

Any Other Day, a new play

By Jake Alexander

(Lights up. Two driveways, separated by only a thin patch of grass. Suburban New England. It's Fall, we might see some of the leaves of the trees in the backyards changing and falling. On either side of the driveways, we see the sides of the houses, which are modest. One with a garage door, the other with a sliding glass door. Two sets of trashcans, one pair per driveway. It's morning. We hear a car drive up, unseen, and turn off. It does not park in the driveway. Two car doors open and close. CHRIS enters, carrying a small backpack. His mother, HARRIET enters behind him, carrying the car keys and a tote bag. They are mid-conversation. They don't step directly onto the driveway.)

HARRIET

Watch out for the tar, your father worked hard on that.

CHRIS

Is he home?

HARRIET

Had to run into work briefly, he'll be back. You hungry?

CHRIS

No, no I'm fine. Wow, you weren't kidding.

HARRIET

Hmm?

CHRIS (**indicating the house next door**)

The new neighbors, they did a ton of work.

HARRIET

On the house? Yeah, really tore up the yard.

CHRIS

I think it looks great.

HARRIET

Eh. I don't like that they pulled out the rhododendron.

CHRIS

Wasn't it dead anyways?

HARRIET

Still! Okay I'm going in. I'll make you some breakfast.

CHRIS

No, Mom, I'm fine. Coffee would be great, though.

HARRIET

I just bought new Keurig pods. I'll put one on for you.

CHRIS

Fine.

HARRIET (*pointing to the backyard next door*)

See! They took out the big tree. Remember the one with treehouse you guys built?

CHRIS

We didn't build it, Mom, their dad did.

HARRIET

Donald did that?

CHRIS

We were, like, eight when it was built.

HARRIET

Really?

CHRIS

Did you think a bunch of eight year olds were up on ladders with hammers and nails?

HARRIET

Well, how was I supposed to know?

CHRIS

I thought Dad helped him with it?

HARRIET

They never really got along.

CHRIS

Didn't he and Dad hang out together a lot? I thought?

HARRIET

In this type of neighborhood, you hang out with whoever is closest.

CHRIS (*chuckling*)

Sure.

HARRIET

Still, it's a shame. That tree house was nice. And if they ever had kids, it would've been perfect for them.

CHRIS

Maybe they don't want kids.

HARRIET

They're young!

CHRIS

Okay, Mom.

HARRIET

Of course, you're young, too...

CHRIS

Mom-

HARRIET

Just saying! I'm losing my "fun-grandma" years!

CHRIS

Let's save this conversation for after I've had coffee.

HARRIET

Alright, alright. Let's get that going.

(They begin to exit. CHRIS turns back to look at the house next door. It's quiet.)

CHRIS

Where are they, anyway? Their car is gone.

HARRIET

Oh, probably finalizing plans.

CHRIS

Yeah?

HARRIET

They're getting married tomorrow.

CHRIS

Here?

HARRIET

I don't know. I saw him yesterday, but he didn't say. Just said they were going to have a lot of cars on the street the next few days in case we were wondering.

CHRIS

Wow. Married. Good for them.

HARRIET

Mhm.

CHRIS

So, what? Their rehearsal dinner is here or something?

HARRIET

No, no, nothing like. Jonah, that's the boy, about your age, said that they were just having some friends over after for drinks. A few might be staying there, I don't know. Hopefully won't be too big a crowd.

CHRIS

Huh.

HARRIET

Hope the weather holds for them.

CHRIS

What do you mean?

HARRIET

You didn't see?

CHRIS

No.

HARRIET

There's a hurricane coming. Biggest since Sandy, they say. Might make landfall tomorrow.

CHRIS

Oh, wow.

HARRIET

That's why your father did the tarring, to get it done before any water damage.

CHRIS

He wasn't worried it wouldn't dry in time?

HARRIET

Oh, I don't know, ask your father. He knows better than me.

CHRIS

Right. Why don't they have cars in their driveway?

HARRIET

Not sure. Maybe just wanted to make some space?

CHRIS

Sure.

HARRIET

It's good luck, they say.

CHRIS

What is?

HARRIET

A hurricane.

CHRIS

A hurricane is good luck?

HARRIET

Well, rain. Rain on the wedding day. Supposed to be good luck for the marriage.

CHRIS

Huh.

(HARRIET exits into the house. CHRIS stares at the house next door. He looks into the backyard. A beat.)

CHRIS *(finally)*

Ma? I think I'm actually gonna run to a coffee shop, do you want anything?

HARRIET *(re-entering)*

I told you I have Keurig pods!

CHRIS

I'm not wild about them, to be honest. I think I need something stronger.

(A beat.)

HARRIET

Honey- I know it's been a hard week for you./

CHRIS

/It's not that Mom, really-/

HARRIET

I know this wasn't your first choice, to be here/

CHRIS

/Really, Mom, I'm fine./

HARRIET

/I actually think you and your father can work out what you're going to do!

CHRIS

Mom! I swear. It's not that. I just don't like Keurig. And could use the drive.

(A beat.)

HARRIET

Take my car.

(She tosses him the keys. CHRIS hands her his backpack.)

CHRIS

Thank you.

HARRIET

Remember not to park in the driveway, the tar-

CHRIS

I know, I know. You don't want anything?

HARRIET

Well...

CHRIS

Latte?

HARRIET

Don't tell your father.

CHRIS *(chuckling)*

Okay. I'll be right back.

(CHRIS begins to exit towards the car. HARRIET stops him.)

HARRIET
Chrissy?

CHRIS *(turning back)*
Yeah?

HARRIET
I just wanted to say...

CHRIS
What's wrong, Mom?

HARRIET
I wanted to say- I'm sorry you're going through this.

CHRIS
I'm really fine, Mom. I swear.

HARRIET
Just don't do anything stupid.

CHRIS
Mom-

HARRIET
People make bad choices when they are going through what you're going through!

CHRIS
I know, I know...I swear I'll be safe, Mom.

HARRIET
Also-

CHRIS
Mom, really, I'm starting to get a headache from the lack of caffeine.

HARRIET
I was just going to say. Nutmeg, on top. Please.

CHRIS
Right.

(CHRIS exits. We HARRIET stares after him for a while. She sighs. She exits into the house. Lights down. Lights back up after a moment. Time has passed. It is later in the day. CHRIS re-enters from the garage door, wearing a sweatshirt. He's holding a beer and a bunch of empty boxes. He places the boxes in one of the trashcans, looks into the backyard. After a moment, JONAH enters from the other side of the stage, whistling. He's giddy, just getting back from his rehearsal dinner. He doesn't notice CHRIS right away, CHRIS tries to make a sly exit. JONAH sees him right before he is able to do so.)

JONAH *(to CHRIS)*

Oh! Hey!

CHRIS *(turning back, awkwardly)*

Hey there.

JONAH

I'm Jonah.

CHRIS

Nice to meet you.

(An awkward silence.)

JONAH

Are you-?

CHRIS

Oh. Sorry, I'm a little out of it. Bad coffee.

JONAH *(laughing)*

Been there, dude.

CHRIS

I'm Chris, I'm-

JONAH

Harri and Bruce's son, right?

CHRIS

Yeah, yeah that's me.

JONAH

Your dad told me you were coming into town.

CHRIS

Yeah, just for a bit.

JONAH
Right.

CHRIS
A short visit.

JONAH
You live in-?

CHRIS
Boston, yeah. Just made it down this morning.

JONAH
That's great. I'm sure your mom was happy to have you.

CHRIS (*joking*)
Perhaps a little bit too much.

JONAH
They've been really nice. Your parents.

CHRIS
I'm glad to hear it.

(A beat. There's a bit of tension. JONAH fiddles with his keys.)

JONAH
Say-

CHRIS
Yeah?

JONAH (*indicating the beer in CHRIS' hand*)
You have another one of those?

CHRIS
A beer? Oh, yeah! Hold on-

JONAH
I know your Dad usually keeps-

CHRIS (*exiting into the garage, re-entering with another beer*)
Yeah he's a got a cooler in here, I've been stealing some-

JONAH (*taking the beer from him*)
Thanks, I appreciate it.

CHRIS
Long night?

JONAH
Well it was my, I mean our- it was our rehearsal dinner and...

CHRIS
Right, right, my mom told me.

JONAH
Folks are coming back here in a few, they went to get some harder stuff to toast and yeah...

CHRIS
Tomorrow's the big day huh?

JONAH
Yeah, yeah, should be good.

CHRIS
Heard it might be a storm, though?

JONAH
Oh, the hurricane? Yeah they don't know. No good projections.

CHRIS
You have a back-up plan? Just in case?

JONAH
I guess so? I'm not sure. Bail might.

