

ALL AMERICAN

by  
Lynn Grant Beck

For my father, William Black Grant  
5/21/27 - 5/26/20

6/20/20

Lynn Beck  
28902 Verde Mesa Lane  
Malibu, CA 90265  
(310)910-8406  
[Lynn@LynnGrantBeck.com](mailto:Lynn@LynnGrantBeck.com)

CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
<u>1971</u>			
Hank Cooper	WWII vet & tire salesman	44	Male
Judy Cooper	Housewife trying to break out	40	Female
Billy Cooper	High school senior ready to leave	18	Male
Penny Cooper	All things counter culture	16	Female
Dorothy	Penny's friend, played by actress who plays Sophia		
Susan	Feminist, Judy's neighbor, played by actress who plays Diana		
Joe	Hank's employee, played by actor who plays Michael		

### 2020

Michael Anderson	Stressed out investment banker	50	Male
Diane Anderson	Psychiatrist who can't cope with her own family	46	Female
Chase Anderson	Angry young man	18	Male
Sophia Anderson	Depressed artist	16	Female
Liz	Diane's friend, played by actress who plays Judy		
Manny	High school kid, played by actor who plays Billy		
Karl	Diane's client, played by actor who plays Hank		

### **ACTS**

Act One

Act Two

With one intermission

Production note: the set should be designed simply with timeless furniture that will work in both eras. It should be decorated to represent the region where it's staged as if this story could take place anywhere in America.

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE: 2020

On stage there's a frame of a house broken into four spaces with 2x4s without side walls. There are two bedrooms upstairs, a master bedroom downstairs and a kitchen/living room with a table, couch and La-Z-boy. The house is sparsely decorated with timeless furniture, but one or two things should be changed out every time we change time periods. A set of stairs connects the two floors. There is an exit upstairs and two downstairs stage right and left.

(DIANE struggles to enter the kitchen from stage left into the kitchen with two bags of groceries, briefcase, purse, coffee container and dry cleaning.)

DIANE

Hello? Can anyone hear me?!

(When no one answers, she turns on the lights revealing her other family members to the audience. MICHAEL is in the master bedroom sitting on his bed, watching his iPad. SOPHIA uses a drawing tablet and CHASE plays a shooter video game on his TV. All wear headphones. Downstairs is messy.)

DIANE

(cont'd)

Is anyone home?!

(She hangs the dry cleaning on the stairs and tries to put the groceries on the counter, but it's covered with dirty dishes. Does her best to make room. Notices an overflowing trash can.)

DIANE (cont'd)  
Are you fucking kidding me?!

(DIANE pulls out her cell phone and makes a call while she puts a bag of frozen something in the microwave, puts the full trash bag outside. The table is set.)

DIANE (cont'd)  
Hi, Gloria. I'd like to call in some refills.

(She grabs a sticky Post-it note off the fridge. Rapidly rattles off prescriptions.)

DIANE (cont'd)  
Lexipro for Sophia: RX6849302. Adderall for Chase: RX9103790, Xanax for Michael, RX2167835.

(She pauses while she fills glasses on the table with a pitcher of water.)

DIANE (cont'd)  
And I have a new one for Diane Anderson, D.O.B. 9/3/73. Prozac, twenty milligram capsules, thirty day supply with two refills. This is Dr. Anderson from Brooktree Wellness Center. DEA RA28493 2 - and you have my phone number.

(She pours herself a glass of wine.)

DIANE (cont'd)  
Yes, I'm calling in my own prescription. I'll be in tomorrow after work to pick them up.

(She drinks her glass of wine and pours another one, puts it on the table. The microwave buzzes, she takes out the bag, cuts it open and dumps the contents onto four plates on the table. Then she presses an intercom button on the wall.)

DIANE (cont'd)  
Time to unplug yourselves. Dinner's ready!

(Upstairs, CHASE takes off his headphones, unzips a duffel bag from under his bed, and pulls out a Colt M4.)

He looks around for somewhere to hide it and stashes it in a sports chest. Heads downstairs. The other family members disengage from their technology and make their way to the kitchen as well. MICHAEL grabs a beer and sits down with the kids at the table.)

MICHAEL

Smells delicious, babe. What is it?

DIANE

Uh...

(She pulls the bag out of the trash.)

DIANE (cont'd)

Luigi's Chicken Cacciatore.

(DIANE sits down.)

DIANE (cont'd)

Happy Friday, everyone!

(She and MICHAEL toast. The kids ignore them, engrossed in their phones.)

DIANE (cont'd)

Phones down at dinner, please.

(They begrudgingly comply.)

CHASE

Another freezer dinner? This is like the third one this week.

DIANE

If you don't like it, you can cook dinner.

SOPHIA

We'd have Crunch Berries.

CHASE

What's wrong with that?

MICHAEL

This isn't too bad... except some of the chicken is still frozen.

DIANE

Put it back in the microwave.

(He gets up and puts his plate in the microwave.)

DIANE

How was school today?

CHASE

Fine.

(Silence.)

DIANE

How was it really?

CHASE

Don't analyze me. (beat). But it sucked - if you really want to know.

MICHAEL

Why?

CHASE

You know, 'cause everyone's a poser - pretending to be someone they're not.

SOPHIA

They're attempting to keep up with their digital avatar, but you can never be as cool as your Snapchat persona.

CHASE

So they hide in plain sight.

DIANE

What do you mean?

CHASE

They hotbox their Honda Civics at lunchtime. Everyone's all jonesing about getting into *the best* college, but once they get there they're probably gonna party their asses off and fail out anyway.

Well... thanks for sharing.

DIANE

Don't patronize me.

CHASE (cont'd)

I'm not.

DIANE

She's validating you.

SOPHIA

Is that what they teach you in group therapy?

CHASE

Shut up!

SOPHIA

Hey, don't say "shut up" at the table.

MICHAEL

Or any time.

DIANE

Just want to eat this frozen - whatever it is.

CHASE

Luigi's Chicken Cacciatore.

DIANE, MICHAEL, SOPHIA

How about that heat today, huh? They didn't predict that.

MICHAEL

The only predictable thing about the weather these day is that it's unpredictable. Thanks to global warming, it's all chaos and destruction from here on out.

CHASE

It's not like there's nothing we can do.

SOPHIA

But there's no will to do anything. At least not from the people in power who have the most to gain from preserving the status quo.

CHASE

The same people can't hold onto power forever. The future is in your hands.

DIANE

CHASE

If there is a future.

DIANE

Of course there's a future. If there's one thing we can count on is time moving forward.  
How was your day, Sophia?

(She slumps in her seat?)

DIANE (cont'd)

Did you go to school today?

(SOPHIA nods "no.")

MICHAEL

Why not, honey?

SOPHIA

Too anxious.

DIANE

Did you take the Vistaril?

SOPHIA

It didn't help.

DIANE

You have to go tomorrow. That's two days in a row, okay?

(SOPHIA nods "yes.")

MICHAEL (cont'd)

How was your day, sweetheart?

DIANE

(sighs)  
Taxing.

MICHAEL

How so?

DIANE

I've got a client who seems more on edge every time I see him.

MICHAEL

Karl?



DIANE

How do you know his name?

MICHAEL

I heard you talking to him on the phone.

DIANE

You shouldn't eavesdrop on my conversations with clients. They're confidential.

MICHAEL

It's not intentional. The walls are so thin in this house it's like they're not even there.

DIANE

I'd like to refer him to someone else, but he has abandonment issues and challenges with transference, so I fear there could be... repercussions.

MICHAEL

What kind of repercussions?

DIANE

I don't know, but he talks about hurting himself or...

MICHAEL

Babe, if you can't help him, you owe it to him to find someone who can. Especially after what happened with your other -

DIANE

I wasn't asking for your advice! I was telling you about my day. Anyway, I picked up your dry cleaning, dropped off Chase's boots to be repaired, mailed Sophia's Amazon package back, went grocery shopping and I come home to find an overflowing trash can and the counter covered with dirty dishes!

SOPHIA

The dishwasher was full.

DIANE

Then empty it! I need the three of you to show *some* initiative. It's not fair that I have to do *all* the heavy lifting around here all the time.

MICHAEL, CHASE, SOPHIA

(uncommitted grumbles)

Sorry. Okay. Whatever.

MICHAEL

It's Friday night. What movie are we seeing?

CHASE

“Batman vs. Godzilla.” The origin story.

SOPHIA

How can there be an origin story? They’re not even in the same universe.

CHASE

I don’t know. Maybe they’re in a parallel universe.

SOPHIA

I want to see “Last Light for Francis.”

DIANE

I can’t do another teen tear jerker. I cried so much in “The Fault in Our Stars” I got a dehydration headache.

MICHAEL

What about “Devil’s Edge?”

SOPHIA

No! No more serial killer movies. They give me nightmares.

DIANE

“Jessica and Tom 2.0” got good reviews. It’s the new rom-com about a woman whose fiancé has a brain tumor, but before he dies he creates an android version of himself and uploads his consciousness.

CHASE

Then how is the android any different from the fiancé?

SOPHIA

Maybe he has a bigger penis.

DIANE (cont’d)

Sophia!

SOPHIA

What?! If you designed an android version of Dad, wouldn’t you upgrade him?

DIANE

Your father has a very adequate penis.

SOPHIA

I rest my case.

MICHAEL

Diane!

DIANE

Sorry, not what I meant. More than adequate, perfect... for me.

(She stops digging to check her phone.)

MICHAEL

Really? This is not appropriate dinner conversation.

CHASE

Since when have we ever been appropriate?

DIANE

All of the movies start around seven at the 24-plex so we can each see the one we want.

MICHAEL

Four different movies in four different theaters?

DIANE

It's better than fighting about it.

MICHAEL

The whole point of our family movie night is for us to be together.

DIANE

Not this family... apparently. But we've got to go *now* or we'll be late.

(They get up, grab their dishes, add them to the pile on the counter and head for the door.

DIANE turns off the light and they exit stage left. Stage hands clear dishes and straighten up as we hear a promo for "Batman vs Godzilla.")

RECORDING: PROMO GUY

In a world gone rad, the dark knight must rise again to face the fearsome giant lizard who roams the sewers of Gotham feasting on an exploding rat population. But when the raucous reptile swaps rodents for subway riders, the caped crusader must team with the rabid rats to banish Godzilla forever.

## SCENE 2: 1971

(HANK, JUDY, BILLY and PENNY waltz in stage left and turn on the lights. JUDY wears a cross. BILLY wears a baseball uniform and props his bat in the corner. The place is immaculate.)

HANK

A triple in the bottom of the ninth! That'll teach those Weasels.

BILLY

Wolverines.

HANK

You got down low in a wide stance just like I taught you, swung from the hips and WHAM! Man, that felt good. You'll make All-American for sure!

BILLY

Thanks, Pops. I wasn't sure if I could hit it. That pitcher had a mean slider.

JUDY

Anything is possible if you believe in it. That's what my mama always said.

BILLY & PENNY

(saying their line as JUDY says her second line)

That's what your mama always said.

(JUDY ties on an apron and starts digging in the fridge.)

JUDY

That's enough, you two. Have a seat, I cooked dinner earlier. It's cold, but I made homemade fried chicken, potato salad and sliced beefsteak tomatoes.

(The family sits down doing nothing to help. JUDY serves the food, fills glasses with milk, gives HANK a beer. No one else waits for her to eat.)

HANK

Those colleges will be after you for sure!

BILLY

Yeah, I don't know.

HANK

What do you mean “you don’t you know”? You’re a smart boy. I work hard at the shop so you can go to college. Have more choices than me.

BILLY

I wanna be a Marine like you, Pops. Get out of this town.

HANK

Not in wartime, son.

(JUDY sits down and eats.)

PENNY

Especially in this unjust, unwinnable war.

HANK

Unjust my ass! You give those commies an inch, they take a whole damned country. First the Baltics, then Eastern Europe and now Cuba for Pete’s sake. Your Aunt Rosie lives in Miami, for God’s sake. You want her raped by the Russians?!

