wanted you to have the ring before Alex, he just didn't think you would ever find a girl to settle down with

MORGAN

So you convinced him to give it to Alex because of course he'll find a pretty girl to marry one day right?

CYNTHIA

It's just more likely he'll find someone

MORGAN

So you don't think I'll find someone.

CYNTHIA

No, it's not like that

Beat

You just don't want to get married, you said it yourself

MORGAN

But that doesn't mean I wouldn't want Memaw's ring

CYNTHIA

I know that

MORGAN

Then why convince Dad to give it to Alex?

CYNTHIA

Do you want kids?

MORGAN

What?

CYNTHIA

Be honest. Do you want to have kids?

MORGAN

No, I don't see what this has to do with Memaw's ring

CYNTHIA

If you don't have kids then the ring stops with you. Your Dad's history stops with you.

MORGAN

Is it really that bad to not want kids?

CYNTHIA

To your Dad... it is. He wanted his legacy to be passed down through his children and I knew you wouldn't be able to do that, so... I told him the truth.

MORGAN

And his *legacy* is important because?

CYNTHIA

Because your father doesn't want to be forgotten about. He wants someone to remember him fifty years in the future.

MORGAN

I will never forget about Dad

CYNTHIA

And who will remember him after you die?

MORGAN

I don't know

CYNTHIA

That's his point. He wants to be remembered after all of us are dead, he wants his grandkids to tell stories about him to their grandkids. And none of that can happen if you don't want children.

MORGAN

And who's to say Alex is going to have kids?

CYNTHIA

I'm saying that-

MORGAN

But you don't know that for certain

CYNTHIA

I know Alex better than you, I know he wants kids

MORGAN

So since Alex is more likely to get married, and carry on Dad's *legacy*, he gets to have the ring over me?

CYNTHIA

Don't be like that, he didn't want to upset you-

MORGAN

Don't worry about it, I understand. Dad didn't want to upset me, but you didn't care.

(Getting up)

I'm going to check on Taylor

(MORGAN brings the keychain with her and exits out the front door, leaving CYNTHIA alone)

(CYNTHIA collects all of the remaining dishware that's on the table and puts it in the sink. She then wraps up all of the aluminum baking dishes and finds a place for them in the fridge, once the fridge is closed it starts to make its normal hum once again. After everything is situated in the fridge she turns back to the sink and begins to do the dishes. As she's doing the dishes the three siblings walk in from the front. First walks in MORGAN, who moves to help CYNTHIA with the dishes, then ALEX who sits at the table, lastly TAYLOR.)

TAYLOR

Sorry for overreacting, I just didn't think Dad would leave me a keychain with my name on it.

CYNTHIA

It's okay

(TAYLOR starts to go to the stairs)

TAYLOR

I think I'm going to go lay down, good night-

CYNTHIA

(stops doing the dishes)

There's one more thing I need to talk to you all about.

Beat

Dad was a complicated man and there's something he wants you to know now that he's passed. He told me to tell you after I passed out the gifts... I guess he was hoping it would ease the blow but that didn't seem to work.

Beat

Right after Morgan was born your Dad found himself in a dark place. He was recently fired and couldn't find another job. It made him uncomfortable, not being able to fulfill his promise to me as a husband. His depression got worse and he started to drink. There's a history of alcoholics on his side of the family which allowed him to easily give into that disease. I'd come home and he'd have half a bottle of scotch on his bedside table and by the time the night was over it'd be gone. He was never mean or abusive towards me, just distant... Through that time I stuck with him, no matter how bad he got. Some days all he would do is lay in bed and drink

Beat

But one day I came home and I found him making dinner, cleaning the house, looking for jobs. Shortly thereafter he found something and started to work again. I eventually quit my job and finally, everything felt right.

Beat

One night he told me that he tried to commit suicide, he said he had a plan and was seconds away from following through with it, but then he thought about having kids and a family and that made him just stop.

Beat

That Christmas he gave me a present

(CYNTHIA grabs the Bottle of Scotch from the top of the fridge)

This.

Beat

He said that “This gift is a promise that I will never drink again”. So, right after that I put it on top of the fridge as a reminder for us

Beat

In the end, I just couldn’t support him enough. I wasn’t strong enough for him or this family. And because of that, he couldn’t keep his promise.

Beat

And once he started drinking again his liver couldn’t support him and started to fail and he refused to go to a hospital so I brought the doctors here and we treated him at home like you all know and the rest is history...

Silence

MORGAN

I had no idea that he...

ALEX

I didn’t know Dad was an alcoholic

TAYLOR

Me either... Why couldn’t you tell us until now?