(A beat. Both sip their beers.)

CHRIS
I haven't met your- I mean-

JONAH
Bail? Bailey. She's with the rest of the group, showing them the town.

CHRIS
You're from around here?

JONAH
Further north, actually. This town was "quaint" as she calls it.

CHRIS
Yeah.

JONAH
Did you like growing up here?

CHRIS
Yeah! Yeah it was great. Glad I got out after high school though.

JONAH
Sure. And hey! You knew the people who used to live here, right?

CHRIS
Yeah, I went to school with them. Used to play with them.

JONAH
Did you ever go up in that tree house?

CHRIS
I did, yeah.

JONAH (*surprised*)
Dangerous!

CHRIS
Yeah. We didn't know that back then.

JONAH
Bailey was worried about it. She had me tear the whole tree down.

CHRIS
Probably smarter if you guys had kids.

JONAH
I feel a little...I dunno, guilty about it?

CHRIS
What?

JONAH
I feel bad for tearing down something that meant something- I mean, that had history.

CHRIS
Ah. No, you made the right call.

JONAH
Well. Sorry, nonetheless.

(He clinks his bottle to CHRIS'. They sit in silence for a beat.)

JONAH
Actually, is your dad around? I had to ask him a question.

CHRIS
Oh- No, he's not home yet. I guess he had to run into work today. He should be back soon enough.

JONAH
Alright. I'll wait for him for a bit.

CHRIS
He shouldn't be much longer.

JONAH
Great.

(A beat. A little awkward.)

JONAH
It's just. He offered to shovel our snow, take care of the yard while we are away.

CHRIS
He loves being a "neighbor". Always offering to help.

JONAH
Your folks are awesome. So kind. They have been great to us since we moved in.

CHRIS
So. You guys are going away? For a bit?

JONAH
Oh yeah! The honeymoon. We're taking this huge backpacking trip! It's going to be so much fun.

CHRIS
Oh yeah?

JONAH
The pacific-northwest, parts of the Rockies, Yosemite, then driving back over and doing parts of the Appalachian in late spring.

CHRIS

So a long trip, huh?

JONAH

Oh yeah, we're going to be gone awhile.

CHRIS

That sounds like it'll be great. Cold though, no?

JONAH

I love it. I love camping in the winter.

CHRIS

I've never been.

JONAH

Oh, man, ya gotta!

CHRIS

It's hard, you know being up in Boston-

JONAH

Oh yeah! Your dad was telling me you're up there. You like it?

CHRIS

Uhm, yeah. Sure. I'm actually-

JONAH

It can really grind ya down, that's why I was happy to leave.

CHRIS

You lived there?

JONAH

For a bit. After Bail and I graduated.

CHRIS

My folks didn't tell me you guys lived there.

JONAH

Well we both went to BU.

CHRIS

No way! (*pointing to himself*) Harvard.

JONAH
Ooooh. Fancy.

CHRIS
It was alright.

JONAH
You work up there now?

CHRIS
Yeah, well, did- I just got-

JONAH (*quickly cutting him off, unintentionally*)
That's great man, good for you.

CHRIS
Thanks.

(*A beat.*)

CHRIS
Your friends and family will be here soon? I don't want to keep you.

JONAH
They'll be a bit, they take forever to get anywhere.

CHRIS
Ah.

JONAH
My folks are staying down the road, they wanted to check into the hotel before it got "too late".
Of course, too late really just means before it gets dark.

CHRIS
You have a lot of family in town for it?

JONAH
Mhm. Bailey, too. Too many people. You have no idea how many people you HAVE to invite to your wedding. Particularly if your parents are paying for it.

CHRIS
I can only imagine.

JONAH

I have this cousin, rough guy. He's actually from New Hampshire, and I kid you not, he's a logger. He literally cuts down trees for a living. It's a government position, it's crazy! And he works all over the state, going from forest to forest cutting down different trees that are dead or sick or whatever. He was able to look at picture of this house, and tell us that the tree, you know the one with the- anyways, he could tell from a PICTURE that it was dead and needed to come down. And that was all Bailey needed to hear. But I'm not that close with the guy and he's perfectly nice but we didn't like grow up together or anything. But because my mom asked HIM to look at the tree in the photo and he gave us a "diagnosis" or whatever, she INSISTED that I invite him to the wedding. And you know, when you plan a wedding, you don't assume everyone is going to come. Some are just obligatory-invites or whatever, but this guy, this fucker, said "yes". He's here, staying in a trailer out in the woods somewhere. I just asked that he wear a tie to the ceremony, because who knows. Probably gonna be wearing jeans, for all I know.

CHRIS

That's funny.

JONAH

Truly.

CHRIS

Well. Cheers to your big day.

JONAH (*clinking his bottle*)

Right. Thanks.

(A beat. JONAH sips his beer absent-mindedly.)

JONAH

I'm really just excited for it to be over.

CHRIS

That so?

JONAH

Yeah, it's been such a huge thing to plan for and I just want to hit the road.

CHRIS

Well, I'm sure it'll be special nonetheless-

JONAH

Sure, sure. But it's just like occupied such a huge part of our minds, and for so long. I'm exhausted.

CHRIS

Right-

JONAH

And don't get me wrong, it's not that I don't want to be married, but it's just like you can't do anything else while you're planning a wedding! Every waking moment is like filled to the brim with shit to plan and talk about and everything.

CHRIS

Yeah, that doesn't sound fun...

JONAH

There are good parts, sure. But it's nice to just, ya know, sit here.

(CHRIS doesn't know what to say. They sit in silence for a beat.)

JONAH

But that roadtrip, lemme tell ya, I am so jazzed for.

CHRIS

Sounds like it.

JONAH

You ever been to any of the National Parks? Acadia, up north?

CHRIS

I don't think so?

JONAH

Oh, man, you gotta! They're just beautiful. Beautiful pieces of land. And they are just steeped in history. I love it, and I'm so glad I get to do it for the honeymoon.

CHRIS

Is your fiancée- Is Bailey big on the outdoors and stuff too?

JONAH

Oh. You know, not really. She likes it for me, I guess.

CHRIS

Well it sounds fun. And it sounds like it'll be a nice wedding too. Where's that happening?

JONAH

Some space near New Haven. Nice. Good.

CHRIS

Cool-

(A car pulls up offstage and we hear a door open and close. BRUCE enters carrying a lunch cooler. He sees JONAH first and waves. He doesn't not immediately acknowledge CHRIS.)

BRUCE *(practically shouting)*
Jo! My man!

JONAH
How you doin' Bruce?

BRUCE
Fine, fine. Just getting off work. What're you doing out here? Don't you have a dinner to be at?

JONAH
I'm waiting for folks to get back here, going to have a toast. Just been sitting here with your son for a bit. Relaxing!

CHRIS
Hey, Dad.

BRUCE
When did you get in?

CHRIS
Earlier.

BRUCE *(back to JONAH)*
You excited for tomorrow?

JONAH
Absolutely. Should be a fun day.

BRUCE
Lemme grab a beer. I'll join ya for a bit.

CHRIS
They're in the-

BRUCE *(dismissively, exiting into the garage)*
Cooler, I know.

(A beat. BRUCE rejoins them.)

JONAH
So hey, Bruce I wanted to ask you about yard and driveway while we are away-

BRUCE
Oh! Yeah!

JONAH
You're cool to take care of it for us?

BRUCE
Absolutely. I'll keep an eye on the house and such for ya as well.

JONAH
We'll have some folks coming to stay for a few weeks at times, but I can text you those details.

BRUCE
Sounds good. And don't you worry about those leaves in the backyard, I'll take care of that for ya.

JONAH
Oh, no, you don't have to do that-

BRUCE
I insist-

JONAH
We have a guy who offered to come, a friend-

BRUCE
No, no, he doesn't need to come by. I got ya-

JONAH
You're sure?

BRUCE
Consider it a wedding gift for you two.

JONAH
Well. That's very nice of you guys, thank you.

BRUCE
Anytime.

(A beat. They all sip their beers.)

JONAH
Bruce, you didn't tell me your son went to Harvard.

BRUCE

That's what I hear. Not a lot of return on that investment though.

CHRIS

Dad-

BRUCE

Joking around, Chrissy.

JONAH

It must be nice to have him back for a bit.

BRUCE (*non-committal*)

Mhm.

(A beat. There's more tension than before. Suddenly, we hear some car doors and few folks speaking. JONAH stands.)

JONAH

Well. So much for peace and quiet. I'd better get going.

BRUCE

A shame. But hey, go entertain. Tell Bailey I said hey. And if I don't see ya before tomorrow, best of luck.

JONAH

Much appreciated. Nice to meet you, Chris.

CHRIS

You too. Have a great day, tomorrow. And have a nice trip.

