

Faster Than Shadows

a play by
by
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CHARACTERS

Gideon Hayes, 35, escort, drug addict, terrified of time passing him by, given to great violence at his times of deepest insecurity and underneath it all, a longing for family.

Olivia Taylor, 33, business executive who has pulled herself out of a very dark past, hanging onto her sanity by a thread, fighting an obsession for Gideon.

Tyler Lewis, 16-22, runaway, lived most of his life on the streets, a tough attitude hiding how deeply lost and lonely he is, dying for love.

SETTING

Olivia's upscale apartment.

ACT ONE

(Time: Present. Night. Setting: Olivia's upscale apartment. Darkness. Someone's in the apartment. Sounds of steps. The figure presses himself against the wall. Door opens. Enter Olivia Taylor, 32, dressed high-class business professional, turning on the lights, revealing Gideon Hayes, 35, sexy/dangerous. Olivia goes into the next room. Gideon slips out. She enters, talking on her cell-phone.)

OLIVIA

No, I told you, hold all my calls.. An Emergency?. Did I or did I not just say. Tell them I left town and you have no idea how to reach. No, I'm not leaving. I just need a little time to myself. I work. I do not have to explain to you. Let's put it this way. If for any reason, I mean, any reason, you let someone call me? You're fired.

(She hangs up, puts on up-beat music, dances. Gideon silently opens the door. Watches her. She sees him.)

OLIVIA

Ahhh!

(Gideon takes out a knife, grabs Olivia, throws her against the wall, holds the knife to her throat. She struggles to get away, hits him. Knife closer, ready to cut. They stand like this, eye to eye, a face-off. Olivia punches him in the stomach, runs. He leaps after her, knocking her to the floor. He wraps his hands around her throat. Eye to eye. Gideon gets up, lets her get up. She runs for the door. Jammed. She runs for her phone, disabled. Runs to the intercom, broken. He walks over to her. She does not move. He moves toward her.)

GIDEON

Don't you ever do that, again.

OLIVIA

Do what?

GIDEON

Tense up when I get--

OLIVIA

I won't.

GIDEON

I'm off my meds, baby. Who knows what may happen? I am no more Biiiiii-polariiiiiiized. It's OK for you to walk around in any shoes you want but I can't kill you?

OLIVIA

I'll walk any way you want.

GIDEON

Why?

OLIVIA

You told--

GIDEON

WHAT THE FUCK DID YOU JUST CALL ME?

OLIVIA

Handsome.

GIDEON

You're lying.

OLIVIA

I'm not--

GIDEON

Fuck you, you're--

OLIVIA

You're very handsome.

GIDEON

I'm fucking gorgeous. People pay top dollar to fuck me.

OLIVIA

I'm sure they so.

GIDEON

When the fuck did you get so mouthy?

OLIVIA

Sometime between you holding the knife to my throat and you holding the knife to my throat.

GIDEON

How am I handsome?

OLIVIA

Look at you. Any woman--

GIDEON

Only women?

OLIVIA

Men, too. Of--

GIDEON

I'M NOT INTO MEN!

OLIVIA

Please--

GIDEON

“Please?” You have the nerve to say that to me? Do you know how painful it is to be ignored?... I said, do you know how painful it is to be ignored?

(Gideon puts the knife away. Olivia kicks him in the balls, runs to the door, bangs on it.)

OLIVIA

HELP. HELP. I'M BEING KILLED. HELP--

(Gideon grabs her, throws her on the floor.)

GIDEON

I trusted you.

OLIVIA

Get your breath away from me.

GIDEON

What's wrong with my breath?

OLIVIA

Nothing. I didn't mean--

GIDEON

Just say you hate me. Be honest, for once.

OLIVIA

But I don't.

GIDEON

How is that supposed to make me feel?

OLIVIA

I just--

GIDEON

I'm talking about me. Can't you focus on me for one fucking moment?

OLIVIA

I'd like to change.

GIDEON

You're perfect.

OLIVIA

Clothes.

GIDEON

What's wrong with my clothes?

OLIVIA

Mine.

GIDEON

You mean, like take them to a store and--?

OLIVIA

Wear different--

GIDEON

I get the inhaling of your meaning. Go ahead. I SAID GO.

(Olivia goes into the next room. Closes the door. Gideon goes to the door, opens it, watches her.)

GIDEON

Don't be shy. Ain't nothing I ain't saw before. HURRY THE FUCK UP. Women!