CYNTHIA

(putting the Bottle of Scotch back up)

Because he wanted you to know and didn’t want to face you once you all knew

MORGAN

Mom... you know it wasn’t your fault

TAYLOR

Yeah, and it’s not like anyone knew what was going on

CYNTHIA

Well It doesn’t matter now, just leave it be

TAYLOR

If that’s what you want... I’m going upstairs

(Goes over to the stairs)

CYNTHIA

Don't forget your jacket

TAYLOR

Thanks

(Grabs his jacket from the bottom of the stairs, as he's going up the stairs he feels around his jacket, making sure his flask is still there. Once he realizes it's not, he stops on the stairs and faces the kitchen)

Alex, did you take anything out of my jacket?

ALEX

No, why would I do that?

MORGAN

What was in it? I might be able to find it

TAYLOR

Don't worry about it, I must have left-

CYNTHIA

I threw it away.

(TAYLOR's stunned, he starts to walk back down the stairs)

TAYLOR

Why would you do that?

CYNTHIA

Because I don't want you to become an alcoholic

TAYLOR

I'm not what Dad was, I'm not in a *dark place* or planning to off myself. You can't just throw my shit away, I'm a fucking adult

CYNTHIA

Well, it's in the trash if you want it

(TAYLOR walks over to the trash can and starts to rifle through it, he finds his flask, takes it out)

Feel better?

TAYLOR

So what if I needed a drink to get through our Dad's funeral, is that so bad?

CYNTHIA

Yes Taylor, it is. You shouldn't be drinking at all

TAYLOR

Well you can't stop me cause I don't live here anymore and I never will, I'd rather live on the street before I live with you again

MORGAN

You don't mean that

CYNTHIA
(to TAYLOR)

You may not understand why I threw it away. But your Dad would've done the same thing if he found it

TAYLOR

That's because Dad fucking hated me-

CYNTHIA

Your father loved you

TAYLOR

Not like he loved Morgan or Alex

CYNTHIA

That's not true, he just didn't understand you Taylor. He never did.

TAYLOR

That doesn't mean I didn't deserve his love

CYNTHIA

I know

silence

I know

TAYLOR

I'm sorry

Beat

I shouldn't have gotten so upset... I'm so sorry

CYNTHIA

I forgive you

(CYNTHIA kisses TAYLOR on the forehead or top of head)

I love you

TAYLOR

I love you too

CYNTHIA
(to everyone)

I know we all have our moments but I'll always love each of you with my whole heart

(Gives ALEX and MORGAN a kiss on the head as she starts to move to the stairs)

I'm proud of us, we made it through today, as a family.

(as she's going up the stairs)

Stay up as long as you want. I'm going to bed

(everyone says a version of "good-night" in response to CYNTHIA)

(MORGAN, ALEX, and TAYLOR now all sit in the kitchen. Silent. We finally notice that it's completely dark outside, the crickets, toads, and other bugs are in full song now. The fridge is humming to life once more)

TAYLOR

Now what?

ALEX

I'm gonna eat again

(Gets up and walks to the fridge, he takes out whatever he can get to the quickest)

Anyone else hungry?

MORGAN

I'm okay, thanks

TAYLOR

You haven't eaten all day, please eat something.

MORGAN

Fine

(MORGAN gets up and moves to get something to eat but TAYLOR stops her)

TAYLOR

Alex can get it

(Waiting for a response from ALEX)

Right?

ALEX

Sure

(ALEX pulls out the plates and silverware and makes two servings of whatever he took out of the fridge. Once he's done, he brings it over to MORGAN and they both begin to eat)

MORGAN

Thanks

ALEX

Mhm

(TAYLOR gets up and grabs the Bottle of Scotch from the top of the fridge)

MORGAN

What are you doing?

TAYLOR

Making myself a drink

MORGAN

You're going to drink that after everything Mom told us?

TAYLOR

Why not?

MORGAN

I don't know... maybe out of respect?

ALEX

I'll drink it with you

MORGAN

You two are insane

TAYLOR

Come on... we deserve this. It's been a long day

ALEX

Yeah, Dad's gifts sucked, a glass of his pitty scotch would make up for it

MORGAN

You literally got Memaw's wedding ring, I don't think they all sucked

TAYLOR

(to MORGAN)

And you got *signed* tickets from a concert Dad took you to

(Sets the Bottle down on the counter and starts to get three crystal glasses out)

I wouldn't be complaining if I were you

ALEX

(to MORGAN)

Come on, don't be a pussy, just have a glass. Mom isn't even going to know

MORGAN

Fine, I'll have a glass

(TAYLOR opens the Bottle and pours three large servings into the crystal glassware, he then passes them out then brings the Bottle to the table and sits down with everyone. ALEX holds up his glass to make a toast)

ALEX

To Dad

(TAYLOR repeats but MORGAN simply just clinks her glass with the other two, they all take varying sized sips)

Ya know, this tastes like shit

TAYLOR

It's not the best

MORGAN

It's scotch, what did you guys expect?