JONAH

Thanks.

(JONAH jogs offstage to greet his friends and family. BRUCE and CHRIS sit silently for a bit.)

CHRIS

Good to see you, Dad.

BRUCE (*indicating his beer*)

How many of those you had?

CHRIS

Just...this one.

BAILEY (*quieting her voice*)
Oh. Right. No shoes, I see that now.

CHRIS (*embarrassed*)
Right.

BAILEY
So are you Chrissy?

CHRIS
I'm- yes. Chris.

BAILEY
Your mom always calls you Chrissy.

CHRIS
I know, it's from- when I was younger...

BAILEY
I figured.

(A beat. CHRIS looks down at his shirt. He looks back at BAILEY who is checking her phone.)

BAILEY
/So you're in town-/

CHRIS
/So I met your fiancée last night-/

BAILEY & CHRIS
Oh.

CHRIS
/Sorry, go ahead-/

BAILEY
/You first-/

CHRIS
/No, no, you go ahead, I'm sorry-/

BAILEY
/I was just saying you're in town for a bit?/

CHRIS

/Jonah, seems nice-/

BAILEY & CHRIS

Yeah.

(A beat. CHRIS takes another sip of his coffee. He gags, spits it out. He goes over to the garbage can and pours the rest of the coffee into the can. BAILEY watches, amused. He turns back and see her watching him.)

CHRIS

It was. Really bad. My mom she loves these little pod things-

BAILEY

Keurig pods?

CHRIS

Yeah?

BAILEY

Yeah they're no good.

CHRIS

It waters down the coffee so much.

BAILEY

She's given me a cup of it before, I wasn't a fan.

CHRIS

Exactly. I usually go out and grab some from the place down the street. They aren't open yet.

BAILEY

Thing don't open around here until like 10.

CHRIS

Yeah. One downside to living in small town, I guess.

BAILEY

Yeah.

(Another awkward beat. CHRIS finds himself staring at BAILEY. She's like, really pretty. He gets a little red when she notices him.)

CHRIS

Anyways. Nice to meet you, Bailey, right?

BAILEY

Nice to meet you too, Chrissy.

(CHRIS gets a little flustered, he starts to exit with a quick wave. He gets inside the garage and then pokes his head back out.)

CHRIS

Wait. Aren't you getting married today?

BAILEY *(amusedly)*

I am.

CHRIS

Congrats.

BAILEY

Thank you.

CHRIS

But...you went for a run?

BAILEY

Yeah?

CHRIS

On your wedding day?

BAILEY

Yeah. I do every day.

CHRIS

Huh.

(A beat.)

BAILEY

Is that weird?

CHRIS

No! No, I just, it's funny.

BAILEY *(a little defensive)*

Funny how?

CHRIS

No, no I didn't mean to- what I meant to say was- ugh, sorry I definitely need coffee.

BAILEY
What's funny about it?

CHRIS
It's funny that you did something kind of normal on the morning of your wedding.

BAILEY
Huh. That is kind of funny.

CHRIS
I didn't mean to imply that you shouldn't have-

BAILEY
No you're right. I didn't even think of it that way.

CHRIS
Just like. A special day. Or whatever.

BAILEY
I guess. I wasn't really thinking of it as anything other than a Saturday.

CHRIS
Right. Makes sense.

(A beat. Kind of awkward.)

CHRIS
Anywho. Enjoy the day.

(CHRIS begins to exit again.)

BAILEY *(interrupting him)*
/You said you met Jonah?/

CHRIS
/I really didn't mean to imply you shouldn't have gone on a run./

BAILEY
/I know that!/

CHRIS
/You definitely didn't need to-/

BAILEY
/Oh really?/

CHRIS
/I mean look at you-/

BAILEY
Look at me?

(A beat.)

CHRIS
Oh my god! That was so bad, what the fuck did I say that for-

BAILEY *(thinks it's hilarious)*
No! No, hey, you're fine.

CHRIS
I seriously don't know how to talk before I've had my coffee, I know that's cliché, but it's so true, I'm a monster right now.

BAILEY
Chrissy. You're fine. It's funny.

CHRIS
Right. Well. Okay then.

(He exits into the garage. BAILEY goes down to the sliding glass door and opens it. Just as she's about to exit CHRIS re-enters.)

CHRIS
Yes, I met Jonah.

BAILEY *(surprised he came back)*
Oh.

CHRIS
/You asked me before and I was too distracted by the running-thing./

BAILEY
/No worries./

CHRIS *(maybe a little too loud)*
He's a nice guy!

BAILEY *(confused)*
Yes?

CHRIS

I mean we had a nice conversation.

BAILEY

I'm glad. He's good when he's got a moment to himself.

CHRIS

/You guys had a-/

BAILEY

/I don't mean to suggest he's not otherwise-/

CHRIS

/Good time last night?/

BAILEY

/He's nice!/

CHRIS

He is.

BAILEY

It was fun. Last night I meant.

CHRIS

Good. And you're excited for the day?

BAILEY

I am. Yes.

(A beat.)

CHRIS

I really am sorry for before, I think I'm gonna go get another cup of coffee-

BAILEY

Keurig?

CHRIS

Maybe two cups is what it takes.

(CHRIS exits again, BAILEY starts to exit too. Just before she closes the sliding glass door, CHRIS re-enters.)

CHRIS

Jonah was telling me about the honeymoon.

BAILEY

/Oh, yeah we are going backpacking-/

CHRIS

/Right, Jonah was telling me about it-/

BAILEY

/Jonah really wanted to go, so./

CHRIS

/Sounds like fun./

BAILEY

Yeah.

(A beat.)

BAILEY

Well. I should start getting ready.

CHRIS

Right! Yeah, okay.

BAILEY

The wedding isn't until 6 but it, apparently, takes like 8 hours to get hair and make-up done for five girls.

CHRIS

Ah. Well. Tell Jonah I said congrats again. And congrats to you as well.

(They both begin to exit, both shouting over their shoulders.)

BAILEY

/Oh! Well, I won't see him until later, he's not getting ready here/

CHRIS

/And my parents say congrats as well and have fun./

BAILEY *(turning back)*

What's that?

CHRIS *(turning back)*

What did you say?

BAILEY
Just that- /

CHRIS
My Parents /

BAILEY
/Jonah's not here, he's at the hotel already. /

CHRIS
/They say good luck, as well. /

BAILEY & CHRIS
Oh.

BAILEY
Well thank them for me. For us.

CHRIS
I will. Bye now.

(He goes to exit. She stops him.)

BAILEY
You should've come by. Last night I mean.

CHRIS *(turning back)*
Oh?

BAILEY
Seems like you'd have been fun.

CHRIS
Oh. Thanks?

BAILEY
Plus, drunk bridesmaids.

CHRIS
Well. You know, it would've been weird, probably.

BAILEY
Like running on your wedding day?

CHRIS

Oh. Yes, exactly.

BAILEY

Say-

CHRIS

Yeah?

BAILEY

Do you believe that thing? About rain on your wedding day?

CHRIS

Oh. The hurricane. Right.

BAILEY

I hadn't seen anything about it this morning.

CHRIS

Yeah. I'm not sure.

BAILEY

So you think it's bad luck?

CHRIS

Hmm? Oh! No, no, I think it's fine. I meant I wasn't sure if it was close or whatever. I think it is?
Good luck, I mean.

BAILEY

Well. Thank you.

CHRIS

Sure. Sure. Hey, enjoy your day. I'm sure it'll be great.

BAILEY

Thank you. Chrissy.

(She smiles and exits into the sliding glass doors. CHRIS stares after her for awhile. He shakes his head, he feels stupid for the whole interaction. He runs his hands through his hair, looks down at his stained shirt. After a moment he looks into the backyard. It's a seemingly calm day, no hurricane in sight. CHRIS exits through the garage. Lights down. Lights back up. CHRIS enters, dressed for the day, more presentable than before. It's a few hours later, around 10AM. He is holding HARRIET's car keys. She yells from inside the garage.)

HARRIET (offstage)

Chrissy!

CHRIS
Yeah? Mom?

HARRIET (*entering from garage*)
Do me a favor would you?

CHRIS
Another latte?

HARRIET
No. I mean, yes. But. Would you stop at the liquor store down the road for me?

CHRIS
Mom it's like 10AM?

HARRIET
No, not for me. For Bailey and Jonah. Just get them a bottle of champagne. From us.

CHRIS
Oh. Sure. Yeah. Like just any bottle?

HARRIET
Well. Something nice, if you don't mind. Just grab a little card and have them wrap it up.

CHRIS
The liquor store does that?

HARRIET
Sure!

CHRIS (*exiting toward the cars*)
Alright.