BILLY

I know. They want to take over the world. That’s why I gotta go to Vietnam. It’s not Bataan, Pops. We’ll never be captured.

(HANK slams the table, making the family jump. He knocks over his beer. No one bothers to help JUDY clean it up.)

HANK

I said NO and that’s final!

(An uncomfortable silence.)

JUDY

Penny, I saw you weren’t talking to Johnny at the game. Everything okay? You still going to the prom with him?

PENNY

I don’t think I’m going to prom, Ma. It’s such an outdated ritual.

HANK

Everything’s an *outdated ritual* with you lately. I don’t want you hanging out with those hippies no more.

PENNY

They're my friends.

HANK

Then pick new ones. People who give you dangerous ideas are not your friends. Those people are trying to destroy everything we hold sacred. Democrats, liberals, commies, whatever you want to call 'em. And the Russians are behind it all: school bussing, feminism, the break up of the Beatles.

JUDY

I don't think the Russians were behind the breakup of the Beatles, Hank. I read in "Reader's Digest" that the Beatles were very popular in the Soviet Union. Young Russians learned to speak English using their lyrics.

PENNY

Imagine an international language based on Beatles lyrics. *I get by with a little help from my friends.*

BILLY

*Nothing's gonna change my world.*

(Judy thinks.)

JUDY

*And when the brokenhearted people living in the world agree, there will be an answer -*

JUDY, BILLY AND PENNY

(singing this last line)

*Let it be. Let it be.*

HANK

Very clever. But claiming to be more popular than Jesus is blasphemy.

(They eat. An awkward silence.)

JUDY

Well I had a good day. Found out my first monthly Mary Kay sales topped \$600. Gonna earn me a pink Cadillac like those other top sellers.

HANK

It's a fake.

JUDY

What's a fake?

HANK (cont'd)

The cars! No one is giving away no cars. It's a gimmick like the name of my shop. My daddy always said a man needs two things - tits and tires. So I named it Titular Tire. See, gimmick.

PENNY

You know "titular" isn't an adjective for tits, right?

(He smacks her in the side of the head with the back of his hand.)

HANK

Don't be fresh!

(She winces, touches her head. BILLY tenses, eyes his bat. JUDY quickly clears the table. Changes the subject.)

JUDY

Look at that, it's almost time for "All in the Family."

HANK

Oh good. I love to watch Archie give it to Meathead.

(HANK downs his beer, gets up, plops himself in the La-Z-Boy and searches for the remote. The back of the TV cabinet faces us. PENNY and BILLY head to the couch. PENNY sits as far from HANK as possible.)

HANK

Where's the God damned remote?!

PENNY

Why can't we watch "Bewitched?"

JUDY

Because your dad likes "All in the Family."

PENNY (cont'd)

Can we watch "The Mary Tyler Moore show" after?

JUDY

Sure.

BILLY

No! I wanted to see the Raquel Welch movie at nine.

JUDY

We can't watch different shows at the same time!

PENNY

We could if we got a second TV.

JUDY

But that would defeat the point of TV, which is to watch it together as a family.

(HANK unearths the remote under his chair  
and JUDY joins the kids on the couch.)

HANK

You think they'd make these things bigger and easier to find!

(He fires up the TV and we hear the theme  
song from "All in the Family" as the lights  
go down. The family exits.)

SCENE 3: 2020 Starbucks

(The theme song is replaced by Starbucks  
chatter. Lights up on DIANE and LIZ,  
played by the actress who plays JUDY,  
sitting at the table. DIANE slurps down a  
frozen coffee drink.)

LIZ

Thirsty much?

DIANE

It's a race against time until these ridiculous paper straws become total mush.

LIZ

I know, right? That's why I like these new cups. A whole nation of caffeine addicts  
reduced to drinking coffee drinks from sippy cups.

DIANE

How else would we survive our overscheduled lives on too little sleep?



LIZ

You look exhausted.

DIANE

Thanks, Liz.

LIZ

Every time I ask one of my friends who's a mother how they are, they say "tired."

DIANE

It's pretty much a permanent state of being. I bring home the bacon, fry it up in a pan and Michael is too tired and stressed out to have sex with me.

DIANE & LIZ

(singing the theme song for Enjoli)

I can bring home the bacon, fry it up in a pan, and never, never let you forget you're a man., 'cause I'm a woman...

LIZ

Yeah. That Enjoli girl was full of shit.

DIANE

We fought so hard to have it all, but now that we have to do it all, I'm not quite sure what we've actually won.

LIZ

How are the kids?

DIANE

They're... okay.

LIZ

Okay how?

DIANE

I don't know. I thought teenagers would be... easier, more independent. But they're just more moody and needy. They can't admit to needing me so we coexist in this weird stalemate like cowboys in a standoff where they don't want to talk, but we can't walk away either.

LIZ

And Michael?

DIANE

He's good... I guess. Actually, I have no idea. We're both so tired when we get home I take a bath and he goes straight to his Netflix man cave. We're like zombies passing in the night.

LIZ

Wow. Well two more years and you'll have an empty nest.

DIANE (cont'd)

But then it's done. I want to get to spend more time with them before that.

LIZ

How?

DIANE

I'm thinking of quitting my job.

LIZ

Really? What about college? Michael would have to shoulder it all by himself. He's already so stressed out.

DIANE

Then maybe just a sabbatical. To figure out what I want. To sleep. To have sex with my husband. I don't know. I need to do something. I need more caffeine.

(She slurps up the last remaining drops of her frozen coffee drink. Lights down. LIZ and DIANE exit.)

#### SCENE 4: 1971 High School Cafeteria

(We hear chatter in a school cafeteria. Lights up on PENNY and DOROTHY, played by the actress who plays Sophia. They sit at the same table, drink cartons of milk and pick at trays of cheap, corporate food. PENNY looks around, agitated.)

DOROTHY

Did you hear that Sam Murphy's number came up last night?

PENNY

No! Poor skinny kid. He won't last a month. He shouldn't go.

DOROTHY (cont'd)

And go to jail?

PENNY

It's better than dying for a war he has no say in. If the Vietcong don't get him, the tigers will. I heard with all the rotting bodies in the jungle, they've developed a taste for human flesh.

DOROTHY

You read too much "Daily News." You gonna march on Main Street Friday? We're making posters at lunch tomorrow.

PENNY

I can't. My dad won't let me. He detests the demonstrations. You know, since he's a vet.

DOROTHY

You have to go. This whole club was your idea. You need to stand up to him.

PENNY

It's not that easy, Dorothy. You don't know what he's like.

(She looks around again, taps her foot.)

DOROTHY

Who are you looking for?

PENNY

No one.

DOROTHY

Johnny's not here today. At least he wasn't in English. Is everything okay?

(PENNY tries her hardest to fend off tears.)

DOROTHY

What's wrong?

(PENNY leans in. Whispers to Dorothy.)

DOROTHY (cont'd)

You're knocked up?!

PENNY

Sh!

DOROTHY

Sorry. Oh my God. What are you going to do?

PENNY

What can I do? I'm Catholic.

(She can't fight the tears any longer, cries.)

PENNY (cont'd)

I want to go to college, but now I'm going to end up trapped like my mom.

DOROTHY

What about giving it up for adoption?

PENNY

And drop out of school for a year? I feel like every time I'd see a kid who's the right age they'd look up at me like "are you my mom who gave me away?"

DOROTHY

Why don't you have your mom raise it? She's such a happy housewife.

PENNY (cont'd)

No way. That would mean my dad would raise it too. I could never do that to my kid.

(Lights down. PENNY and DOROTHY exit.)

SCENE 5: 2020

(Sounds of two people fooling around. A woman moans and climaxes. Lights up on MICHAEL and LIZ, who've finished their lovemaking at Liz's place. The bed has a feminine bedspread.)

MICHAEL

Your place looks nice. Something's different.

LIZ

New bedding. Nothing says "can't afford a remodel" like a new duvet. You smell nice. New cologne?

MICHAEL

Mm, hm.

LIZ

I guess it's kind of like a present.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

You know I can't buy you things, Liz. Diane goes through our credit card bills with a magnifying glass.

LIZ

You could use cash.

MICHAEL

Well, actually -

LIZ

Don't tell me she puts you on an allowance.

(Michael shrugs)

LIZ

How the hell do you live with such a control freak?

MICHAEL

Gotten used to it I guess.

LIZ (cont'd)

She tells me you don't have sex with her?

MICHAEL

You talk about our sex life?!

LIZ

Or lack thereof. All women talk about sex, Michael. Get over it. Starbucks is the female locker room. Why don't you have sex with your wife? You certainly enjoy it with me.

MICHAEL

I don't know. It's like we've grown apart and don't know how to find our way back to each other.

LIZ

Screwing her best friend is an interesting way to "reconnect." She wants to leave you, you know.

MICHAEL

She told you that?

LIZ

In so many words. She's not happy, that's for sure. Cutting her loose would be a gift. Then we could take a trip to Italy or Costa Rica. I hear there's a warm river there where you can have sex while you watch an exploding volcano!

MICHAEL

I can't leave. Not now. We've only got two more years with Sophia and she's pretty fragile. Divorce would crush her.

LIZ

That's sweet, but you've got to think about Diane. Trapping her in a miserable marriage isn't fair to either of you.

MICHAEL

I don't think she's *miserable*.

LIZ

How would you know? You two are like zombies passing in the night.

(Dr. Ruth gives sex advice as the lights go down and LIZ and MICHAEL exit.)

RECORDING: DR. RUTH

You don't have to share your fantasies. If you have sex with your partner, and the woman thinks about a whole football team in bed with her, that's OK, but keep your mouth shut about it.

SCENE 6: 1971

(Lights up as JUDY does a makeover at the table for her neighbor, SUSAN, played by the same actress who plays Diane.)

SUSAN

You know I don't normally wear make-up, right?

JUDY

I know, but you should. It brings out your eyes, and you've got such great, full lips.

SUSAN

Did you know that lipstick was invented to make our mouth look like a vagina?

JUDY

Then we better find the right shade.

(Susan laughs.)

SUSAN

How are sales?

JUDY

Good, actually. I just started, but if I get enough beauty consultants under me I can earn a pink Cadillac. Wanna sell Mary Kay? You get to help women look and feel their best.

SUSAN

I prefer to help women feel their best from the inside. Force them to examine who they are and what they want.

JUDY

We can't all be Women's Studies professors.

SUSAN

But you could get a real job and buy yourself a Cadillac.

JUDY

Hank would never let me.

SUSAN

He's not your master.

JUDY

I know that. The kids also need me here. Besides, what would I do? I didn't go to college.

SUSAN

You're a darn good saleswoman. You could do anything you wanted. Here, read this. I just finished it.

(SUSAN pulls a book out of her bag and hands it to JUDY.)

JUDY

"Why Women's Liberation?" I'm not a feminist, Susan.

SUSAN

You should be.

(BILLY enters from the door stage left.)

BILLY

Hi, Ma. Hi, Mrs. Roberts.

JUDY

Hi, honey.

Ms.

SUSIE

BILLY

I did it! I signed up!

(He proudly holds papers in the air.)

JUDY

What do you mean you signed up? For what?

BILLY

To be in the Marines, like Pops. I told you that's what I wanted.

JUDY

(in a panic)

Oh, no, you didn't! Take them back. Your father said "no!"

BILLY

You can't take enlistment papers back, Ma. I gave the Oath. I'm off to basic training at Fort Dix in two weeks.

(JUDY sits down, defeated.)

JUDY

Your father's going to kill me.

BILLY

I'll protect you.

(BILLY grabs his bat and swings it. SUSAN takes it from him.)

SUSAN

Going to Vietnam is a terrible idea, Billy. We're losing the war and can't win.

BILLY

Says who?

SUSAN

Says the Pentagon papers. Don't you read the news?



BILLY

Pops says it's all Soviet propaganda.

SUSAN

Everything with him is Soviet propaganda.

JUDY

Why didn't you talk to me about it? No one tells me anything.

BILLY

I tried. But you always kowtow to Pops.

SUSAN

It doesn't matter now. What's done is done. He's eighteen, Judy. He gets to decide for himself now.