(Olivia comes out of the room, dressed.)

You changed. GIDEON

I told you-- OLIVIA

You used to be all vulnerable and shimmery and shit. Five years passed and I don't hear one word from you and you. I called you a million times. GIDEON

I never-- OLIVIA

Burner phones. I didn't want to let on like I needed you or nothing. GIDEON

You managed-- OLIVIA

The walls of your life mildew away-- GIDEON

O.K.-- OLIVIA

I wrote you letters-- GIDEON

I threw them away-- OLIVIA

You threw me away? GIDEON

The letters. OLIVIA

Why? GIDEON

No return address. OLIVIA

Honey-- GIDEON

Get the fuck out.

OLIVIA

My beauty--

GIDEON

How did you get past security?

OLIVIA

On their left.

GIDEON

How did you--?

OLIVIA

The key? I broke into your apartment--

GIDEON

You what?

OLIVIA

One time! OK, several times, and found your spare key, took it to that hardware store, you know, the one right next to the deli that used to sell coffee but then-

GIDEON

You had my key copied?

OLIVIA

If you're going fucking to put it like that. OK. Yeah. Like. And I must say, every time I've been here I've been just been so impressed for how well you've done for yourself.

GIDEON

Don't let your green snakes have babies just yet, I fucking inherited the place.

OLIVIA

Excuse me for even walking on the planet that. I had to see you.

GIDEON

Mission accomplished. Go.

OLIVIA

"Go?"

GIDEON

I'm sorry.

OLIVIA

No, you're not.

GIDEON

Leave.

OLIVIA

Oh. OK.

GIDEON

I'm waiting.

OLIVIA

You don't really want me to leave--

GIDEON

I do.

OLIVIA

That's what you always say just before you want to kiss me.

GIDEON

That will never happen--

OLIVIA

Look at you. You got your shit all together up in the big, corporate world, looking down at the rest of us, the vermin.

GIDEON

Don't talk about yourself like that.

OLIVIA

That's what you think I am.

GIDEON

Sometimes we make mistakes.

OLIVIA

I'm a mistake?

GIDEON

OLIVIA

Yes.

GIDEON

I'm a mistake?

OLIVIA

You're a mistake for me to be with--

GIDEON

That's right. It wouldn't be good for your recovery. You're sorry. You're very fucking sorry.

OLIVIA

The hospital said I have to stay away from my triggers. You are the definition of a trigger.

GIDEON

Trigger? I have a gun. Sometimes I sit for hours, with the gun pointed at my head, and, and, it's like, it's like, like a medication, or something. I imagine pulling the trigger, and suddenly, it's like everything's all right.

OLIVIA

You have the gun, now?

GIDEON

Now, you want me to answer you.

OLIVIA

Give it to me.

GIDEON

Ho ho!

OLIVIA

Throw it out the window.

GIDEON

Oh, no.

OLIVIA

Show it to me.

GIDEON

If you insist.

(Gideon unzips his fly.)

OLIVIA

Old news.

GIDEON

Old? That's not the reaction I usually expect when I pull down my zipper.

OLIVIA

I thought you had a gun.

GIDEON

To protect you.

OLIVIA

No one is out to hurt me. That was all in my mind.

GIDEON

But I want to.

OLIVIA

Hurt me?

(Gideon pushes Olivia against the wall, holds a knife to her neck.)

GIDEON

Sometimes, I think it would be like a spiritual experience to watch you bleed. Where would I cut you first? Maybe a nice--

(Olivia punches Gideon in the stomach, tries to run but Gideon catches her.)

GIDEON

WHY ARE YOU FUCKING RUNNING AWAY FROM ME?

OLIVIA

You're terrifying me.

GIDEON

Terrifying you or getting you turned on?

OLIVIA

I'm not like that.

(Olivia rushes to a garbage can, throws up.)

GIDEON

I really wish you wouldn't throw up around me. It makes me think like it has something to do with me or something.

OLIVIA

Instincts.

GIDEON

OK. OK. OK! L.O.L. Is that what you would say while you live on your phone texting everyone. Everyone but me. So, here are the rules--

OLIVIA

I will not--

GIDEON

Did I say you could talk?

OLIVIA

What about going to the bathroom?

GIDEON

I'll decide when you--

OLIVIA

What's going to happen when you have to go to the bathroom?