HARRIET
And then when you come back, just drop it by the glass door down there. For them to find when they get back tonight after the wedding.

CHRIS
Okay. Hey? I met her this morning.

HARRIET
Bailey?

CHRIS
Yeah. Nice girl.

HARRIET
Isn't she?

CHRIS
She thanked you guys for the well-wishes.

HARRIET
She's pretty isn't she?

CHRIS
Oh. I mean? Yeah, sure. Yes.

HARRIET
You alright?

CHRIS
Sorry. Yes she was very pretty. I was a little. Ferklemt.

HARRIET
Ha! Sucker.

CHRIS
Okay, okay.

HARRIET (*teasing*)
She's taken ya know, can't go flirting with a married woman.

CHRIS
I wasn't!

HARRIET (*teasing*)
Better not be.

(*A beat. HARRIET starts to exit through the garage.*)

CHRIS
Latte and champagne.

HARRIET (*shouting over her shoulder*)
With a little-

CHRIS
A little nutmeg on top. Got it.

(HARRIET exits. CHRIS exhales, looks over to the glass door. He exits. Lights down. Lights up. About an hour later. CHRIS enters with a tray of coffees and the bottle of champagne, gift-wrapped. He debates which he should deliver first. He heads into the garage, and comes back out a few seconds later. He takes the lid off of his coffee and throws it away. He walks over to the sliding glass door and goes to place the gift-wrapped champagne next to it, when it suddenly opens and BAILEY emerges from it. BAILEY has had her make-up and hair done for the wedding, and she's wearing a "bride" robe. Startled, CHRIS slips back and drops his coffee, which spills all over the driveway.)

CHRIS

Oh, shit./

BAILEY

/Oh, god, I'm so sorry. I was just coming out for-/

CHRIS

/No, no, I'm sorry I spilled coffee all over the place./

BAILEY

Oh, that's totally okay.

CHRIS

Man, I cannot catch a break today.

BAILEY *(smiling)*

At least it didn't get on your shirt this time.

CHRIS *(smiling back)*

True.

(A beat.)

BAILEY *(seeing the champagne)*

What's this?

CHRIS

That is from me. Us. My parents. And I. For you and Jonah. Today.

BAILEY

Well, that is very thoughtful. Thank you.

CHRIS

Of course.

(A beat. CHRIS sees BAILEY for the first time with her hair and make-up done, and is a little entranced.)

BAILEY (*seeing him looking at her*)
What?

CHRIS
Hmm? Oh! Nothing.

BAILEY
What is it?

CHRIS
You look. Pretty.

BAILEY
Thanks. They do the bride first. So it has time to set.

CHRIS
Makes sense.

BAILEY
They're doing the girls in there now. I just stepped outside to get some air. It can get stuffy. All that hairspray.

CHRIS
Sure.

(A beat.)

BAILEY
Sorry again. About your coffee.

CHRIS
Oh. No. Not your fault. Either time.

BAILEY (*laughing*)
Okay.

CHRIS
Well. See ya.

(CHRIS turns to leave through the garage door. He throws the cup that just had coffee in it in the garbage can. BAILEY stops him.)

BAILEY
Hey?

CHRIS (*turning back*)
Yeah?

BAILEY (*pointing to the spilled coffee on the driveway*)
Since you can't drink that?

CHRIS
Uh-huh?

BAILEY (*holding up the champagne bottle*)
Want to have some this?

CHRIS
Oh. I mean. It's a gift.

BAILEY
No I meant *with* me.

CHRIS
With you?

BAILEY
Yeah. They have so much of this inside and I don't think Jonah will want it. Actually.

CHRIS
Oh. Well. I mean, it's only like 11AM.

BAILEY
You have a lot to do today?

CHRIS
Absolutely nothing.

BAILEY
Come on, have some champagne with the bride.

(*A beat. CHRIS decides.*)

CHRIS
Alright. Then.

BAILEY (*unwrapping the bottle*)
There we go!

CHRIS

Oh, I should've kept that cup.

BAILEY

We can both drink from the bottle. No worries.

(BAILEY pops the champagne, which overflows. She puts her mouth on it so it doesn't go to waste. CHRIS looks surprised.)

CHRIS

You don't have to finish getting ready?

BAILEY

I have some time. Honestly, with everything going on it there I doubt they'll even notice I'm gone.

CHRIS

Okay.

(BAILEY takes a slug from the bottle. She hands it to CHRIS, who sips cautiously. BAILEY sits on the asphalt of the driveway. CHRIS stands awkwardly.)

BAILEY

You can sit, ya know?

CHRIS

I know.

BAILEY

I don't bite.

CHRIS

Right.

(CHRIS sits next to her. At first a little too close, then he scoots away at a comfortable space. He looks around, making sure no one is watching.)

BAILEY *(seeing him)*

Who're you looking for?

CHRIS

No one.

BAILEY

Who?

CHRIS

My mother, actually.

BAILEY

To save you?

CHRIS

No, nothing like that. She was, I dunno...teasing me a bit before.

BAILEY

About what?

CHRIS

It doesn't matter, I just didn't want her to think-

BAILEY

That you have a little crush on me?

(A beat. CHRIS doesn't know what to say.)

BAILEY

I'm joking! You spilled your coffee twice around me, a girl can see where that comes from.

CHRIS

Both times were accidents.

BAILEY

Right.

(They pass the bottle in silence. CHRIS always takes less.)

BAILEY

So you went to Harvard?

CHRIS

Yeah. Jonah was telling me you guys lived in Boston for a while?

BAILEY

Yup.

CHRIS

Whereabouts?

BAILEY

Beacon Hill. Expensive. We moved there after college.

CHRIS

Did you also go to school at BU, or-?

BAILEY

Yeah. Applied Psych major. Jonah was biology.

CHRIS

Are you using that degree now? Or...

BAILEY

I got a job at an insurance place, just answering phones.

CHRIS

So...why move here?

BAILEY

Jonah got hired at Pfizer. We moved here for his work.

CHRIS

Wait...this is gonna sound so weird. Because I used to sublet a place near Beacon Hill...

BAILEY

Oh yeah?

CHRIS

Did you ever go to, what's that place called, in the Seaport?

BAILEY & CHRIS

Bell in the Hand?

CHRIS

Yeah!

BAILEY

Ohmigod, I worked there!

CHRIS

No way!

BAILEY

Yeah I bartended. It was awful!

CHRIS

I used to go there. For-

BAILEY & CHRIS

Karaoke.

CHRIS

Jesus!

BAILEY

Oh my god, I must've served you.

CHRIS

Wild.

(A beat. They laugh a bit. Awkwardly share the bottle of champagne.)

BAILEY

When you were at Harvard, did you ever go to, what was that Mexican place?

CHRIS

Border Café?

BAILEY

Yeah! Jonah and I had our first date there.

CHRIS

Oh, wow. That's cool. I had a friend actually who used to be a manager there. His name was Stephen-

BAILEY

/Stephen?/

CHRIS

Yeah? Wait how did you know?

BAILEY

There was a guy who was training that night and he was, well, NOT good at his job. I always remembered him.

CHRIS

Tall guy? Sandy hair?

BAILEY

Bangs?

CHRIS

Oh man, that's absolutely him.

BAILEY

Wow.

CHRIS

Small world.

(A beat.)

BAILEY

So you said you met Jonah?

CHRIS

Last night, I did.

BAILEY

What did you think?

CHRIS

Of Jonah?

BAILEY

Yeah.

CHRIS

I told you this morning, he seems great.

BAILEY

Right, so now the bride is asking-

CHRIS

Wow.

BAILEY

What?

CHRIS

We've known each other for like a sum total of twenty-five minutes, and you're playing the "bride" card?

BAILEY

It's all I've got today!

CHRIS (*laughing*)

Okay, okay. So what's your question?

BAILEY

What did you really think of Jonah?

CHRIS

I really do think he's great! Perfectly nice! Why do you ask?

BAILEY

Well you're a stranger.

CHRIS

Yeah?

BAILEY

So you're first impression is like, super genuine.

CHRIS

Okay.

BAILEY

And you have no reason to lie to me.

(A beat.)

CHRIS

Do you think people have lied to you? About liking Jonah?

BAILEY

I think... People want me to be happy and if it seems like I am, then I think they would lie for that.

CHRIS

That's not so bad, though, right?

BAILEY

Sure.

(A beat. She sips the champagne.)

CHRIS

There was one thing I thought was kinda weird, I guess-

BAILEY

Was it the honeymoon?

CHRIS

Yeah! He was like, really, really excited about it.

BAILEY

Yeah, he won't stop talking about it.

CHRIS

I mean, I think it's a cool idea, going backpacking and everything, but it almost seemed like, I don't know...

BAILEY

Like he didn't care about getting married?