BILLY

Don't worry, Ma. I'm gonna be fine. I'm gonna kill so many Vietcong they're gonna give me a Bronz Star. You'll see. You'll be proud of me.

JUDY

I am proud of you, Billy. I love you, but you can't... You can't leave me with him.

BILLY

You should leave him, Ma. Take Penny and go. So he can't hurt you no more.

SUSAN

How does he hurt you? Does he hit you?!

JUDY

Just when I talk back. But Penny, she's so stubborn and willful.

SUSAN

Jesus. Then Billy's right. You need to get out of here - as soon as possible. Or make him leave.

JUDY

He'd never leave. He's king of the castle.

SUSAN

Then come stay with me, at least until you figure something out.

JUDY

You live right down the street, Susan. He'd find us and drag us right back. And it wouldn't be pretty for the neighbors.

SUSAN

You can't worry about what the neighbors think, Judy. You have to do something. What kind of mother are you if you don't stand up for your daughter?

(Lights down. They exit.)

RECORDING: BETTY FRIEDAN

Each suburban wife struggles with it alone. As she made the beds, shopped for groceries, matched slipcover material, ate peanut butter sandwiches with her children, chauffeured Cub Scouts and Brownies, lay beside her husband at night - she was afraid to ask even of herself the silent question - 'Is this all?'

SCENE 7: 1971

(Lights up on a small counter with a Titular Tire sign. HANK and JOE, played by the same actor who plays Michael sit at the counter. HANK enters receipts into a ledger while JOE reads a paper.)

JOE

Can you believe this? Protests against the war in our own damn town.  
(peers more closely)  
Is that Penny?

(Hank grabs the paper.)

HANK

Give me that! I told her not to go to that. She's so damn stubborn!

JOE

A knock off the old block, eh?

HANK

Shows me no respect. I tell her to go right, she goes left.

JOE

You mean in politics?

HANK

In everything!

JOE

Kids are tough. Especially girls. One day they're sweet and innocent and you can do no wrong. The next day... they turn into their mother.

HANK

She's trying to embarrass me!

JOE

I don't know, Hank. This war feels different. All these boys dying in the jungle of a God forsaken little country on the other side of the world.

HANK

I fought in a jungle in a "God forsaken" country on the other side of the world! Not everyone got to go to Europe.

JOE (cont'd)

It wasn't like a European vacation. We froze our damn balls off in Northern Italy!

HANK

It doesn't matter where we fight, Joe. It's the principle of it. If God's chosen us to be the beacon of liberty then that's what we gotta do.

JOE

How do we know God has chosen us? Everyone thinks God has chosen them.

HANK

Not the commies. They got no God. That's why we gotta defeat 'em. It's our duty, and it's what men do. We fight. Ever since we lived in caves, we kill to defend our hearth.

JOE

But we don't live in caves any more. We're supposed to be civilized.

HANK

What the hell does that mean? That we're not supposed to act like men? All these men now actin' like women and women actin' like men.

JOE

It's called equality.

HANK

Equality my ass. It's confusing and it's messin' everything up.

JOE

Maybe the world needs a little messin' up.

HANK

Why would it need messing up? The Greatest Generation has everything figured out just fine.

(Hank looks at the Titular Tires sign.)

HANK

Hey, Joe. What do you think “titular” means?

JOE

It’s a combo of “tits” and “spectacular,” like tires are spectacular tits on a truck. They’re “titular!”

HANK

Exactly!

(Lights down. They exit.)

RECORDING: BO BURNHAM’S SONG  
“FROM GOD’S PERSPECTIVE”

The books you think I wrote are way too thick. Who needs a thousand metaphors to know you shouldn’t be a dick? And I don’t watch you when you sleep. Surprisingly I don’t use my omnipotence to be a fucking creep. You’re not going to heaven. Why the fuck do you think I’d ever kick it with you? None of you are going to heaven. There’s a trillion aliens cooler than you.

SCENE 8: 2020

(Lights up on SOPHIA in bed, on her phone. Maybe the song continues to play softly. We hear a DING and a text is beamed onto her back wall, as well as her reply and journal entry.)

KRAZYKUPKAKES

Gotta spill some tea. Kyle hooked up with Bella last night. Sooo sorry. I know you like him. Never would have shipped them.

SWEET2SECRET

Me neither. Thanks.

(SOPHIA gets out of bed and paces. She speaks into her phone.)

SOPHIA

Siri, open new journal entry. I'm so fucking pissed!

(She turns around to look at the type on the wall.)

SOPHIA (cont'd)

Good, I wasn't sure you understood expletives. No, Siri. Erase that last line. I'm pissed because Kyle Huntsman had sex with Bella Stewart, and she could have any guy in school. In fact, she's probably been with half of them. Okay, that's an exaggeration, but still. She knows I like him. I've been going to school with Kyle since middle school and he doesn't even know my name. At least I don't think he knows my name. I've never actually spoken to him other than the time I told him his "Gravity Falls" hat was cool, and he grunted back "thanks."

(As SOPHIA continues her monologue, she sits at her desk and pulls out rubbing alcohol and a cotton ball. She removes a razor blade taped to the bottom of the desk. Pours some alcohol on cotton ball, rubs the razor, then pulls up her sleeve.)

SOPHIA (cont'd)

So really I'm angry at myself for being too scared to talk to him. Why is it so hard for me? Why are people so hard for me? Maybe I can pretend he's you, Siri, whatever you are. Why do we even trust intelligence that's artificial? How can we even tell what's real any more?

(She makes a cut on her upper arm, winces from the pain, puts the blade in a drawer.)

RECORDING: BO BURNHAM

If you want love then the love has gotta come from you.

(SOPHIA retreats back into bed and pulls the covers over her head.)

SCENE 9: 2020/2017

(Death metal music plays as CHASE enters stage left and bounds upstairs to his room. He sits at his desk and pounds on the keys of his computer as he fumes. His group chat conversation is beamed onto his back wall.)

## MISSIONMAN

Two beaners threatened to beat me up at school today! Illegal wetback fuckwads who shouldn't even be here. They call me Chase the Face.

## WHITESOLDIER

You gonna take that? Or are you gonna rectify that injustice. We live in a world run by the Zionist Jewish Influence and Mexican Pedophiles, who are only here to rape our heritage and destroy the qualities that make us White People great.

## MISSIONMAN (cont'd)

What should I do? They look at my sister like they want to rape her. What if they get her pregnant with a halfbreed?

## WHITESOLDIER

If we do not stand now and perform our God given duty to keep our country clean of all the niggers, kikes and beaner scum, we are just as bad as the enemy, if not worse. We are trading our race for that of an inferior form of genetic garbage. It's time to be a white warrior, Missionman. You gotta stand up and fight or sit down and die!

(CHASE stops typing for a moment.)

## MISSIONMAN (cont'd)

But what happens to me? I could get hurt. Or killed.

## WHITESOLDIER

YOU ARE A WARRIOR! To die in battle would be an honor and your name will live on in infamy. I'll make sure of it.

(CHASE speaks out loud to his computer. To himself. To psych himself up.)

## CHASE

All right. Let's do it!

(He hops up, slides the duffel bag out from under his bed. Opens the sports chest and digs under a baseball glove for the M4. He holds it, takes a stand and points it out towards the audience.)

## CHASE (cont'd)

Pow, pow, pow, pow, pow!

(He puts the rifle in the duffel bag, zips it up and swings the bag over his shoulder. He walks to his door, takes a look back at his room as if it might be the last time he sees it, and trots down the stairs. He goes to the door stage left, opens it and walks through. He bumps into BILLY.)

CHASE (cont'd)

What the hell, man? Watch where you're going!

BILLY

You watch where you're going. This is my house.

CHASE

Are you high?

BILLY (cont'd)

Am I what?

CHASE

High, wasted.

(beat)

Are you here to see Sophia?

BILLY

Who's Sophia?

CHASE

My sister.

BILLY

No. I live here.

CHASE (cont'd)

No you don't, asshole. You're at the wrong house.

BILLY

Come in with me and I'll prove it .

CHASE

I can't. I gotta get to school.

BILLY

You're a little late for that, buddy. It's almost six o'clock.

(CHASE takes out his phone to check the time, but it doesn't work.)

BILLY (cont'd)

What's that?

CHASE

Uh, my phone.

BILLY (cont'd)

News flash. Phones have cords.

CHASE

Not cell phones.

BILLY

Is it a toy?

CHASE

No it's not a toy. You've never seen a cell phone before?

BILLY

Nope.

CHASE

Are you home schooled?

BILLY

No, I go to Roosevelt High.

CHASE

So do I. How come I've never seen you there before?

BILLY

I don't know. You must keep a low profile 'cause everybody at Roosevelt knows me. I'm Billy Cooper, the home run king.

BILLY (cont'd)

Who are you?

CHASE

Chase. Anderson.



BILLY

How does your phone work, Chase Anderson?

CHASE

I could show you, but for some reason it's not working. It actually does a lot of stuff. You can send messages, it has a camera, calculator, GPS, and you can access the internet.

BILLY (cont'd)

The what?

CHASE

The internet. Are you messing with me?

BILLY

No. I never heard of it.

CHASE

You can use it to look up things.

BILLY

Like an encyclopedia? Can you look up nudie pictures?

CHASE (cont'd)

Thousands of them. You can even watch videos of people having live sex!

(BILLY pauses, then laughs.)

BILLY

That's a good one. You had me going there for a minute. Come in and you can meet Ma.

CHASE

I, uh can't. It's important I get to school.

BILLY

No one will be there except the janitor. Look, it's dark. Come on in. You hungry? Ma's a great cook and it's casserole night.

(CHASE follows BILLY inside. JUDY enters from stage right with a laundry basket full of clothes. )

BILLY (cont'd)

Hi, Ma. This is Chase.

JUDY

Nice to meet ya, Chase. Help yourself to some cookies on the counter, boys. But not too many. I have a tuna casserole almost ready.

CHASE

Are you a maid?

JUDY

Hah! I might as well be with all the housework I do.

BILLY

She's not a maid. She's just obsessed with ironing.

(She eyes Chase.)

JUDY

That shirt could use a once over. Why don't you take it off and I'll give it a quick zip.

CHASE

Um, that's okay.

JUDY

Come on. A handsome young man like yourself shouldn't be a wrinkled mess. I'll have it done in a jiffy.

(She walks over to help him take it off, but he resists.)

CHASE

Fine, I got it, thanks.

(He removes his shirt and hands it to Judy.)

CHASE (cont'd)

Why are you ironing here?

JUDY

There's better light in the living room than in the laundry room and I can watch TV. Today I cried so much watching "Days of our Lives" I didn't even need spray starch. Doesn't your mama iron?

CHASE

She doesn't believe in it. Says it's against her religion.

JUDY

What religion is that?

CHASE

It's a joke. She just hates to iron.

JUDY

Well I agree with her on that one. What religion are you?

CHASE

We don't really have one.

(JUDY stops ironing.)

JUDY

No religion? Then what do you believe?

CHASE

That things are out of whack. Our values, ideals, our very character is under attack and we got to do something about it.

JUDY

You'll like my husband. He hates the communists too.

CHASE

Communists, social democrats, Green Party. They all want to destroy the American way of life.

BILLY

We're Catholic by the way.

JUDY

Even saw Pope Paul the first time he came to New York. We were up pretty high at Yankee Stadium, but you could still see his little red hat and feel his holiness even way up there in the cheap seats.

CHASE

Pope Paul? When was that?

JUDY

October 4th, 1965. I'll never forget it as long as I live.

CHASE

Were you a baby?

JUDY

No silly. It was six years ago.

(Chase looks around at a few dated  
nicknacks with a growing realization.)

CHASE

So it's ...1971 now?

BILLY

Of course it's 1971. What year did you think it was?

CHASE

2020. That's when my family and I live in this house. We moved here in 2011.

JUDY

Well I'll be a monkey's uncle. It's happening again.

CHASE

What is?

JUDY

A time mash-up. This house has a habit of throwing people backwards and forwards through time.

CHASE

A time mash-up?