GIDEON

I didn't--

OLIVIA

Think. You didn't think about that, did you, Gideon? That's just you all over.

GIDEON

What's all over me? Fuck.

OLIVIA

More half-baked ideas you can't carry through on. That was always you. You're going to do this, you're going to do that, but never followed through. A real loser.

GIDEON

I'll figure it out.

OLIVIA

And groceries?

GIDEON

I didn't go shopping before I came over.

OLIVIA

You're going to lock me into my own apartment, the least you could do is bring me dinner.

GIDEON

I have a plan. I do.

OLIVIA

What?

GIDEON

What?

OLIVIA

What is--?

(Gideon doubles over.)

GIDEON

What the fuck just happened?

OLIVIA

Other than you attacking me?

GIDEON

I attacked you?

OLIVIA

You don't remember?

GIDEON

What the hell did I take?

OLIVIA

Take?

GIDEON

A drug.

OLIVIA

What was it?

GIDEON

How am I supposed to know that?

OLIVIA

Ask.

GIDEON

I don't know, I felt insecure with this guy. He was so above it all, like he was standing on top of a building, shouting down at me, and the next thing I knew he had my head in a deadlock, and forced this pill into my mouth.

OLIVIA

Did you report it to the police?

GIDEON

That I was buying drugs? Yeah, like right away.

OLIVIA

You paid him?

GIDEON

He seemed pretty adamant about it but fuck, what the fuck, I can't even remember. It's like I stepped into this whirlpool of darkness and spun around so--

OLIVIA

You need to go back on your meds or--

GIDEON

Don't get crazy on me. Oh, shit. I forgot!

OLIVIA

Forgot what?

GIDEON

He's going to kill me.

OLIVIA

The guy who sold you the drug?

GIDEON

It's after me.

OLIVIA

What?

GIDEON

My shadow. I can't get rid of it. It's trying to make me older. God, I hope he can forgive me. I don't know. I don't know. OK, I have to take a chance.

OLIVIA

If it were me--

GIDEON

You're not me. DON'T GET ME EVEN MORE CONFUSED THAN I ALREADY AM. THAT REALLY PISSES ME OFF.

(Gideon takes the door-jam out. Opens it. Olivia tries to push him to get out of the apartment. Gideon punches her, hard. She screams through the open door.)

OLIVIA

HELP ME. CALL THE POLICE. CALL--

(Gideon wraps his arm around Olivia's throat so she can't scream. She gets away from him. Tyler Lewis, a homeless youth in rags enters the apartment. Gideon lets her go and runs jams up the door, again.)

OLIVIA

Get out. He has a knife. Call the police.

TYLER

Because of a knife? You on crack?

GIDEON

I'm warning you. I--

OLIVIA

Who is this poor kid?

GIDEON

Tyler. I gave him a little food, and he's been following me everywhere I go, now.

OLIVIA

He was begging?

GIDEON

Begging, asking, depends on how you look at it.

TYLER

You were just going to lock me out?

(Tyler rushes to Gideon wraps his arms around him.)

TYLER

Don't leave me. Ever. Don't, don't, don't.

OLIVIA

Someone likes you. Take him to the park. It's beautiful out now.

(Gideon ruffles Tyler's hair.)

GIDEON

Crazy boy.

TYLER

You taught me how to find flowers in the garbage. You brought me tea and oranges that came all the way from Japan.

GIDEON

I did?

(Tyler holds Gideon even harder.)

TYLER

Don't throw me away.

GIDEON

Ok!

TYLER

Not ever. You don't know what it's like to be hurled from one hurricane to another without anyone even holding your hand, without anyone... You're replacing me with this bitch?

OLIVIA AND GIDEON

Hey.

TYLER

It'll be your last day, you take Gideon away from me.

OLIVIA

Will I get a supper?

TYLER

What? You think I can cook? You don't even know me. Yeah. I can cook. Empty a trash can, get me a stove. I'll do wonders.

OLIVIA

Honey--

TYLER

Don't "honey" me, you--

OLIVIA & GIDEON

Hey.

TYLER

I've been living on the streets since before I was born and can slice any scamp that crosses me.

GIDEON

Listen, kid, I'm really sorry I forgot about you.

TYLER

You forgot about me?

GIDEON

Well, not about, like, what is about you, objects and things, but you yourself, yeah, for a moment, just a moment, I forgot.

TYLER

How long was this moment?