CHRIS

Well. Yeah.

(A beat. BAILEY passes him the champagne.)

BAILEY

He's looked forward to this trip for a while, I think. And I'm happy he's happy.

CHRIS

Isn't that exactly-

BAILEY

What?

CHRIS

What you don't want people to do to you?

BAILEY

Right. *(moving on)* Anyways. Thanks for answering. Honestly.

CHRIS

Of course.

BAILEY

So what're you doing here?

CHRIS

You...told me to sit./

BAILEY

No, I mean, like home?

CHRIS

Oh. Oh. Just. Needed a change of scenery.

(A beat.)

BAILEY

Huh.

CHRIS

What?

BAILEY

You were just pretty honest with me about my future husband, and then you immediately followed it up with a lie.

CHRIS

Wha-? I didn't lie/

BAILEY (*taking the bottle from him*)
/I don't think you deserve any more champagne.

CHRIS

Wait, Bailey, I didn't lie-

BAILEY

Chris.

CHRIS

What?

BAILEY

Your mom told me. About what happened.

CHRIS

Told you what?

BAILEY

We got to talking a few days ago, she told me you were coming home and I could tell she was getting a little upset and she just kind of...spilled it all. To me.

CHRIS

What is she doing disclosing that kind of-

BAILEY

Hey, I really don't care. What happened, I mean./

CHRIS

/Nothing happened, is the thing./

BAILEY
/C'mon./

CHRIS
/I just needed to get away from Boston for a bit./

BAILEY
But that wasn't the reason.

CHRIS
What wasn't?

BAILEY
You said you needed a "change of scenery" before.

CHRIS
Yeah, and I did-

BAILEY
Chris, c'mon. I know what happened. I know what happened when you were teaching.

CHRIS
/Nothing happened!/
/

BAILEY
I know you were high.

(A beat.)

CHRIS
I'm supposed to say "allegedly".

BAILEY
Right.

CHRIS *(timidly)*
What else did she say? My mom?

BAILEY
That you're on administrative leave. Pending an investigation.

CHRIS
And the ruling by the academic board.

BAILEY
You're a PHD candidate?

CHRIS

And I was teaching a class on journalism.

BAILEY

What were you on?

(A beat. CHRIS hands her back the champagne and stands.)

CHRIS

I'm really not /supposed to talk about it./

BAILEY

/How did they find out?

CHRIS

I. Said some things that didn't...align with Harvard's views of journalism.

BAILEY

And you were reported?

CHRIS

By multiple students, yeah.

BAILEY

How did they know it was, ya know-

CHRIS

Drugs?

BAILEY

Yeah.

CHRIS

Umm. It was. The guy who gave me the...who gave it to me, he was also a candidate and he didn't want them to find out so he provided-

BAILEY

He ratted you out.

CHRIS

He was honest. That he gave me the pills. And they asked and I...was honest, too.

BAILEY

So they were able to put two-and-two together?

CHRIS

It's not hard to figure out when you have statements about my "appearance" and what I was saying.

BAILEY

What did you say?

CHRIS

When?

BAILEY

In the class, what did you say to the students you had?

CHRIS

I, uh. I said. I think I said something like "it doesn't fucking matter if you tell the truth, they won't believe you nowadays."

BAILEY

I can see how that would be a problem.

CHRIS

It just sort of. Slipped out.

BAILEY

Well. I think it is good you got away for a bit.

CHRIS

Doesn't matter.

BAILEY

How so?

CHRIS

Can't run away from everything all the time. I'm going to have to go back and face it- the hearing, that is. Whenever they schedule it.

BAILEY

Sure.

(A beat. CHRIS stares into the backyard. He finally speaks his mind.)

CHRIS

It's weird. That you care about this.

BAILEY

What do you mean?

CHRIS

It's your wedding day! And I'm a stranger, or I WAS a stranger to you, and now you know me better than most of my- than my friends do. This is supposed to be, like, the happiest day of your life, and you're thinking about my problem.

(BAILEY stands.)

BAILEY *(after a moment, earnestly)*

Today isn't that special to me. I know it should be, but I find myself focusing on the smaller stuff instead. Not that your problem is small! But like, you pointed out that I went for a run this morning-

CHRIS

That WAS weird.

BAILEY

Right. I know! But I woke up worried I wouldn't be able to. I actually got up earlier so that I COULD go for a run. Like, why was it that important to me?

CHRIS

I guess it just feels like...any other day? For you?

BAILEY

I'm walking around, doing things I'd do everyday! Perfectly normal. But really it's not. My life will change today, completely, and hopefully, for the best.

CHRIS

Hopefully?

BAILEY *(not answering him)*

I mean the crazy thing is that there are millions of people who are experiencing something similar today. Weddings are, in actuality, incredibly common. It's not some rare occurrence. It shouldn't be special, but the industry, whoever makes all this money, has made it so that the stakes are SO high. Which is why they're so expensive, by the way. It's a billion dollar industry every year! It's a vicious cycle: they tell you that you should make it special and so they make it more expensive, which in turn makes it more special. Wealth equates to worth, I guess. I went to a wedding last year of a friend of mine, she's inside actually, and she told me her father paid almost half a million dollars. On ONE DAY. But she talks about it like she peaked. It was the best day of her life. People say that all the time. I think it's because something that should be normal becomes abnormal. We have made this day so special, to everyone, there's this focus on how much lives will change on wedding days. From engaged to betrothed. But it's not these days that are special, I think. It's the smaller days, the ones that are seemingly normal from the start, not ones we have to force normalcy on. Like me this morning with the run. It's the days that make you realize how quickly we fall in love or lose our jobs or suddenly experience tragedy. Like what you experienced? That was just any other day. You didn't think you'd get caught, but

then you did and the whole world gets tipped over. That day is going to always be huge for you.

I'm sorry it will be! It's horrifying and breath-taking all at once. And you know what the absolute craziest part is? We can't control it. I felt BAD this morning when I went for a run because it's like "I'm not taking this day seriously". You ever go out and no one knows it's your birthday? Isn't that the best? I love it. You are sitting at a restaurant or like mailing something and the people around you have NO IDEA. It's a secret. But this morning, it was like "should I be freaking out?" "Should I be, like, examining my life up until this point" and like really considering it? Considering whether this is what I want or like wondering how Jonah and I got here? But it's just, not that kind of day. And I don't know if that's because we've been planning this for so long, or maybe because Jonah is so focused on the trip or whatever. And it's not like it's NOT special, you know? It is! But it's just: I can go for a run today. I can take a normal shower. I can do what I want. I can meet a stranger. And maybe my life will change later, but I just won't think of it that way.

CHRIS
Bailey?

(BAILEY moves a little bit closer to CHRIS. It's a small gesture, but it carries a lot.)

BAILEY
Just another day, ya know?

CHRIS
I do.

(They sit for only a moment before BRUCE enters from offstage where the cars are parked. He sees them touching, and interrupts.)

BRUCE *(gruffly, loud)*
Chris.

CHRIS *(startled)*
Hey. Dad.

BRUCE
How're you doin', Bailey?

BAILEY
Fine! I was just, sharing some champagne with Chris here. Thank you. For the bottle.

BRUCE
Sure. Chris, come here for a second.

CHRIS
Can you just give me a second, Dad, I'll be right in-

BRUCE (*firmly*)
Now.

(CHRIS goes over to BRUCE. BAILEY sits back down.)

CHRIS
What's up, Dad?

BRUCE
What're you doing?

CHRIS
Nothing.

BRUCE
That girl's getting married, you should leave her be.

CHRIS
Dad-

BRUCE
What're you doing?

CHRIS
I was. Mom asked me to get them a bottle of champagne. To congratulate them- and then I just ran into Bailey, I mean I was- and we got to talking and I was just sitting there- We were just talking, Dad.

BRUCE
Really? Just talking?

CHRIS
Yes. Honestly, Dad.

BRUCE
Expect me to believe you?

CHRIS
That's the truth, Dad. Nothing's going on.

BRUCE (*angry*)
She's got things to do, she can't be wasting her time with you.

CHRIS
We were just talking.

(A beat.)

BRUCE (*firmly*)

Well. Listen. I was doing some research. I had a buddy on mine look into a few- there's a facility up in Massachusetts, near Worcester, I think. Supposedly very good. And I think you should consider. Well. It's expensive, so your mom and I won't be able to help out as much as I'm sure you'd like, but I think you should. Check yourself in. (A beat.) Show the school a real commitment to getting back on your feet. And put this mess behind you.

CHRIS

Dad-

BRUCE

I'm not kidding here.

CHRIS

I know. But I really don't think I need to. Check myself in. Anywhere.