BILLY

Yeah, you know, like the Enterprise, traveling through the space-time continuum.

CHASE

The Enterprise like on "Star Trek?"

BILLY

Yep! Remember the time we went back to the Depression, Ma?

JUDY

How could I forget it? Nothing but potatoes for a week! But it's surprising how many things you can do with potatoes if you have to.

CHASE

Can you control where you go? What time I mean?

BILLY

Nope. There's no tellin' where you'll end up.

JUDY

But it seems to happen in chaotic times. Like the world is being shaken up and time collapses with everything else.

BILLY

Do you have any more future stuff with you? Other than your pocket phone that doesn't work?

CHASE

Uh, not really.

BILLY

What's in your duffel bag?

(CHASE clamps the bag close to him.)

CHASE

Nothing futuristic. Just some... gym clothes and a book I think.

BILLY

What's the book? What are kids reading in 2020?

(CHASE unzips the bag just a little, sticks his hand in, pulls out a small book and hands it to BILLY. It's clear he's hiding something.)

BILLY (cont'd)

"The Catcher in the Rye?" High school kids are *still* reading this? Well *that's* depressing.

(PENNY makes a grand entrance from stage left with a book bag, heads straight to the oven and opens it.)

PENNY

I smell tuna casserole! Must be Wednesday.

(She throws her book bag at the bottom of the stairs and notices CHASE. He's embarrassed by his nakedness.)

PENNY is impressed by it. She walks over to him and shakes his hand.)

PENNY (cont'd)

It's not every day I get to come home to a half naked boy.

BILLY

Penny, meet Chase. Chase meet Penny.

CHASE

(to Judy)

Could I get my shirt back ...please?

(JUDY hands him his shirt and he quickly puts it back on.)

BILLY

He's from the future.

PENNY

Future farmers of America?

BILLY

No. From the future, future - 2020. He lives in this house with his family.

PENNY

Far out. What brings you to 1971?

CHASE

I have no idea.

PENNY

Soda pop, Chase?

CHASE

Sure. I'm actually pretty thirsty.

(PENNY grabs two soda bottles out of the fridge and opens them with a bottle opener.)

PENNY

Doesn't surprise me. Time travel is very dehydrating.

JUDY

I have a skin product for that.

BILLY

I'll take a soda pop.

PENNY

Get it yourself.

(turning to Chase)

So tell me about the future. Is racism gone? When does the ERA pass? What year is the first female president elected?

CHASE

Uh, unfortunately, none of those things have happened yet. But a female candidate won the popular vote in 2016.

PENNY

So the archaic electoral college is also still around, eh?

CHASE

Afraid so.

PENNY

What have we accomplished as a human race? The end of war, poverty, disease?

CHASE

Nope. All those things are still around. Fossil fuels are causing the climate to change and we recently had a major worldwide pandemic.

BILLY

But there are cool pocket phones that show real sex.

PENNY

Well *that's* good to know. Entrenched patriarchy and world turmoil still exist, but at least we get to watch other people having sex on our pocket phones.

CHASE

They do other things too.

HANK

I'm home and I'm starved. Hope dinner's ready.

(HANK has appeared from stage left and washes his greasy hands in the kitchen sink.)

JUDY

It is. Have a seat and I'll pull it out. You kids as well.

CHASE

Can I give you a hand?

(The whole family stops and stares at him as if he's an alien - because he kind of is.)

HANK

Who are you?

PENNY

He's Chuck from the future.

CHASE

Chase.

PENNY

Lives in this house in 2020.

HANK

Well sit down, Chuck from the future. I'm starvin' and Mama makes a swell tuna casserole.

JUDY

Thank you, Sweetie.

(Everyone sits, Judy serves the casserole, then joins them.)

HANK

Hey, since you're from the future, who wins the Super Bowl this year? We can put some money on the game.

CHASE

I'm not sure. I don't really follow sports.

HANK

You don't?!

BILLY

You don't?!

HANK

That's not very American. How's the casserole?



CHASE

(being diplomatic)  
Best tuna casserole I've ever had.

(PENNY reacts to the smell.)

HANK

Why aren't you eating, Penny?

PENNY

I'm not really hungry. Had a late lunch.

HANK

Your mother worked hard on this and I worked hard to pay for it, so eat it.

(Penny does her best, but she's *really*  
nauseous.)

JUDY

What does your mother cook, Chase?

CHASE

She doesn't really cook that much because she works late.

HANK

See what happens when women work? Their families starve.

CHASE

We eat, but it's usually takeout from a restaurant or frozen food.

PENNY

What does your mom do for work?

CHASE

She's a psychiatrist.

PENNY

A female doctor. How cool!

CHASE

There are lots of female doctors now, and lawyers and astronauts. Even combat soldiers.

HANK

That's ridiculous.

PENNY

Why?

HANK

War is brutal. We shouldn't subject women to it.

PENNY

We shouldn't subject anyone to it.

HANK

War is necessary to fight evil, Penny. America has a responsibility to maintain world order. Be the shining city on a hill, the beacon of hope for democracy. Like fighting the commies in Vietnam. Just something we gotta do.

BILLY

Do we win the war in Vietnam, Chase?

(Chase hesitates. Looks around the table.)

BILLY (cont'd)

Come on. I can handle it.

CHASE

No. We don't. Saigon falls to the communists, in 1975 I think, and the South Vietnamese surrender.

HANK

That's ridiculous! America never loses.

CHASE

Sorry, but this time we do. We've been at war in Afghanistan my whole life, but there's no more draft so it's easier for people to forget that we're at war. Except for the soldiers who are fighting it, of course, - and all the civilians who die.

JUDY

You see, Billy. You can't go. There's no point if we're just going to lose any way.

HANK

He's not going. So what are you worried about?

(Strained silence.)

BILLY

I enlisted, Pops. I got my papers yesterday.

(HANK is crushed.)

HANK

Why won't anyone in this family listen to me?! You have no idea what you're in for, son. It will break you. When you get home you'll try and put the pieces back together, but they... they never fit back in the right way again.

BILLY

Maybe I could go to college.

HANK

It's too late! You'd be a deserter. They'd find you and arrest you.

CHASE

He could go to Canada.

HANK

And hide like a coward? No way! Coopers ain't cowards. What's done is done. You gave your word and now you'll go. Win or lose, you'll serve your country and we'll pray to God to keep you safe.

(JUDY crosses herself. Lights down. HANK, BILLY and PENNY exit and the table is cleared off.)

RECORDING: 1971 ARMY RECRUITMENT  
RADIO AD

We know you have pride in yourself and in what your country can be. We know you have a brain and your own ideas. We know you'd like to share your ideas with young men and women from all parts of this country. We know you'd like to further your education, learn a skill, have opportunity for advancement and thirty days vacation a year. We also know you put a price on these things. The price is your individuality, and you question the Army's willingness to pay this price. Today's army is willing to pay this price. We're committed to eliminating unnecessary formations, skinhead haircuts, signing in and make work projects. In today's army you'll find more mature personnel policies at every level. If you'd like to serve yourself as you serve your country, today's Army wants to join you.

SCENE 10: 2020

(Dim lights come up on CHASE sleeping on the couch.)

BILLY creeps downstairs, steps on the creaky first step and winces, but CHASE doesn't wake. BILLY sneaks over to the duffel bag and slowly unzips it. He opens it and pulls out the M4. He's awed by it. He takes it upstairs quietly and the lights go down. When they come up, BILLY is gone and DIANE comes out dressed from her bedroom. CHASE sits up.)

CHASE

Mom? Thank God!

(He gets up and gives her a hug.)

DIANE

Wow. What's wrong? Why did you sleep on the couch?

CHASE

You're never going to believe this, but I traveled back in time and met the family who used to live here in 1971. They had a son and daughter the same age as me and Sophia and two parents a little younger than you and dad.

(DIANE makes a cup of tea.)

DIANE

That sounds like quite a dream.

CHASE

It wasn't a dream. It was real! I ate tuna casserole. Smell my breath.

DIANE

Honey, I know you've been feeling alienated lately at school and -

CHASE

(yells)

STOP ANALYZING ME!

MICHAEL (OFF STAGE)

(presumably from the master bathroom or walk-in closet we can't see)  
Everything okay out there?

DIANE

Yes, Michael.  
(to Chase)  
Please don't yell, honey.

CHASE

I'm sorry, Mom, but I keep trying to talk to you and you won't listen to me. I'm telling you something important.

DIANE

Okay, I'm sorry. Go ahead. I'm listening.

(She turns to him and gives him her full attention. Thinking, he rushes over to the duffel bag and unzips it to find the gun gone.)

CHASE

Oh, no. I had something in here that Billy took. God damn it!

DIANE

Who's Billy?

CHASE

The kid I just told you about who lives here in 1971.

DIANE

What'd he take?

CHASE

I, I can't tell you. Something important... and expensive.

DIANE

If it's drugs you can tell -

CHASE

It's not drugs. The point is this house is a kind of portal. You can travel through time or at least I did. My phone didn't work, but I didn't need it because no one has phones back then. So they have to talk to each other... in person. The other mother -

DIANE

Other mother?

CHASE

Yeah, the one who lives here in 1971. She says it happens during chaotic times. Like the world is trying to wake us up.

DIANE

That's... very interesting.

CHASE

You still don't believe me, do you?

DIANE

I believe you believe it.

CHASE

That's not the same as believing me.

(He gives up, grabs his duffel bag and angrily heads for the door.)

DIANE

Where are you going?

CHASE

School.

DIANE

Don't you want to wait for your sister?

CHASE

No. She's probably not going anyway.

(He exits stage left, DIANE gets the cup of tea and walks it up to SOPHIA'S room. She's completely under her covers.)

DIANE

Hey, baby. I brought you some tea.

(No response from SOPHIA, and DIANE puts the tea on her bedside table.)

DIANE (cont'd)

What's going on?

SOPHIA

Don't you have to go to work?

DIANE

I do. I have a client in about an hour. But I always have time for you. Or rather I will. I'm quitting my job... or at least taking a sabbatical.

(SOPHIA lowers the blanket and sits up.)

SOPHIA

You are? Don't do it for me.

DIANE

I'm not. I'm doing it for me. I want to spend more time with you.

(Sophia picks up her tea cup and exposes her fresh scar.)

DIANE (cont'd)

Sophia! I thought you stopped cutting.

SOPHIA

I did. (beat) But then I started again.

(Diane sits on her bed.)

DIANE

Why, angel?

SOPHIA

Because I was angry. But I also numb. I wanted to feel. And also release.

DIANE

You know there are healthier methods -

SOPHIA

I KNOW, Mom. I really don't need a lecture right now.

DIANE

Can I have the razor blade?

(Sophia hesitates, then gives it to her.)

DIANE (cont'd)

How about I pick you up from school today and we do something fun together?

SOPHIA

Like what?

DIANE

I don't know, your choice. But you have to go to school.

SOPHIA

I hate it there, Mom.

DIANE

I know, but sometimes we have to do things we hate... just to get through them.

SOPHIA

Can we go to the Cheesecake Factory?

DIANE

Sure.

SOPHIA

Then okay.

(She gets out of bed, grabs her backpack, trudges down the stairs and out the door like she's heading to the gallows. DIANE straightens up her room. JUDY walks in downstairs with her Mary Kay kit and DIANE hears the door open.)

DIANE

Did you forget something?

JUDY

Hello?

(Diane heads downstairs to investigate.)

DIANE

Can I help you?

(Judy looks around.)

JUDY

Oh my God. I'm in 2020 and you're Chase's mom!



DIANE

Yes...

JUDY

He told me all about you. You're a doctor. You have an eighteen year-old son and sixteen year-old daughter -

DIANE

Sophia.

JUDY

Just like me. But you cook frozen food and don't iron!

DIANE

Well I buy clothes that don't need - I'm sorry. How did you get in?

JUDY

My key.

(holds it up)

It looks like the locks were never changed. The place looks pretty good. How is the roof?

DIANE

It was terrible. Every time it rained it leaked -

DIANE (cont'd)

In the master bedroom.