(unsure about what to do with the glass in her hand. Silence exists in the space for a moment while everyone is observing their glass)

Mom *really* wouldn't like us drinking this

(TAYLOR and ALEX keep drinking)

ALEX

Who cares what Mom thinks? Don't we deserve this? Like she said, we pulled together as a family, we should celebrate that

MORGAN

I'm just ready to leave

ALEX

Then pack your stuff and leave, no one's forcing you to stay

TAYLOR

Alex.

MORGAN

No, you're right.

Beat

I just wish Dad left me the ring instead of you

ALEX

If you want the ring so fucking bad then take it

(ALEX throws the ring in front of MORGAN on the table)

MORGAN

I'm not going to take it, Dad left it for you

ALEX

I don't care that Dad *left* it for me

(Grabs the bottle and pours another drink for himself)

You always got everything when we were kids why should now be any different

MORGAN

I didn't get *everything*, there were plenty of things I didn't get

ALEX

Dad didn't force you into rehab when you were eighteen did he Morgan?

silence

He didn't force you into a place that made you feel like absolute shit just for one fucking mistake.

MORGAN

You were drinking and driving Alex... you should be happy the police didn't pull you over that night.

TAYLOR

Or that no one died

MORGAN

Exactly, most kids who do that shit end up in jail or dead... you should feel lucky Dad only made you go to rehab for six months. And after everything Mom just told us... it makes a lot of sense why he would take it so seriously.

(ALEX finishes his drink in one swig, reaches for the Bottle again but TAYLOR stops him)

TAYLOR

Dude.

ALEX

What? I'm not going out or anything

TAYLOR

You sure? You're not meeting with your friends later?

ALEX

No...

MORGAN

What have you been sneaking out and doing anyways?

ALEX

Nothing

MORGAN

What is it?!

ALEX

If you get to have a secret then I do too

MORGAN

I don't have a fucking secret Alex, you're being ridiculous. Just tell me!

ALEX

No!

MORGAN

Why not?

ALEX

Because I don't have to tell a fucki-

TAYLOR

He's taking pills

MORGAN

What?!

TAYLOR

Dad's pills

MORGAN

You've been stealing Dad's pills? What the fuck is wrong with you Alex?! I thought you were better than this. I thought you were healed from all that bullshit with those assholes from highschool. I thought you got rid of them.

ALEX

Well... I didn't. And I needed something to numb the fact that our Dad was literally dying before any of us even reached 30... So I took some of his pills that he didn't take anymore and my friends and I smashed 'em up and took them.

Beat

I'm still alive, so what's the big deal

MORGAN

Nothing will ever get through to you will it, you'll have to overdose on something before-

ALEX

Why are you saying this to me like I don't already know

MORGAN

Because I care about you, I know you know it, I want you to understand it

ALEX

You don't care Morgan. You don't like me, you never did.

MORGAN

I love you

ALEX

Don't fucking lie

MORGAN

I'm not!

ALEX

You don't *love* me. You can't love anyone, even if you did it's not like anyone would want it.

MORGAN

Excuse me? Fuck you Alex

ALEX

There it is... That's the Morgan I know.

Beat

Come on, say it again

MORGAN

Just shut the fuck up

(ALEX starts to laugh in response to MORGAN)

TAYLOR
(to ALEX)

What's wrong with you?

ALEX

Fuck you Taylor

Beat

You know what?

(Grabs the Bottle)

Fuck Dad too

(ALEX chugs the rest of the Bottle)

MORGAN
(louder)

What the hell?!

ALEX

At least I have nothing left to hide

TAYLOR

Alex, don't start with that shit

MORGAN

What are you talking about Alex?

ALEX

(very pointed to MORGAN, starting to slur his words)

Why don't you tell me?

MORGAN

I'm not telling you shit

ALEX

Oh, come on, just admit your little secret... a little birdy already told me. I just want to hear it from the horse's mouth itself

MORGAN

I don't have a fucking secret

ALEX

Yes you do, stop lying!

(ALEX slams the Bottle on the ground, it shatters)

MORGAN

What do you want me to say?!

ALEX

That you're a fucking faggot!

MORGAN

So fucking what?! Why does it matter?

ALEX

Because-

MORGAN

Because why?!