BRUCE

It's 11AM and you're drinking champagne. It's not your wedding day. You don't have anything to celebrate. What's your excuse?

(A beat. BRUCE walks away from CHRIS towards BAILEY.)

BRUCE (*friendly*)

Seems like the weather's gonna hold off for you!

BAILEY

Seems that way, for now. Could change, who knows-

BRUCE

Well. Don't let Chris bother you too much.

BAILEY No. He wasn't-

BRUCE

And give my best to Jonah. You two have fun tonight.

BAILEY

Thank you. And thank your wife for me.

BRUCE (*over his shoulder, exiting into the garage*)
Need your help with something, Chris. Get inside soon.

(BRUCE exits. CHRIS stares into the backyard. Finally, BAILEY speaks.)

BAILEY

Can I be honest about something? Your dad scares me.

CHRIS (*not really focused*)

Yeah.

BAILEY

He's just giving you a hard time.

CHRIS

Sure. Look I should-

BAILEY

I'm practically a stranger, Chris. I really don't care what you did.

(*A beat.*)

CHRIS

Yeah. Listen I should let you get back to what you're doing.

BAILEY

Right.

CHRIS

Hope the weather holds up for you guys.

(*BAILEY stands, CHRIS turns to exit through the garage.*)

BAILEY

Listen, Chris-

CHRIS (*turning back*)

It was OxyContin. That's what I was on.

BAILEY

Thanks for being honest. You can stay, if you want-

CHRIS

It's just. I don't want today to be special. I don't want any more surprises.

(*CHRIS exits. BAILEY sits for a moment. She stares at where he was. She finishes the bottle of champagne and exits through the sliding glass door. Lights down. Lights up. It's several hours later. It looks darker than it was before, as if the storm is sitting just off the coast and ready to strike at any moment. We suddenly hear thunderclaps, see lightning strike nearby. The wind whips and picks up speed and ferocity. We hear doors closing, chaos. Some shouts. Rains tarts to fall at an alarming rate. The wind whips, the power goes out. As the stage is plunged into*

*darkness, we hear an alarming *CRACK* and a tree comes crashing down. We do not see it, but we hear it. After a few moments, the wind stops, the rain halts, and we hear a chainsaw chopping through some of the wood. Lights up on the houses; it's very early, just before dawn, the next day. Voices come in faintly, from far off, after a moment BRUCE and JONAH enter from the backyard. They are mid conversation, almost whispering in the early-morning hours. BRUCE carries a chainsaw.)*

BRUCE

Thank god you'd been home.

JONAH

Didn't know if we'd make it, but once they lost power we knew we had to call it. That rain though!

BRUCE

Worst I've seen it. And from out of nowhere.

JONAH

Have you had a tree come down like that?

BRUCE

Once, when we first got married. We had just moved in. Never heard anything like. Made me wish we had gotten the trees inspected too, before buying the house.

JONAH

I suppose that's the risk you take.

BRUCE

You bet. You'll see. I'd go knocking on those old trees in your backyard too, just make sure they're sturdy.

JONAH

If they hung through last night, they can withstand anything, I bet. But I can have my cousin come take a look at them.

BRUCE

So they had to cancel huh?

JONAH

Yeah, my family wasn't going to make it in that weather. The hotel lost power, too.

BRUCE

Sorry to hear that. It'll be back up later today.

(BRUCE opens up the garage door and exits to deposit the chainsaw. JONAH looks into the backyard.)

BRUCE

Ya know, we had rain on our wedding day too.

JONAH

Is that right?

BRUCE

Kind of foggy and wet all day. Didn't make for great pictures, but who gives a shit about that?

JONAH

Sure.

BRUCE

My wife, sure. But a picture's a picture.

JONAH

Where did you guys get married?

BRUCE

Small church down the road, actually. Wasn't a shotgun wedding or anything like that, we just wanted to keep it small. Her folks, my dad. The reception was in their backyard, a few kegs of beer and grill. I'm sure Harri wanted something larger, maybe a rec-hall or something but we were poor. I hadn't started working yet, and her folks weren't made of money so it was, ya know, limited.

JONAH

Sounds nice, actually. Intimate.

BRUCE

I was just thinking. We were standing around a picnic table in her folks' backyard. And someone was making a toast, maybe her father, I don't know, and suddenly, just like (snaps his fingers) rain starts pouring down. And there's no tents, no awnings or anything like that. So we run to their back steps, they have these steps that go up to another level on the back, and we all scatter and me and Harri, just standing there. She's got my jacket on, and we are soaked to the bone. And I just say "I got ya." Just like that. "I got ya." And I think to myself, "this is most romantic thing in the world." And just as I'm having that thought, just as I think I've become a real prince for Harri, she starts laughing. Just cackling. Absolutely cracking up at me. Because it was hilarious in how stupid it was. "I got ya" like I was some kind of hero in a romantic comedy. And that's what I remember, us laughing at each other, under the stairs in the rain. And that was that. I was remembering that this morning. While we were out there.

JONAH

Bruce. You're a big softie.

BRUCE (*chuckling*)
Right.

(*A beat.*)

BRUCE (*pointing to JONAH's house*)
She sleeping?

JONAH
I'll be honest, I'm not sure. When we got home and everything started. Probably.

BRUCE
Thank god you guys had been home, or I would've been doing this by myself.

JONAH
I'm sure Chris could've helped you out.

BRUCE
I can't count on him.

JONAH
Sure.

BRUCE
So what's the plan? Getting married today instead?

JONAH
I guess, if the club gets power back. I just hope the trip is still on. Even if we don't get married.

BRUCE
You'd still go?

JONAH
I've rented all the equipment for only so long. Gotta make use of it while I can.

BRUCE
A honeymoon without a wedding.

JONAH
It's just a party. We're basically already married. Plus, I've really been looking forward to the trip.

BRUCE
It'll be a nice time, you two will get some alone time. That's always needed.

JONAH

Exactly. Well. I should get some sleep. I'm exhausted.

BRUCE

Sun's about to come up.

JONAH

Yeah, all the more reason.

BRUCE

Well, thanks again.

(BRUCE starts to exit through the garage door. JONAH stops him.)

JONAH

Bruce-

BRUCE *(re-entering)*

Yeah, son?

JONAH

I wanted to ask the other day, but Chris was right there so I didn't want to-

BRUCE

What is it?

JONAH

Any advice? For getting married?

BRUCE

Oh.

JONAH

It's super cliché, I know, I'm just not very close to my dad, and I am, ya know, a little nervous-

BRUCE

Oh, there's no need to-

JONAH

And honestly? I was glad yesterday was off. I don't know if I was ready. I really feel like I didn't know that I wasn't ready until the day was there, and I was just so overwhelmed. Like I felt like I couldn't breathe. It's not that I don't believe in us, or like, that I don't love Bailey and everything. But it's huge, ya know? Just HUGE. I wish I could describe it better, and I know we never like, talk like this. To each other. But I just figured, ya know, we're out here. And.

BRUCE

Jonah. Listen, it's normal. To feel this way.

JONAH

It is?

BRUCE

Absolutely. And I appreciate you coming to me and asking.

JONAH

You do? Because I didn't want to like, overstep my bounds as a neighbor or anything-

BRUCE

You didn't. I'm, glad, I guess, that this is where we're at. As neighbors, I mean.

JONAH

Wow. That is a relief.

BRUCE

The thing is- I wish I had something good to tell you-

JONAH

How do you mean?

BRUCE

I mean it's hard. Marriage, life together. You guys have experienced parts of it, sure, but it gets harder. And some day you will want to give up, to give in to the stress and the pressure. And I could tell you some cliché things like "don't go to bed mad" or "bring home flowers every week" or some bullshit. But the truth is, it'll be easy when it's easy and hard when it's not. What makes the difference is the connection between you and Bailey. You guys are great to each other, and for each other. As long as nothing can break that bond, you'll be fine.

JONAH

Well, believe it or not, that's exactly what I needed to hear.

BRUCE

Happy to help.

(JONAH starts to exit into the sliding glass door. BRUCE stops him.)

BRUCE

Say, listen-

JONAH *(stopping)*

Yeah?

BRUCE

You're not gonna be able to sleep, let's grab a cup of coffee.

JONAH

They won't have power, down the road.

BRUCE

No, but gas station's got a generator. They'll fire it up for us and we can get a cup there.

JONAH

Gas station coffee? That sounds good actually. You can give some more pearls of wisdom.

BRUCE

Happy to.

(BRUCE claps JONAH on the back. They exit towards the cars on the road. We hear a car start and pull away. After a moment, CHRIS emerges from the garage door. He stands in his driveway a moment, inspects the backyard, sees that there's no one out there. He looks across to the sliding glass door. The morning light is cracking through. CHRIS decides, moves towards the glass door. He is about the knock, decides against it. He shakes his head. He starts to creep across the driveways to the open garage door. He pauses in his own driveway to look into the backyard. BAILEY enters silently from the sliding glass door. She watches him.)