JUDY

In the master bedroom.

JUDY (cont'd)

I know. I'm really sorry about that. My hubby repaired it himself.

DIANE

We had to replace the whole damn thing. Oh my God.

(Diane sits down, stunned.)

JUDY

What's wrong?

DIANE

I didn't believe Chase when he told me he traveled back in time.

JUDY

I don't blame you. It's pretty freaky-deaky and you're a scientist.

DIANE

A psychiatrist actually.

JUDY

Is it hard?

DIANE

Is what hard?

JUDY

Listening to people's problems all day?

DIANE

No. Having problems is just life. Not being able to help people is hard.

JUDY

Wow, women's lib worked didn't it? You're a doctor *and* you're raising amazing kids. I bet you have a great marriage too.

DIANE

Um, well, I love my husband...

JUDY

But?

DIANE

I think he's sleeping with another woman. I can't believe I just told you that.

JUDY

Your secret is safe with me. There's no one in my time who would even know you.

DIANE

I was sixteen in 1971. The same age Sophia is now.

JUDY

Why do you think your hubby is romping with someone?

DIANE

I can smell her on him. He bought a new cologne to hide her smell, but it didn't work.

JUDY

I'm sorry.

DIANE

Yeah.

JUDY

I know what you need!

DIANE

What?

JUDY

A make-over!

(Judy opens her kit on the table and starts pulling out make-up.)

DIANE

Oh no, that's okay. I don't wear much make-up.

JUDY

That could be part of the problem! Come on, I'll make you into a whole new you. You'll see.

(DIANE relents and JUDY starts to work on her.)

JUDY (cont'd)

Nothin' allows you to look at the world differently like a luscious new mascara. You've got great skin, but it's a little sallow. Some bright pink rouge will brighten your whole face. It's amazing you have so few wrinkles. How old are you?

DIANE

Forty-six. It's Botox.

JUDY

What's that?

DIANE

A neurotoxin that paralyzes your facial muscles and reduces the lines in your face.

JUDY

That sounds like a horror movie. Do all women do it?

DIANE

Nope. Just the women who can afford it.

JUDY

You're tellin' me the rich women of the future stay young, but the poor ones still get old?

DIANE

Pretty much.

JUDY

Jeez Louise.

DIANE

Are you a make-up artist?

JUDY

I'm learning. I just started with Mary Kay, but I'm doing pretty good so far.

DIANE

Are you going to earn a pink Cadillac?

JUDY

Yes! I want to anyway. My husband, Hank, says it's a gimmick. But gimmick or not, I got to make my own money.

DIANE

Making money is good.

JUDY

I need to leave my husband.

DIANE

Why?

JUDY

He's... abusive and I'm tired of walking on eggshells.

DIANE

You don't have to earn money to leave him. If you divorce him he'd have to pay you alimony and child support until your daughter turns eighteen.

JUDY

I know, but I don't know how to be on my own. I got married when I was nineteen. The first time I left home was for our honeymoon, and we just rented a cabin on Green Lake an hour away.

DIANE

Do you still love him?

JUDY

I do. Our marriage is like a telephone wire. All the pretty colored plastic stuff got stripped off, but the strong copper stuff underneath still holds us together.

DIANE

You'll figure it out.

JUDY

That's easy for you to say. You're a doctor with a *career*! You can do whatever you want.

DIANE

I want to quit my job actually.

JUDY

Why?

DIANE

Because I want my family back... before I lose them.

(HANK barges through the door startling  
both of them.)

HANK

Sweetheart, I'm home! What the hell happened to the house?

JUDY

We're in the future. 2020.

HANK

Mother of Mary. I *hate* traveling to the future. As if there ain't enough change goin' on in 1971!

JUDY

This is Chase's mom, Diane.

HANK

It's good to meet ya'. You need to teach your son a sport. It just ain't American not to play sports.

DIANE

We tried. He never showed any interest.

HANK

You got anything to eat? I'm so hungry I could eat a mule.

DIANE

Uh, I have a veggie lasagne in the freezer. Marie Calendar's I think.

HANK

Oh, I see. This is the woman who starves her family.

DIANE

I don't starve my family.

HANK

That's not what your son said.

DIANE

Chase said I starve him?

HANK

Yep.

JUDY

No.

JUDY (cont'd)

He didn't say you starve them. He said you cook frozen food.

HANK

Same difference. A woman should make a home cooked meal when her husband works hard all day.

DIANE

I work too!

HANK

That's the problem now, ain't it?

DIANE

Most households can't get by in the twenty-first century on one income. We don't really have a choice.

HANK

How do we get back to our time? I want a steak!

DIANE

I have no idea. How did you get here?

HANK

Turned left on Maple on right on Myrtle - just like always.

DIANE

Maybe you have to leave and come back.

(Hank steps right outside the door and immediately comes back.)

HANK

Nope!

DIANE

Then I don't know what to tell you. You two are the experienced time travelers. Don't you know how to go back?

JUDY

There doesn't seem to be much rhyme or reason to it. Maybe we gotta learn something to take back with us.

HANK

Well you sure as shit ain't gonna learn nothin' here. Let's go get some real food and hopefully when we get back it'll be our house in our time.

JUDY

No.

HANK

What do you mean "no?"

JUDY

I'm not leaving with you. Go eat yourself. I'm *working*, doing Diane's make-up.

JUDY (cont'd)

It's fine. I'm -

HANK

See the garbage you're already learning? Disobeying your husband! I'll teach you not to disobey your husband. He grabs her forcefully by the arm and drags her out of the house.

DIANE

Wait. Stop it. Let her go! She doesn't have to go with you!

(DIANE is torn. She looks at her watch, then grabs her briefcase and exits. Lights down.)

ACT TWO

## SCENE 11: 2020

(Lights up on DIANE, who sits in a chair with a pad and pen. Her client, KARL, a nerdy scientist type, played by the same actor who plays HANK, sits on a couch in her office.)

KARL

Are you all right? You seem upset.

DIANE

Just a little distracted. I apologize.

KARL

Trouble in paradise?

DIANE

No one's life is paradise, Karl. Everyone has challenges. How did the online dating go?

KARL

Terrible! The women in this town are all the same, except for you of course. All they care about is money. The first thing they ask is what I do.

DIANE

Maybe they actually want to know what you do. Conversation has to start somewhere.

KARL

Sure, but when I tell them I'm a theoretical physicist their eyes just glaze over.

DIANE

You've seen someone in person?

KARL

No, just over my computer. I don't get that far. I just can't seem to... connect.

DIANE

You have to try and find something that's mutually interesting and make it relevant to the person you're with.

KARL

Like what?



DIANE

Do you remember when you were excited to explain time travel to me?

KARL

Yes, but how is it relevant to you?

DIANE

Well I've been exploring it for a... book I'm writing. I've been thinking "what if there were fissures in the fourth dimension?"

KARL

I don't think I used the word "fissures."

DIANE

It doesn't matter. What if there were time quakes, like earth quakes where the world's psyche was so damaged that it cracked open and you could slip into the...

KARL

Fissures?

DIANE

Right, fissures, and find yourself in the same space, but in a different time. You could actually interact with people who lived in that different time.

KARL

It's not probable, but anything is possible if we can conceive it with our limited mind. Like my feelings for you. I know they're real, that they permeate both space and time.

DIANE

We've talked about this, Karl. There's a professional boundary you have to respect.

KARL

Fuck boundaries. True love doesn't have boundaries. Look at Romeo and Juliet.

DIANE

It didn't end well for them. But I'm talking about a doctor patient relationship. It has to stay professional.

KARL

But you told me you care about me.

DIANE

I do care about you, but as my client, Karl. I don't have romantic feelings for you.

KARL

You're so full of bullshit.

(KARL gets up and Diane recoils as if he's coming after her, but he just paces.)

KARL (cont'd)

You're *exactly* like all the other women in this town. Only instead of sex, you peddle therapy. But you charge for it just the same.

DIANE

I think we should talk about finding someone else for you to work with.

KARL

Now you're *quitting* on me - when you know I have abandonment issues?

DIANE

I'm not abandoning you - just transitioning you to someone who can help you keep progressing. Our hour is almost up.

KARL

See, you even charge by the hour just like prostitutes do. Well here you go.

(He takes out a wad of cash from his pocket and throws a few bills at her.)

KARL (cont'd)

Buy yourself something pretty. Something that shows off your legs you like to flash so much.

(KARL exits as the lights down.)

RECORDING: JOAN BAEZ SINGING "THE NIGHT THEY DROVE OLD DIXIE DOWN"

Virgil Kane is the name and I served on the Danville train 'till Stoneman's cavalry came and tore up the tracks again. In the winter of '65 we were hungry, just barely alive. By May the 10th, Richmond had fell, it's a time I remember, oh so well. The night they drove old Dixie down, and the bells were ringing. The night they drove old Dixie down and the people were singing. They went, "Na, na, la, na, na, la."

SCENE 12: 1971

(Lights up on PENNY singing in her room as she looks at herself in the mirror to see if her pregnancy is showing yet.)

SOPHIA enters and can't figure out why her phone won't work. She heads up the stairs to her room. She hears the music and knocks on the door.)

SOPHIA

Hello? Is someone in there?

(PENNY turns the music down on a radio and opens the door. Checks out SOPHIA and her weird clothes.)

SOPHIA (cont'd)

Who are you?

PENNY

I'm Penny. You must be Sophia. Chase told me about you.

SOPHIA

Likewise. Am I really in 1971?

PENNY

Yep. Can you dig it?

SOPHIA

I guess it explains why my phone won't work.

PENNY

You have a pocket phone too? Do you watch sex on it?

SOPHIA

No. Is that what Chase does?

PENNY

He said everybody watches sex on them.

SOPHIA

Not everybody. All teenage boys maybe.

PENNY

Come in! Come in! I want to hear all about 2020 from a girl's perspective.

(SOPHIA slowly walks into Penny's room and looks around.)

SOPHIA  
Bobby Sherman, huh?

PENNY  
Yeah, isn't he dreamy?

SOPHIA  
I can't get past the hair.

PENNY  
So the Farrah Fawcett style doesn't stick?

SOPHIA  
No.

PENNY  
Thank God. 'Cause it takes *way* too much Aqua Net to maintain. Our school recently banned it 'cause girls were having hair spray fights.

SOPHIA  
Girls mostly fight through social media now.

PENNY  
What's that?

SOPHIA  
Um, it's kind of like a forum in digital space.

PENNY  
How do you access it?

SOPHIA  
With our computers... and pocket phones.

PENNY  
Far out. But how do you fight in a space that's not... actually real?

SOPHIA  
Good question. We do everything now in the digital space. Gossip, listen to music, meet people, create stuff. All from the comfort of our own beds.

PENNY  
Does it get lonely, not actually being with people... in the real world?

SOPHIA

Yeah, it does. I bet you have a ton of friends.

PENNY

I do. We're protesting the Vietnam War.

SOPHIA

That's good. It's a terrible war.

PENNY

Aren't all wars terrible?

SOPHIA

I suppose so. Do you have a boyfriend?

PENNY

I did.

SOPHIA

Did you break up?

PENNY

Not exactly. I got...

(She touches her stomach.)

SOPHIA

Pregnant?

(Penny nods "yes.")

SOPHIA (cont'd)

What are you going to do?

PENNY

What can I do? I'm Catholic.

SOPHIA

Do you want a baby?

PENNY

No! Not now anyway. I wanna go to college and be a journalist.

SOPHIA

Then what about getting an abortion?

PENNY

I've thought about it, but my parents will never forgive me.

SOPHIA

Then the burden's on them. How far along are you?

PENNY

About eight weeks - I think.

SOPHIA

Then you better go soon.

PENNY

By myself?

SOPHIA

Your boyfriend should go with you. You didn't get pregnant alone.

PENNY

Are all girls as strong as you in the future?

SOPHIA

I'm not strong. But I do care about the right to an abortion. Women fought so hard for it and now it looks like we could lose it again.

PENNY

Are you kidding?

SOPHIA

I wish. We took it for granted that we would keep control over our own bodies.