ALEX

Because it really shows just how fucked up you are. Taylor told me you came out to Dad and I bet that's why he went back to drinking. Because he couldn't handle the fact that one of his sons was a fucking faggot and that he raised such a fuck up. I'm sure he was asking God where he went wrong, how could he have fucked up so much that one of his precious, no, his *favorite*, son turned out to be a fucking psycho.

MORGAN

I don't believe in God asshole

(ALEX grabs the ring from where he previously threw it)

ALEX

I get why Dad left me the ring now

MORGAN

And why's that?

ALEX

Because I bet he knew that you would never find someone to love because who in their right mind would love someone as fucked up as you

MORGAN

That's rich coming from an *alcoholic drug-*

ALEX

I'm not an alcoholic!

(ALEX hits MORGAN)

Silence

MORGAN

You're right Alex. You're not an alcoholic, you're worse. You're just a stupid college druggy who will eventually flunk out just like how you've flunked out of everything else in life. No matter how perfect Mom thinks you are, you are *nothing* to society and you never will be anything to this world because you will overdose before you even get the chance to prove otherwise cause guess what? Dad isn't here anymore to save you.

TAYLOR

Morgan... Why would you say that?

MORGAN

Because Taylor. Because I'm someone who stands up for myself and what I believe in. I don't cower away in fear like you.

TAYLOR

I don't hide behind anything

MORGAN

Yes you fucking do! When you didn't get what you wanted from Dad you ran away. When Mom found your flask you dug through the fucking trash to get it back. All you do is run-away. When you dropped out of high-school, who helped you get your GED? When you couldn't find a job, who rewrote your resume? I did. I did all that shit because I love you and I wanted you to succeed in life. And when our own brother hits me... what do you do?

Beat

Nothing

(CYNTHIA is now at the top of the stairs, we don't know how long she's been there. We don't know how much she heard or witnessed, but this is when everyone notices her)

TAYLOR

Mom... we're sorry that we woke you-

CYNTHIA

I never went to sleep.

(Silence)

TAYLOR

I hope you didn't hear what-

CYNTHIA

Oh... I heard.

(ALEX snickers in a drunken stupor)

I don't want to hear anything from you.

(Looks directly at ALEX)

ALEX

Yes ma'am

(Silence, CYNTHIA looks at the glasses and plates on the table, she walks over and picks everything but the broken glass up. She then brings the dishes to the sink to clean them. You hear the water from the sink piercing through the silence.)

MORGAN

Can I help?

CYNTHIA

Don't move..

(Everyone is silent, we just hear CYNTHIA do the dishes, after we sit in this for a minute CYNTHIA says)

Will someone please clean up the broken glass

TAYLOR

I got it

(TAYLOR gets up and starts to clean the Bottle, MORGAN and ALEX stay seated)

ALEX

(to CYNTHIA)

Aren't you going to say anything to Morgan?

(CYNTHIA stops doing the dishes, she turns to face everyone. TAYLOR also stops sweeping)

CYNTHIA

I don't know what to say

MORGAN

Aren't you going to say anything to Alex? He fucking hit me-

CYNTHIA

I don't want to hear it.

MORGAN

But he assaulted me/

ALEX

He was lying to you

CYNTHIA
(almost yelling, shaking)

/I said, I don't want to hear it

(recomposing herself)

Someone finish cleaning the kitchen, we'll talk about it in the morning

(Moves to the stairs)

ALEX

You aren't going to do anything to Morgan?

(CYNTHIA stops in her tracks)

CYNTHIA

No

Beat

Go to bed

(CYNTHIA goes up the stairs, everyone watches, we hear the squeaks of the stairs as she slowly moves up. After a moment, MORGAN gets up and finishes the dishes CYNTHIA started. ALEX tries to stand up but falls over, TAYLOR doesn't know what to do, he's still holding the broom)

MORGAN
(to TAYLOR)

Take care of him, I'll finish cleaning

(TAYLOR moves to get ALEX and together they move up the stairs)

TAYLOR

I love you

(MORGAN doesn't respond. TAYLOR and ALEX disappear up the stairs. Then the fridge starts up, the bugs and toads start singing from outside. MORGAN finishes the dishes, then she starts to sweep and clean the Broken Bottle, as she's cleaning she starts to sing *Fancy* to herself. After she's done cleaning she heads upstairs. We hear the sounds of movement come from the floorboards above. MORGAN then reappears with her suitcase and walks down the stairs, she stops at the kitchen table and pulls out a notepad and pen from a drawer. She writes a note for everyone, after she's done writing the note she takes the vase of flowers she rearranged. With her suitcase and flower vase she turns the kitchen light off and walks out the front door silently closing it behind her. We hear the clicks of the deadbolt as she locks the front door.)

End of Play