BAILEY

Good morning.

CHRIS *(startled, turning to her)*

Hey! Hey. Sorry, did I wake you?

BAILEY

No? Why?

CHRIS

Nothing. Nevermind. Good morning.

BAILEY

Were you- were you coming over to see me?

CHRIS

No! No. I was just/

BAILEY

/You were going to wake me up./

CHRIS

I was just coming over to say sorry your wedding got cancelled.

BAILEY
Postponed. And no you weren't.

CHRIS
No. I wasn't.

(A beat.)

BAILEY
They were out there all night.

CHRIS
Yeah. I think they left though.

BAILEY
Yeah?

CHRIS
Yeah I heard a car pull away. And the backyard is empty. Except for the tree.

BAILEY
You guys were lucky. That it didn't hit the house.

CHRIS
I'm sure my Dad was worried.

(BAILEY moves toward him.)

BAILEY
So.

CHRIS
So.

BAILEY
What were you coming over to say?

CHRIS
When?

BAILEY
/Just now./

CHRIS
/Oh./

(A beat. CHRIS steps away.)

CHRIS
Nothing.

BAILEY
Liar.

CHRIS
I'm not

BAILEY
My wedding got cancelled, and you were coming over to see me.

CHRIS
I mean. Postponed.

BAILEY
Chris. What do you want to say to me?

CHRIS
That. That...it was nice to meet you.

BAILEY (*exasperated*)
God.

CHRIS
Bailey! Really, nothing. It was stupid.

BAILEY
I'm not an idiot, Chris.

CHRIS
I didn't say you were.

BAILEY
Ask me the question.

CHRIS
I won't.

BAILEY
That's exactly what I thought you'd do.

CHRIS
Because you know me so well.

BAILEY
I feel like I do.

CHRIS
Well, you don't!

(A beat.)

CHRIS
What's your excuse, then?

BAILEY
What do you mean?

CHRIS
Why're you up this early?

BAILEY
Because I was- nothing, just checking.

CHRIS
You weren't coming to wake me up?

BAILEY
No!

CHRIS
Okay then.

BAILEY *(finally, angrily)*
I think you're fucked up.

CHRIS
Yeah, you and everyone else.

BAILEY
Fuck you.

CHRIS
Yeah, that's great. Fuck you too.

(CHRIS starts to leave. BAILEY stops him.)

BAILEY

I think you're fucked up because you came over here to say something to me and you're too much of a coward to actually say it.

CHRIS

Because I'm such a fuck up, right? I do drugs and I'm a huge disappointment and on top of all that, I can't be honest, is that what you're saying?

BAILEY (*going to exit*)

Fine. If this is how you want it to end.

CHRIS

What's "it"?! Why were you coming over here?!

BAILEY

I wanted to see you to know if it was something!

(*A beat.*)

BAILEY

I wanted you to come over because I couldn't get you out of my head. I couldn't stop thinking about meeting you. It's not cold feet, I honestly wanted to see you. And it's totally weird. But it's like I was saying before: I thought today, yesterday, whatever, was supposed to be one thing and I kept cursing myself for it not being that but then... I don't know. It was something else entirely.

I was wrong.

CHRIS

What do you mean?

BAILEY

It wasn't normal. Because I met you.

(*A beat.*)

CHRIS

I was coming to see you, too.

BAILEY

I'm glad you did-

CHRIS

But I shouldn't have.

BAILEY

You feel that way?

CHRIS
I do.

BAILEY
Okay.

(A beat.)

CHRIS
This was a mistake.

BAILEY
Then why come?

CHRIS
I don't know

(A beat. BAILEY moves to CHRIS. They are practically touching.)

BAILEY
I'm glad I met you. Yesterday.

CHRIS
I'm glad I met you, too.

BAILEY
But. It's-

CHRIS
I know.

(A beat. She takes his hand.)

CHRIS
I'm not going to ask you.

BAILEY
Why not?

CHRIS
Come on. You know.

BAILEY
You think I should marry him?

CHRIS

We don't know each other. And this is-

BAILEY & CHRIS

Weird.

(A beat. They laugh, remembering how little they've actually interacted.)

BAILEY

You could though.

CHRIS

Could what?

BAILEY

You could ask me.

CHRIS

You're just saying that.

BAILEY

Maybe I'm not.

CHRIS

And what then?

BAILEY

I don't know!

CHRIS

Exactly. You're not thinking. We aren't thinking.

BAILEY

Yeah. Maybe we aren't.

CHRIS

You know what sucks the most?

BAILEY

What's that?

CHRIS

We have to act like this didn't happen.

(A beat. She takes his other hand, her head resting against his. They stand there for a moment. After a beat, HARRIET enters. She sees them, speaks.)

HARRIET (*not indicating if she knows what happened*)
Chris?

CHRIS (*startled, pulling away*)
Mom!

HARRIET
You're up early.

CHRIS
Yeah, I was just-

HARRIET
Morning, Bailey.

BAILEY
Good morning, Harri. Did you get any sleep?

HARRIET
A little. I heard a car leave, was it Jonah?

BAILEY
I think he and your husband left together.

HARRIET
So sorry to hear about your big day.

BAILEY
Oh, that's alright-

HARRIET
What a shame to have to reschedule. Did the club give you any indication of when you guys could do it?

BAILEY
Uhm, not really-

HARRIET
Such a shame. But you know what they say? Rain on your wedding day is good luck.

BAILEY
Right.

(*A beat.*)

HARRIET

Well. Let us know if we can do anything. Chris, why don't you come on in and help me figure out a breakfast? Can't cook anything, but I think we have cereal.

CHRIS

That's alright, Mom. I'm just going to-

HARRIET (*a little more demanding*)

Chris. Come on, come help me.

CHRIS

Mom, I just need a-

(A car pulls up and stops them all. JONAH and BRUCE enter with cups of coffee for everyone.)

JONAH

Hey! You're up!

BAILEY

Yeah, what're you-

JONAH

Bruce had a great idea, and I think we should do it.

HARRIET (*to BRUCE*)

Did you bring me one?

BRUCE (*handing her a cup*)

Black coffee, how you like it.

HARRIET (*reluctantly taking it*)

Well...thank you.

BRUCE (*to CHRIS*)

And look who decided to suddenly emerge from slumber!

CHRIS Hi, Dad.

BRUCE

Couldn't help me last night but he suddenly appears now when coffee arrives.

CHRIS

You didn't ask me last night-

BRUCE (*bluntly, handing him the coffee*)

Here.

BAILEY
Sorry, what was the idea?

JONAH
I know it's kind of crazy, but the club still doesn't have power and doesn't look like they will get it back anytime soon.

BAILEY
Oh, okay.

HARRIET
Such a shame.

JONAH
But Bruce suggested, and I think it would be great: what if we get married here?

BAILEY (*taken aback*)
Like, here-here? In the backyard?

JONAH
Or front yard! Whatever works!

BAILEY
Like, today?

JONAH
Yeah! Why wait, ya know?

BAILEY (*uneasy*)
Well, our families and friends-

JONAH
I already called my folks, they're willing to eat the money for the venue. And Bruce says we can use his grill to cook food and stuff. I'm sure the club would give us the liquor we bought.

BAILEY
Are you- are you sure?

JONAH
Why not!

BAILEY
I just feel bad, and you know, it's so last minute.

JONAH

Well this way we don't have to wait! And we don't have to reschedule the trip.

BAILEY
The trip?

JONAH
Yeah! You know we only have the equipment for so long, and I really don't want to miss out.

BAILEY
Jonah-

JONAH
Yeah?

BAILEY
That's not a reason to rush through our wedding.

(A beat. CHRIS stares.)

JONAH
I know! It's not. I just. Really want to be married to you.

(A beat. JONAH kisses her on the cheek and takes her hand.)

HARRIET
We can help, dear. Bruce and Chris can help clean up the backyard, and I think we have a canopy somewhere in the garage.

BRUCE
And we got the grill, and I'm sure we can offer some stuff to cook.

JONAH
It could be really beautiful. Intimate.

(BAILEY thinks. She looks to CHRIS. He is silent.)

BAILEY
We had better start calling people. I guess.

JONAH
There we go!

HARRIET
Excellent! Bruce start picking up the backyard, find a rake to bring with you. And Chris, maybe you can find the canopy?

CHRIS Sure.

BRUCE
Alrighty! Let's get going! We got a wedding to put up.

JONAH (*to BAILEY*)
Come on, honey.

BAILEY
Coming.