PENNY

You can't take anything for granted. You got to speak up and say what you want.

SOPHIA

Like an abortion.

(BILLY enters from stage left with two suitcases and carries them up the stairs. He knocks on PENNY'S door. She opens it.)

PENNY

Come meet Sophia, Chase's sister.

(He brings one of the suitcases into Penny's  
bedroom and puts it in the corner.)

BILLY

Oh, hi. Chase told me all about you.

SOPHIA

He did? He hardly even talks to me.

BILLY

He says you're an amazing artist.

SOPHIA

I don't know about amazing. I like to draw stuff and write poems.

PENNY

Tell us one of your poems!

SOPHIA

I can't. They're all in my phone.

PENNY

Wow, sex *and* poetry. Pocket phones really are magical.

(to Billy)

What's with the suitcases?

BILLY

Ma told me to buy them and bring them home before Pops gets back from work. She says we're really going to do it this time.

PENNY

We're leaving? Where are we going?

BILLY

To stay with Uncle Bob until we can get our own place.

PENNY

But that's three hours away! I have to go talk to Johnny. Stay with Sophia. I'll be back as soon as I can.

(She runs out of the room, down the stairs and out the door. It's a little awkward for Billy and Sophia.)

SOPHIA

So, uh, are you a senior like Chase?

BILLY

Yeah, just a couple more months to go.

SOPHIA

Then off to college?

BILLY

Nah, at least not now. I've enlisted in the Marines.

SOPHIA

Why? You'll be sent to Vietnam.

BILLY

'Cause I want to get out of here. I hate school, I'm not good at it, but I want to do something important, something exciting while I'm still young. I definitely don't want to work in my father's tire shop.

SOPHIA

I can understand that. Do your parents want you to go?

BILLY

No, they don't. Even my Pops, who's a World War II vet.

SOPHIA

Why doesn't he want you to go?

BILLY

'Cause he knows how bad it can be. He was in Bataan, on the death march.

SOPHIA

Oh.

BILLY

It broke him. I think it's why he's so mean.

SOPHIA

The war in Vietnam goes on for another -



BILLY

Don't tell me. It's better if I don't know. Chase already told me that we lose.

SOPHIA

They're never any real winners in war.

BILLY

Maybe, but I feel like I was meant to be a soldier, that I'll be good at it. You know, brave out there in the jungle.

SOPHIA

Brave soldiers get killed.

BILLY

Then you better kiss me.

SOPHIA

What?

BILLY

If I'm going to die, the least I deserve is to get kissed by a beautiful girl.

SOPHIA

You think I'm beautiful?

(He leans in and they share an innocent kiss.)

BILLY

I have to show you something I got from Chase.

SOPHIA

Okay.

(Billy goes next door to his room, gets the Colt M-4 and brings it back to Penny's room.)

SOPHIA (cont'd)

Oh my God. You got that from Chase?!

BILLY

Yeah, well from his bag. I took it when he was sleeping.

SOPHIA

I wonder where he got it.

BILLY

What's it for? Is he a soldier?

SOPHIA

No. I'm scared to think what it's for. You have to get rid of it.

BILLY

Are you kidding?! A modern gun from the future. It could help turn the tide of the war in Vietnam. I'm gonna bring it with me.

SOPHIA

No, you can't change history.

BILLY

Why not? If it's for the better!

SOPHIA

Because you never know what it could lead to.

(Downstairs JUDY scurries through the door stage left and calls upstairs. BILLY quickly returns the gun to his room and stashes it under his bed.)

JUDY

Billy! Penny! Are you packed?

(She races up the stairs as BILLY emerges from his room.)

BILLY

Penny's not here. She went to Johnny's.

JUDY

Didn't you tell her to pack?

BILLY

It seemed pretty important.

JUDY

This is more important! We have to pack and get out of here before your father gets home.

(JUDY walks into Penny's room.)

JUDY (cont'd)

Sophia?

SOPHIA

How do you know my name?

JUDY

I met your mom in the future downstairs. She gave me the courage to leave. We have to pack quick. I can't believe Penny left.

SOPHIA

I can pack for her.

JUDY

You can?

SOPHIA

Well, the essentials at least.

JUDY

Oh, thank you. You're so capable - just like your mom.

(The lights go down. Judy and Billy exit the stage. Sophia stands center stage and reads a poem from her phone in a spotlight.)

SOPHIA

Walls are all around me and inside me  
 Keeping me from being whole  
 Connections broken  
 Friendships tokens  
 Together we stand  
 Alone we sit in our rooms  
 Connected through the walls of our computers  
 Border walls like bathroom stalls  
 Preventing us from seeing each other  
 Breaking walls and standing tall  
 Seeing people eye to eye  
 Touching, smelling, hearing, tasting  
 Remembering how to be human

(Spotlight fades and SOPHIA exits.)

## SCENE 13: 2020

(Lights up on DIANE vacuuming. The doorbell rings and she turns off the vacuum and opens the door stage left. It's LIZ, played by the actress who plays Judy, carrying a purse and a bag from a fancy grocery store.)

DIANE

Hi, Liz.

(LIZ leans in for a cheek kiss and DIANE gets a whiff of her hair.)

LIZ

I brought us some fresh mozzarella and sun-dried tomato sandwiches from Whole Foods. I always knew that inside you were a lady who lunches. Were you just vacuuming?

DIANE

Yes, it'd been a while. The dust bunnies were riding dust bunnies.

(DIANE takes off her apron and sets the table for lunch. LIZ takes a seat.)

LIZ

Don't you have a maid?

DIANE

No, why? Looking for a job?

LIZ

No thanks. Alimony pays just fine thank you very much.

DIANE

Had a good divorce lawyer did you?

LIZ

The best. Why? Do you need one?

DIANE

Nope, I'm good.

LIZ

Don't forget the wine.

DIANE

Oh, I won't.

(She grabs a bottle of white win from the fridge and joins LIZ at the table. She twists off a screw top.)

LIZ

(sarcastic)  
Only the best for me, eh?

DIANE

The perfect wine for the occasion.

(LIZ is a little perplexed as DIANE pours the wine into two glasses. They pick them up to clink.)

LIZ

Cheers.

DIANE

I want you to stop screwing my husband.

LIZ

Diane, I don't know what you're -

DIANE

Jus stop it. It's worse if you deny it.

(A stone cold silence. Liz drinks a big swig of wine.)

LIZ

How did you know?

DIANE

I smelled you on him.

LIZ

Even with all that awful cologne?

DIANE

That's what I smelled. Why? How? You've been like a sister to me.

LIZ

You weren't having sex together. You told me so yourself.

DIANE

So that gave you permission to sleep with him?

LIZ

Not permission. But men have needs that you weren't fulfilling -

DIANE

Screw you. You messed up your own marriage banging the pool boy and now you want to screw up mine by fucking Michael?

LIZ

You're not happy with him.

DIANE

I'm not happy with me! It has nothing to do with Michael.

LIZ

Bullshit! You're like two roommates with nothing in common anymore. Do you even know what's happening at his firm?

DIANE

Of course I do.

LIZ

Then what's happening.

DIANE

Well... I know there's been friction amongst the managing partners.

LIZ

More than friction, Diane. The whole firm is imploding and he's not sure he'll even have a job in a month from now.

DIANE

He would have told me that.

LIZ

Yeah, maybe before. But not now that you want to quit your job.

DIANE

How would he know that?

(LIZ looks away.)

DIANE (cont'd)

Of course, you told him, didn't you? I shared that in confidence, Liz, but I guess nothing is sacred to you.

LIZ

My love for Michael is sacred.

DIANE

Give me a fucking break. The only thing sacred to you is finding some sucker to pay for your designer, pathetic life.

LIZ

You'd both be happier apart.

DIANE

You don't really believe that. We had what you and Phillip never did and you're a lonely, vindictive bitch.

LIZ

At least I know how to satisfy a man.

(Chase walks in as Diane slaps Liz.)

CHASE

Mom!

DIANE

Stay away from my family or I'll make your life a living hell.

LIZ

You already make my life a living hell, you crazy witch doctor. No wonder your patient offed herself!

(This pushes DIANE over the edge and she attacks LIZ. The two have a crazy cat fight.)

CHASE

Hey, whoa! Take it easy, both of you!

(He pulls his mother off of Liz, who grabs her purse.)

LIZ

Jesus, Diane. You need therapy!

(LIZ storms out.)

CHASE

What the hell was that about?!

DIANE

Something I should have done a long time ago. Getting rid of a deceitful unfriend. Honey, I'm really sorry I didn't believe you about the time travel.

CHASE

But now you do?

DIANE

Yeah, Judy came here. She did my make-up.

CHASE

It looks good.

DIANE

Thanks.

CHASE

How do I get back there? To 1971? I left something I really need.

DIANE

I don't know, Chase. I'm as new to this as you are.

CHASE

Everything is so fucked up!

(He charges out of the house. DIANE collapses into a chair at the table and takes a big swig of the cheap wine. The door creaks open and HANK sticks his head in.)

DIANE

Hank?

(He walks in.)

HANK

God damn it!



DIANE

Where's Judy?

HANK

I don't know. I took her to the Sizzler, but it became some hoity toity, upscale joint called the Wild Thyme. With "thyme" spelled like the herb. Never trust a restaurant with a clever name. They didn't even have meat. Asked me if I wanted an avocado on a piece of toast. What the hell is that?

DIANE

It's a thing now.

HANK

A terrible thing if you ask me! If supper in the future is avocado on toast I don't want no part of it.

DIANE

I hear you.

HANK

Judy says she's gotta powder her nose. She goes to the lady's room and I wait like a fool eating *shaved brussel sprouts* for a salad. How the hell do you even *shave* brussel sprouts? What happened to lettuce? Is that "endangered" now too? Anyways, I go to look for her. To see if she needs help or somethin'. And she's split. Left me with an unholy bill. I guess inflation also goes bananas. Jesus, does anything go right in the future?

DIANE

Women don't have to wear pantyhose.

HANK

What's wrong with pantyhose?

DIANE

Everything. Do you want to sit down?

(He plops down, defeated.)

HANK

I wanna go home.

DIANE

I know. Want some wine?

HANK

Got any beer?

DIANE

Afraid not.

(HANK gives her a panicked look.)

DIANE (cont'd)

Don't worry. Beer still exists. We're just out.

HANK

Thank God. In that case I'll take some wine.

(She pours him a big glass and he drinks it,  
wincing.)

HANK (cont'd)

This is awful.

DIANE

I know. Sorry. You know you kind of are home, in your house anyway.

HANK

Home ain't about the house, Diane. You gotta know that.. It's about family. My family.

DIANE

I do get that.

HANK

I love them all so much. But I'm losing them. Like Penny. She was my little petunia. And now she's marching with hippies protesting the war. I don't even know who she is anymore.

DIANE

She's growing up, Hank.

HANK

Okay. But she doesn't respect me.

DIANE

Maybe. Or maybe she just wants you to accept her for who she is.

(Hank drinks more wine.)

HANK

My wife is going to leave me.

(Hank puts his head in his hands and cries.)

DIANE

Why?

HANK

Sometimes I lose my temper.

DIANE

Chase says you were in World War II.

HANK

We were the first American soldiers to fight Japs on the ground in the Philippines. Did Chase tell you that?

DIANE

No, he didn't.

HANK

We tried our best to hold 'em at Layac. So they couldn't reach Bataan. Bunch a fucking kids out of basic training. The shooting - it's super loud. You got no idea. Bullets, from every goddamn direction. My buddy - his eye - just fucking gone. And his brain - running down the back of his helmet. Can't even see what I'm shooting at - THEY can all just fucking DIE - not me though - not me... It's tough.

DIANE

What's tough?

HANK

To turn it back on, you know? That switch. The switch to make you human again. To make you feel again.

DIANE

It's tough, but not impossible. You can get help at a VA Hospital. You've got Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. They call it Shell Shock in your time.

HANK

Billy signed up for Vietnam. The idiot. I tried to warn him.

(beat)

I need more of that bad wine.

(She pours him the rest of the bottle.)

DIANE

Don't worry. I won't tell anyone.

HANK

What?

DIANE

That you drank white wine.

(HANK smiles. JUDY marches down the stairs with a suitcase until she sees HANK and stops cold.)

JUDY

What are you doing here?

HANK

I didn't know where else to go. I hoped I was coming home... that you'd be here.

JUDY

Yeah... well...

HANK

(referring to the suitcase)

You're leaving me, aren't you?

JUDY

The kids and I are going to Uncle Bob's, assuming we can get back to 1971, because I doubt he's still alive now the way he drinks.

HANK

Will you give me another chance, Judy? Please? Diane says I can get help at the VA. You know, so I won't get so angry. So - out of control.

JUDY

You've said that before, Hank.

HANK

But I can change.

JUDY

You hate change!

HANK

Yeah, sure. Change outside a me. 'Cause I don't know where I fit in no more. But not change inside a me. I know I gotta do better. I can't stand that look on your face.

JUDY

What look?

HANK

When you're disappointed in me.

JUDY

I can't live waiting for you to snap. When you hit me I burn up inside with anger. But when you hit the kids, I'm ashamed because I'm too scared to stand up to you and I just want to disappear. To pretend I'm some place else. Well now I'm here and I don't have to pretend any more.

HANK

I don't want to hit you. Any of you's. You gotta believe me. Something in the war broke me. Broke that part of me that stays in control. But you know I love you and I can't... I can't live without you.

(They stand for a moment in silence as  
JUDY deliberates.)

JUDY

You gotta call that hospital as soon as we get back. And no more calling me names or hitting me. And if you ever raise a hand to either one of the kids, I swear to God I will walk out and never look back.

HANK

I promise.

JUDY

I need some air.

HANK

Wanna go on a walk?

JUDY

Where?

HANK

Around the neighborhood. See how things have changed and what's still the same. Then maybe when we get back we'll be home and can get something decent to eat.

(He holds the door open for JUDY, she walks out and he follows.)

HANK (OFF STAGE) (cont'd)  
 'Cause I rather starve than eat shaved brussel sprouts!

SCENE 14: 1971

(Lights up on PENNY entering stage right.)

PENNY  
 Billy! Sophia! I'm home! Hello? Is anyone home? Hm.

(CHASE opens the door stage left and walks in carrying his empty duffel bag.)

PENNY (cont'd)  
 Hi, Chase. Have you seen my mother or brother, or your sister? They were all here when I left. Packing to leave.

CHASE  
 Where are they going?

PENNY  
 We're leaving my father.

CHASE  
 Like in time or space?

PENNY  
 Space. Maybe time. I'm not sure. We're going to my Uncle Bob's. What are you doing here?

CHASE  
 I've been trying to get back here to get something that Billy took from me.

PENNY  
 A token from the future, eh?

CHASE  
 Uh, sort of.

PENNY  
 What is it?

CHASE

Kind of a guy thing. I'm guessing it's in his room.

PENNY

Well go on up. You know the way.

(CHASE scrambles up the stairs, finds the gun under the bed, puts it in the duffel bag and heads back downstairs. PENNY gets a box of Pop-Tarts from the kitchen and takes one out to eat. CHASE comes back downstairs as casually as he can.)

PENNY (cont'd)

Wanna Pop-Tart?

CHASE

Uh, sure. I'm pretty hungry, actually.

PENNY

Nothing builds an appetite like good old fashioned time travel. Have a seat and I'll get you a glass of milk.

(Not sure what to do with the duffel bag, he puts it by the door and has a seat. He eats a Pop-Tart while Penny gets whole milk and two glasses and joins him at the table.)

CHASE

Wow, this milk tastes really good.

PENNY

Does it taste different in the future?

CHASE

They take the fat out of milk, and out of a lot of other things too.

PENNY

Why?

CHASE

I don't know. I guess to make people skinnier.

PENNY

Does it work?

CHASE

Nope. People are fatter than ever.

(PENNY laughs.)

PENNY

How's the Pop-Tart?

CHASE

Exactly the same.

PENNY

Well it's good to know some things don't change.

CHASE

Unfrosted blueberry is my favorite.

PENNY

Mine too! See, we have a lot in common.

CHASE

I don't think so.

PENNY

Sure we do, we're both rebels destined to do great things.

(CHASE chokes on his milk.)

CHASE

How do you know I'm a rebel?

PENNY

Because you don't like the war in your time and I don't like it in mine.

(He stares at her.)

CHASE

I wish I could stay here. Maybe I'm supposed to. Maybe the universe is trying to right a wrong - like the wrong placement of people in time.

PENNY

I don't think so. I think we're born when we are for a reason.

CHASE

Like what?



PENNY

Like to use our unique gifts to fulfill a mission.

CHASE

But how do you know if your mission is the right mission?

PENNY

I guess if it helps people, or creates something good, then it's cool. If it doesn't, then it's probably not.

CHASE

What if it rights a wrong?

PENNY

Then I would say "yes." It's a good mission. But you gotta listen to your own intuition, you jive? When I make the wrong choice it weighs on me, feels really heavy and I can't shake it. But when I make the right choice, the weight lifts off of me and I don't think about it any more.

CHASE

I would choose you if I could. You know, if I lived in 1971.

PENNY

Maybe. Or maybe you just like me because I'm different than girls in the future or because you can't be with me since we live fifty years apart.

CHASE

I don't think so. You see things in me that people in my time don't.

PENNY

I can see that you're special.

CHASE

I'm sorry to disappoint you.

(He stands to go.)

PENNY

What do you mean?

CHASE

I've got to go.

(He heads to the door stage left, grabs his duffel bag and exits. PENNY stares after the door, then goes upstairs. Lights down.)

SCENE 15: 2020

(Lights up on MICHAEL scrounging in the refrigerator. He bites a cold piece of pizza and swigs straight from the milk carton. DIANE enters stage left.)

DIANE

I caught you!

MICHAEL

Sorry.

DIANE

Liz was here today.

MICHAEL

Uh, huh.

DIANE

We had an interesting talk.

MICHAEL

Oh, yeah?

DIANE

I don't want you to see her again. Ever.

MICHAEL

I don't know what you're -

DIANE

Just stop. Please don't lie to me.

MICHAEL

No, really. Whatever she said -

DIANE

She didn't have to *say* anything, Michael. I smelled your shitty cologne all over her. So STOP LYING TO ME! For God's sake!

(A moment of silence as the two stare at each other.)

MICHAEL

Do you want me to move out?

DIANE

No, I don't want you to move out. I want you to be a man and end it with Liz! I want you to be a father and spend time with your kids. I want you to be a husband and fuck me. Stop being a God damned ghost in your own house - plugging yourself into your damn iPad to escape from everything and everyone. I want you to talk to me, Michael.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry. I feel like you listen to other people's problems all day long. The last thing you need is to hear mine.

DIANE

But I want to hear yours. That's what married couples do. We share the good stuff and blame each other for the bad stuff.

MICHAEL

But you seem so... bored with me.

DIANE

I'm not bored with you. I'm bored with me and it's affecting my job. How can I help my clients when I feel like I'm a failure in my own home? I want to quit my job, or at least take a sabbatical.

MICHAEL

You should.

DIANE

Liz said you might lose your job.

MICHAEL

I might, but if I do, I'll find another one.

DIANE

How are you such a good lawyer when you're so broken yourself?

MICHAEL

I'm not broken. I'm just... numb.

DIANE

Because you don't allow yourself to feel anything. But your actions have consequences. Liz and I have been friends for twelve years. You destroyed that. Forever.

MICHAEL

(beat)

I was jealous of your friendship. The way you shared things with her that you didn't with me.

DIANE

That's your justification for having an affair with her?

MICHAEL

No, of course not. I never meant to have an affair.

DIANE

Don't do that. Take responsibility at least.

MICHAEL

She made me feel... desirable again. You know, she'd wear sexy underwear.

DIANE

Fuck you! Are you blaming this on me? Because my underwear isn't sexy enough for you?

MICHAEL

No, of course not. I was just so stressed out at work. She was a distraction. She helped me relax and forget about things for a while.

DIANE

Do you love her?

MICHAEL

She's attractive on the outside, but pretty rotten on the inside.

DIANE

She wasn't always like that. She got bitter after her divorce. Lost her sense of self worth. Tried to replace it... with you apparently.

MICHAEL

I don't think it worked. She knew I didn't love her. But it only made her dig her nails in more. I was going to end it. I've really missed you.

DIANE

I've missed you too, but we have a lot of work to do if we're going to fix this.

MICHAEL

I know.

(CHASE bursts through the door stage left.  
He's agitated and still carries the duffel bag.)

CHASE

It's so frustrating not being able to control it!

DIANE

What, honey?

CHASE

The time travel back and forth. Between now and then.

MICHAEL

Seems like there's a lot of things we can't control, son.

DIANE

But a lot we can. It's what being a man is all about.

(CHASE looks at his parents, feels the  
tension between them.)

CHASE

Yeah, well, I gotta get to school.

DIANE

Have you taken your medication?

MICHAEL

Do you need lunch money?

(He starts to take out his wallet.)

CHASE

I need you to stop treating me like a child! But I want you to know - that I don't blame you.

MICHAEL

For what?

CHASE

For everything. The way things turn out.

DIANE

Are you all right? Why don't you sit down and we can talk.

CHASE

No, I'm done talking! I need people to listen to me now. To know who I am.

DIANE

What's in the bag, Chase?

CHASE

Nothing. Just something I need for school.

(DIANE gives MICHAEL a look and he walks towards CHASE.)

MICHAEL

Let me see what's in the bag, son.

CHASE

No! I've got to get to school.

(MICHAEL reaches for the bag, but CHASE swings it away from him and runs out. MICHAEL rushes out after him and DIANE watches anxiously as if she can see them.)

MICHAEL (O.S.)

Chase! Come back!

(MICHAEL returns..)

MICHAEL (cont'd)

I couldn't catch him. What do you think he has in there?

DIANE

I don't know. I don't know anything any more.

MICHAEL

Should we be worried?

DIANE

I'm a mother. I'm always worried.

(She flops into the La-Z-boy. Michael looks between her and the door not sure what to do. Lights down and they exit.)

SCENE 16: 2020

(Loud chatter of a high school hall as lights go up on CHASE facing the audience miming opening his locker. The duffel bag hangs heavily on his shoulder. MANNY, a Chollo played by the same actor who plays Billy, sidles up next to him to open his own locker. CHASE stiffens. MANNY speaks with a slight Latino accent.)

MANNY

Yo, if it isn't Chase the Face.

CHASE

Don't call me that!

(He puts his hand on his bag. Manny notices.)

MANNY

Dude, chill. I don't mean no disrespect.

CHASE

Then why do you call me that?

MANNY

'Cause you always so serious. You make that mean face.

CHASE

It's not mean. It's just my normal face.

MANNY

You look like you're suspicious. Like you gonna be jumped, hombre.

CHASE

That crap happens here. Jose and Marco are always talking shit.

MANNY

It's just talk. They wanna be top dogs. Get some respect.

CHASE

I'm sick of it. They act like they're better than everyone else. Better than me.

MANNY

That's just insecurity. You should talk to them.

CHASE

About what?

MANNY

I don't know. Say "hi." Ask 'em about stuff. See what you have in common.

CHASE

What would I have in common with... Mexicans?

MANNY

I guess you won't know if you don't ask 'em. Do you know where Sophia is at?

CHASE

You need to leave my sister alone! I see the way you look at her.

(CHASE unzips the duffel bag.)

MANNY

Whoa, muchacho. Relax. She's a pretty girl, but I got nothing but respect for her. She's helping write the school play. An incredible poetisa.

CHASE

What's that?

MANNY

A poet.

CHASE

I didn't know she wrote poetry.

MANNY

You should read some. Deep stuff. Whatcha you doin' for lunch?

CHASE

Cafeteria I guess.



MANNY

Leave that corporate gringo shit and come eat with us at Los Toros.

CHASE

Uh, I don't know.