(JONAH and BAILEY exit through the sliding glass door. HARRIET turns to CHRIS and BRUCE.)

HARRIET
Alright, well. Chop-chop!

CHRIS
Wait. I think I should-

BRUCE
Grab the canopy, like your mother asked.

CHRIS
No. No. I think I should get going.

HARRIET
Going?

CHRIS
Yeah. Back to Boston. There's a train in a few hours, I should get back.

HARRIET
No! You should stay longer, sweetheart, with everything going on.

CHRIS
That's just the thing, I should get back and face it, Mom.

BRUCE (*sarcastic*)
Isn't that convenient?

CHRIS
What's that supposed to mean?

BRUCE
The minute you're asked to do anything around here, to actually help out, you gotta run.

CHRIS
I'm not running, Dad.

HARRIET
Sweetheart-

BRUCE
Your mother is asking for help, and you can't even lend a hand.

CHRIS
Dad, I have to get back.

BRUCE
Get back to what? Hmm?

CHRIS
To work.

BRUCE
You don't have work! You have nothing. Your mother was gracious enough to have you back here after you fucked up. And now you run from that, too.

CHRIS
I didn't run away.

BRUCE
You did. You're a coward. You're no man-

HARRIET
Boys, let's leave it.

BRUCE
No, Harri, you've stood up for him for far too long. Now he has to sleep in the bed he made.

CHRIS
I'm trying to fix this-

BRUCE
If you wanted to fix it, you'd go to the facility in Worcester. You'd check yourself in today, instead of avoiding your problems.

CHRIS
I don't need rehab, Dad. And I'm trying to face my problems, not run from them.

BRUCE

Instead you bring all this shit back here with you.

CHRIS

This is still my home, Dad.

BRUCE

It's not. Not anymore. Not until you check yourself in there.

CHRIS

Dad, that's insane-

HARRIET

Honey-

BRUCE

Probably wasted last night, that's why you couldn't help me with the tree.

CHRIS

You never asked!

BRUCE

I shouldn't have to!

CHRIS

I don't want it to be like this, Dad.

BRUCE

You want a better relationship? Then you have to fix it.

CHRIS

Our relationship is never going to get any better, Dad. Not unless you stop being such a fucking dick.

(BRUCE smacks CHRIS across the face. There is a moment of stunned silence. HARRIET is stricken.)

BRUCE

Get the fucking canopy for your mother. And then go get yourself straightened out.

CHRIS *(softly)*

Dad-

BRUCE

Now. Come on Harriet.

(BRUCE begins to exit into the garage.)

HARRIET
Chrissy...

BRUCE (*offstage in garage*)
Harri!

CHRIS
It's alright. Mom. It's okay.

(HARRIET touches his face. She exits into the garage. CHRIS stands there for a minute, he looks as if he could cry. After a beat, he goes into the garage. We hear him rummaging around, and he eventually re-enters with a canopy bag. He goes to walk it over to the sliding glass door, decides he can't go that far. He leaves it on the edge of the driveway. He exits into the garage. After a beat, he re-enters and sighs. He picks up the canopy bag and walks it over to the sliding glass door. Just as he's putting it down, BAILEY enters from the door and startles CHRIS.)

CHRIS
Jesus!

BAILEY
Sorry!

CHRIS
Stop doing that!

BAILEY
Stop leaving stuff by our door!

CHRIS
Fine! Here!

(He puts the bag down and starts to exit through the garage door.)

BAILEY (*stopping him*)
Chris!

CHRIS
Bailey, we're strangers. It's okay.

BAILEY
What if it's not?

CHRIS
You're going to get married today. And I'm gonna go.

BAILEY
Back to Boston?

CHRIS
Yeah. It's time.

BAILEY
Are there even trains? With the hurricane?

CHRIS
I'll wait. But I can't do it here.

BAILEY
Okay. So then this is goodbye?

CHRIS
I'm sure I'll be back.

BAILEY
Not like this, though.

CHRIS
No. Not like this.

BAILEY
Well. Take care of yourself.

CHRIS (*finally*)
You too.

(A beat. CHRIS goes to exit. He turns back in the garage doorway.)

CHRIS
If it was any other day.

BAILEY
Yeah.

CHRIS
It was weird. But I'm glad for it.

BAILEY (*finally*)

Me too.

(CHRIS smiles and exits. BAILEY looks after him. She turns to the sliding glass door. She picks up the canopy bag. She shakes her head, starts to cry softly. Lights down. Lights back up. Later in the day, the afternoon. We hear voices and car doors shutting. A crowd is gathering at the house for the wedding. The garage door opens, CHRIS exits. HARRIET follows.)

HARRIET

And what time is the train?

CHRIS

About a half hour?

HARRIET

You're sure they're still running?

CHRIS

That's what it says online.

HARRIET

Okay. And I can't convince you to stay?

CHRIS

You know Dad wouldn't like that, Mom.

HARRIET

He's just being hard on you.

CHRIS

Mom.

HARRIET

I know. It's more than that.

CHRIS

Anyways. I should get going.

HARRIET

Let me get my keys...

CHRIS

No, Mom, I called a car. Don't worry.

HARRIET

I could take you!

CHRIS

I didn't want you to have to worry.

HARRIET
Dear, are you alright?

CHRIS
What do you mean?

HARRIET
I mean. What happened this morning? Between you and-

CHRIS
Yes.

HARRIET
Chrissy?

CHRIS
Yes, I'm fine. Mom. Really.

(A car horn honks. CHRIS sees it's his taxi.)

CHRIS
Gotta run. I love you. I'll call you when I get in.

HARRIET
All right. Travel safe, and let me know if you need anything at all.

CHRIS
I will. Love you.

HARRIET
About your father-

CHRIS
It's alright. Really, Mom. It's alright.

HARRIET
I love you.

CHRIS
I love you too.

(He starts to exit to the car. He pauses, looks back at the other house and the driveway.)

CHRIS

It's just-

HARRIET
Yes, dear?

CHRIS
It looks good without the rhododendron. I like it better.

HARRIET (*looking over at the other house*)
I suppose maybe you're right.

(CHRIS exits. The sounds of the wedding next door get louder. The lights fade. Lights up, the next morning. JONAH exits the sliding glass door with BAILEY. They both have luggage, they're leaving for their honeymoon.)

JONAH
Got everything?

BAILEY
I think so.

JONAH
Great, I'll start the car.

BAILEY
You're sure they don't mind keeping an eye on the house?

JONAH
Bruce said it wasn't a problem.

BAILEY
That's very nice.

JONAH
They've been great to us, we should get them something on the trip.

BAILEY
That's a good idea.

JONAH
Say, whatever happened to Chris? He had to take off?

BAILEY
I'm not sure. I guess so.

JONAH

Huh. Kind of a weird guy.

BAILEY

He's been through a lot.

JONAH

I'll say. He didn't say goodbye? Seems like you two hit it off?

BAILEY

How do you mean?

JONAH

Jennie was telling me at the club. You guys had a drink together?

BAILEY

I didn't know you knew. Sorry. I wasn't like-

JONAH (*not at all phased*)

No, hey, whatever. Glad he could calm your nerves on the big day!

BAILEY

Well. What was supposed to be the big day.

JONAH

Right. I thought we recovered nicely!

BAILEY

We did.

JONAH

Well, lock that behind you. Lemme start the car.

(He exits towards the driveway. BAILEY stops him.)

BAILEY

Jonah?

JONAH

Yeah?

BAILEY

Are you excited-

JONAH

About the trip? Hell yeah.

BAILEY

No I meant. About us being married?

JONAH

Of course. Of course I am. Why would you ask that?

BAILEY

What did you do on that morning?

JONAH (*confused*)

The morning of the wedding?

BAILEY

The morning of the day it was supposed to happen?

JONAH

I had drank so much the night before, I'm not sure I remember...

BAILEY

Right.

JONAH

Actually, that's not entirely true. I woke up thinking I was excited for it to be over. Not that I wasn't excited for the wedding itself. But I just wanted so badly to get to the next thing. To be married to you and to get to the next part of our lives. I remember I stayed in bed for like an extra hour just thinking of that.

BAILEY

That's. Very nice.

JONAH

What did you do? I just realized you weren't there when I woke up.

BAILEY

Oh. I went for a run. Actually.

JONAH (*amused*)

Huh.

BAILEY

What?

JONAH

That's funny. That you did something kind of normal. Just going for a run on your wedding day.

BAILEY

You're right. It was pretty-

BAILEY & JONAH

/Weird./

(They laugh together. JONAH goes to exit.)

JONAH

Lock the door. We should get going.

BAILEY

Right behind you.

*(JONAH exits. BAILEY looks towards the garage door. She looks into the backyard. She exits.
Lights down. End of Play.)*