MANNY

Come on. A growing boy needs more than baloney sandwiches. Wait to you taste their carne asada burritos. Do you wanna leave your duffel in your locker?

CHASE

Uh, yeah. I guess so.

(CHASE opens his locker and stuffs the duffel bag inside.)

MANNY

Whatcha got in there anyways?

CHASE

Something I may need later.

(As they walk away MANNY pats him on the back and he flinches.)

MANNY

You're all right, homie. But you gotta chillax. You're all jumpy and shit.

(CHASE takes a breath, relaxes his face.)

MANNY (cont'd)

See, that's better. What am I going to call you now that you stopped making that face?

CHASE

How about just Chase?

MANNY

Nah, that sounds like a bank.

CHASE

It is a bank.

MANNY

See? You need a respectable name... like Carlos.

CHASE

You think that's better?

MANNY

Of course it's better. It's Mexican.

CHASE

I'm not Mexican.

MANNY

That's pretty clear. You about as gringo as they come, but we can work on that. We'll start with some burritos and Micheladas.

(CHASE cracks a smile as the two head off stage and the lights go down.)

#### RECORDING OF NEWS SNIPPETS

"A community is still in shock in Newton, Connecticut where a 20 year-old man killed 26 people at Sandy Hook Elementary, including 20 children between 6 and 7 years old." "A town grieves tonight in Parkland, Florida where a 19 year-old teenager shot and killed 17 people and injured 17 more." "The death toll from the Las Vegas shooting is now at 58, making it the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history." "As we look back on the 417 mass shootings in 2019, we realize that there were more mass shootings across the nation than there were days in the year."

#### SCENE 17: 2020

(Lights up on MICHAEL, DIANE and SOPHIA eating dinner. CHASE walks in from stage left with the duffel bag. DIANE gets up, relieved to see him.)

DIANE

Chase, are you okay?

CHASE

I'm fine.

(He starts to head up the stairs.)

DIANE

Come sit down. I made you a plate.

(CHASE hesitates, then stashes the bag  
behind the stairs and joins them at the table.)

CHASE

I'm not very hungry. I ate a big lunch.

SOPHIA

At school? The baloney sandwiches were disgusting.

CHASE

At Los Toros... with Manny actually.

SOPHIA

Manny Fernandez?!

CHASE

Yeah.

SOPHIA

I thought you hated Mexicans.

MICHAEL

Since when did you hate Mexicans?

CHASE

I don't hate them. More like the idea of them. You know all the illegals and gang bangers. But Manny's cool. He says you're helping write the school play.

SOPHIA

Yeah. He's doing props.

DIANE

Wow, honey. That's amazing.

MICHAEL

I look forward to seeing it.

DIANE

It's movie night. Anyone looked to see what's playing?

SOPHIA

Why don't we stay in tonight - play a game or something?

CHASE

You don't play video games.

DIANE

How about a board game?

MICHAEL

I could pull one down from the attic.

CHASE

I'd be up for that.

DIANE

You would?

(The door opens and the Cooper family  
strolls in.)

HANK

Jesus, mother and Mary. All I want to do is go home and put my feet up in my La-Z-boy!

MICHAEL

You must be Hank. I'm Michael.

(Michael gets up and shakes his hand.)

HANK

I wish I could say it's good to meet ya', Mike. But I'm really ready for this latest time  
shakeup to settle down and send me back to 1971 for good.

MICHAEL

You're welcome to sit down in my chair.

DIANE

Yes, please. Make yourselves comfortable.

(They do.)

BILLY

Hey, Chase. Can I see how your pocket phone works now?

CHASE

Yeah, sure.

(They look at it. But we don't see it.)

BILLY

Far out. It's true. All we have are Playboys. How is this legal?

DIANE

What are you showing him?

CHASE

Angry Birds.

SOPHIA

A lot of things are legal now that weren't then.

JUDY

Like what?

SOPHIA

Travel to Cuba, marijuana, abortion.

(She looks at Penny. Judy notices.)

JUDY

Why did you just look at Penny?

SOPHIA

I didn't.

JUDY

Yes you did.

(to Penny)

Oh Lord. That's why you haven't been eating lately, isn't it? You're knocked up.

PENNY

I'm not actually... any more.

JUDY

No, Penny. How could you? It's a sin against God!

(HANK gets up, walks menacingly towards Penny.)

HANK

See, I told you. Out all hours of the day and night. Hanging out with those good for nothin' hippies. My own daughter - a God damned whore!

PENNY

I wouldn't have a baby if it meant being stuck in this house raising it with you!

HANK

How dare you speak to me like that! You got no respect!

(HANK looks like he wants to strike PENNY, but he controls himself and takes a step back. JUDY let's her breath out. BILLY spots the duffel bag sticking out behind the stairs. He uses the distraction to disappear behind the stairs.)

PENNY

I respect myself, Pops. That's why I made a decision to get an abortion. I want to go to college to be a journalist and travel. I don't want to get stuck like Ma.

(HANK turns to JUDY.)

HANK

You feel stuck? I thought you loved being a wife and mother.

JUDY

Of course I like being a wife and mother... but I want other stuff too.

HANK

Like what?

JUDY

Like being successful with my business.

HANK

The makeup thing?

JUDY

Yes, my Mary Kay business. I'm gonna earn me a pink Cadillac.

HANK

Be my guest. But I ain't drivin' it.

JUDY

No you won't. Cause I'll be driving it.

(During this scene BILLY takes the gun out of the duffel bag, puts it under his shirt on his back and puts his jacket on over it. At this point he comes out.)

CHASE

Where were you?

BILLY

Just checking under the stairs - to see if my initials were still there. They're not.

DIANE

We painted over the orange when we moved in.

(Suspicious, CHASE tries to see BILLY'S back, but BILLY turns. CHASE lunges at him and feels the gun.)

CHASE

Give it back!

BILLY

No, I need it. What do you need it for? You're not a soldier.

SOPHIA

Yeah, Chase. What do you need it for?

DIANE

What are you talking about?

(CHASE holds BILLY while SOPHIA takes the gun out of his shirt. Everyone reacts.)

HANK

(whistles)  
That's a doozy.

JUDY

Is it loaded?

CHASE

Yes!

(Everyone reacts and MICHAEL grabs the gun from SOPHIA.)

MICHAEL

Jesus, Chase. Why do you have an automatic weapon?

CHASE

It's semi-automatic.

MICHAEL

Don't be start with me. What's it for?!

CHASE

I, uh, bought it for a thing. But I don't need it anymore. I was going to sell it back.

MICHAEL

To who?

DIANE

Whom.

MICHAEL

Really, Diane?

DIANE

Sorry.

CHASE

To a guy I met online.

MICHAEL

You're not doing anything with it anymore. I'm getting rid of it.

(MICHAEL exits stage left with the gun.)

DIANE

(to Chase)

We'll talk more about this later.

HANK

Can I use the loo? I'm 'bout to split a gasket.

DIANE

Of course. You know where it is.

(HANK disappears upstairs and exits, but we hear some bathroom noises as if he's still there.)



BILLY

I wanted to take it to Vietnam. We could make more of them and turn the war to our side, you know? But now I'm not sure I even want to fight any more. I feel like a coward.

SOPHIA

You're not a coward for having doubts. It takes bravery to question authority.

CHASE

(to Penny)

You're brave for standing up to your father. You'll make a great journalist.

PENNY

Especially since I have the scoop on future events.

(MICHAEL re-enters stage left without the gun.)

DIANE

What did you do with the gun.

MICHAEL

I threw it out.

DIANE

In the garbage can? That's a terrible idea.

MICHAEL

It's just for now. I'll call the police. They can pick it up.

(He takes out his phone to dial.)

BILLY

Oh, man. Everyone has a pocket phone. How do I get one?

(The doorbell rings. DIANE turns to MICHAEL, who stops dialing.)

DIANE

Are you expecting someone?

MICHAEL

No.

(DIANE opens the door to discover KARL, played by the actor playing Hank.

He's holding the M4. KARL steps into the house and DIANE instinctively steps back.)

DIANE

Karl?!

JUDY

Who's Karl?

DIANE

My client.

(to Karl)

Why are you here and what are you doing with the gun?

KARL

I came to see you, Diane, since you don't answer my calls. And I found the gun sticking out of your garbage can.

DIANE

(to Michael)

See? I told you that was a terrible idea!

MICHAEL

I was going to call the police.

(MICHAEL starts to dial again. KARL aims the gun at him.)

KARL

Put your phone away!

(MICHAEL complies.)

DIANE

Just put the gun down, Karl, and we'll talk.

(MICHAEL walks slowly towards him, but KARL suddenly aims the gun at him and he stops.)

KARL

Don't come any closer! Or I'll shoot. I swear.

(He swings the gun wildly at the other characters and at the audience.)

KARL (cont'd)

(to the Coopers)  
Who are you people?

JUDY

The Cooper family. I'm Judy and this is -

KARL

(cutting her off)  
Where are you from?

JUDY

Uh, from here.

(He studies their clothing.)

KARL

When are you from?

PENNY

How does he know?

DIANE

I, uh, talked about time travel theoretically in a session.

MICHAEL

I thought you didn't talk about us.

DIANE

I don't - usually. But I needed some answers.

KARL

I knew it. It all makes sense now. You're living in a portal. Tell me how it operates! I'm not living in the right space or time. I know it! But now I can actually leave. Go where I'm wanted. Go where I'm loved. I can finally escape the prison of my own reality.

DIANE

Lower the gun, Karl, and we'll talk.

(KARL takes a beat, then slowly lowers it.)

DIANE (cont'd)

We don't know how it works.

KARL

Bullshit!

CHASE

It's true. I wish we did.

DIANE

It spits us forwards or backwards fifty years right back into this house.

JUDY

And it's not even predictable.

KARL

Fifty years? Oh, no. I want to go back a hundred years to the roaring twenties, or a thousand years to plunder with Vikings, or millions of years and walk with dinosaurs!

PENNY

I'd go back to 1913 to march with the suffragettes.

BILLY

I'd go to ancient Rome and race a chariot.

SOPHIA

I'd travel to the 1800's and have tea with Emily Dickinson.

CHASE

I want to go to the future and see what life is like on Mars.

DIANE

But we can't.

MICHAEL

I haven't even been back to 1971.

KARL

No. No, no, no! I refuse to be a victim of my circumstances any longer.

DIANE

You don't have to be a victim, Karl. You can be a conductor, a perpetrator. The master of your own life.

KARL

I can be more than that, Diane. I can be God!

(KARL raises the gun and aims it at several cast members, who ad lib pleas. Then he turns it on himself and shoots himself in the head. We hear “bam, bam, bam, bam” as confetti shoots out of the barrel. He looks at it confused. The others are hugely relieved. CHASE takes the gun from him and examines it.)

CHASE

Manny must have done that.

BILLY

Who’s Manny?

CHASE

A kid at school.

SOPHIA

The prop master... for our play.

MICHAEL

That’s some practical joke.

CHASE

It wasn’t a joke. Manny must have known. I couldn’t do it. I wanted to, but I couldn’t.

DIANE

Do what, honey?

CHASE

When I was ten I shot a dove. But I used a bb gun so I only knocked it off a wire and it broke its wing. I picked it up and carried it to my bedroom. I tried to feed it, to fix its wing, but I couldn’t and it died. For a year it’s mate sat on the wire cooing for its partner. It haunted me. I tried at school, but all I could hear was that cooing and I couldn’t do it.

DIANE

What are you saying?

KARL

I wanted to be God.

SOPHIA

But you can't. None of us can.

JUDY

Of course not. That's sacrilegious.

SOPHIA

I mean we're humans, stuck down here on earth. In the giant Cosmos of it all we're tiny molecules in a spot of time, in a sliver of space. But now the world is shaking us up with natural disasters, a major pandemic, massive protests. It's catapulting us to another time where we bounce off other molecules, shaking them up and sending out reverberations that transcend both space and time. Then we bounce back. How we land is up to us.

CHASE

Wow. You can write poetry.

MICHAEL

Confetti for bullets. What a crazy idea.

DIANE

Maybe not so crazy. Not so crazy at all.