GIDEON

You know how I told you to wait at the door while I went in to visit Olivia?

OLIVIA

Visit?

GIDEON

Yeah, after that, you just went right of my mind. Uh, sorry.

TYLER

I went out of your mind? Where did I go?

GIDEON

What do you mean?

TYLER

Did I fly out of your mind and land on a window cill or something? Must be that pill I gave you.

OLIVIA

He gave you--?

GIDEON

He forced me.

TYLER

“Forced?” I found it on the ground. You begged me for it. People on the street climbed stairs that weren’t there just to get away from you.

(Olivia runs for the door, bangs on it.)

OLIVIA

HEEEELLLLLLPPPPP!

(Gideon grabs Olivia, her throat, pressing the knife against her throat so that it hurts..)

GIDEON

I really do not like you trying to run out on me like that. How is that supposed to make me feel? I’ll fucking slice your throat, right now.

TYLER

Talk about losing your head.

GIDEON

He thinks I’m his father. But I ain’t no Boston Strangler, if you know what I mean.

OLIVIA

I don’t.

TYLER

I never said--

GIDEON

You talk in your sleep, kid.

OLIVIA

You sleep together?

GIDEON

Not together, together, like, together, or nothing. I sleep next to him on the sidewalks to make sure no one hurts him.

TYLER

According to him.

GIDEON

He talks in his sleep.

TYLER

I do?

GIDEON

Yeah, not very well. You tend to mumble. I wish you'd work on that.

TYLER

Like if I'm waiting for someone to open the gates of Heaven when they unzip my zipper and they're late, they're like, not on time, not at the time they were supposed to be, a time different--

OLIVIA

Late.

TYLER

Like that! Well, when that happens and trust me, that rarely happens. Usually they're early, forming lines--

OLIVIA

I'm sure you're very popular.

TYLER

Sometimes, waiting, like, waiting, I get, I don't know, I get a feeling, inside, you know, and I go out, quick, kill someone, rush back, spread my legs, they unzip me, put it in their mouth and suddenly that feeling that I had, that feeling inside, that I didn't like, like I said I didn't like, vanishes, and you shove it in, and you pull it out, and you slide it in, and you yank it out, and you do the Hookie Pokie, and that's what it's all about. Yeah! Sing it with me.

GIDEON

We all know what head feels like, Tyler.

TYLER

Not everyone, Gid, I mean...you know--

GIDEON

She knows what it tastes like.

TYLER

That's different than feels like.

OLIVIA

Is it like a guy having his tongue up my vagina?

TYLER AND GIDEON

Olivia!

GIDEON

So crude.

TYLER

So vulgar.

GIDEON

So out of bounds.

TYLER

Remember my age.

OLIVIA

Why?

TYLER

Because I can't. Someone fucking has to!

GIDEON

You got to take care of him, Olivia.

OLIVIA

Sounds like you really care about him.

GIDEON

He means nothing to me. I mean, in my heart, yeah, there, I have feelings for him, in the square of it, and I want him to have a good life and shit. Hey, stop changing the subject. I will slice his throat the second you try to escape, again.

TYLER

Mine? I don't see how that's very fair.

GIDEON

Being born isn't fair.

OLIVIA

See, Gideon, you deserve so much more. I can help you. I can help you get a nice place to live--

GIDEON

What's wrong with here?

OLIVIA

A place of your own--

GIDEON

You're just hell bent on rejecting me.

TYLER

You'd better be careful. He really doesn't like people who bend hell. He--

OLIVIA

What the fuck is wrong with you? This is a dangerous man. You have...I could get you a place to live, also, so you don't have to sleep--

TYLER

You think I've had to live on the streets all my life? I could go back to that thirty-third floor, in the air, any time. But I wanted to be more.

OLIVIA

You have a real home?

TYLER

Who would live on the streets if they had a choice?

GIDEON

Tyler--

TYLER

Do not come near me.

GIDEON

Kid--

TYLER

"Kid?" You even know my name?

GIDEON

For a moment.

TYLER

The moment passed?

GIDEON

No, uh, not really, but around the side of it, that's well--

TYLER

TYLER. My name is Tyler.

GIDEON

Tyler!

TYLER

Yeah.

OLIVIA

Gideon, you can't keep us here forever.

GIDEON

Where you been, man?

TYLER

Locked out.

GIDEON

Of where?

TYLER

Here.

GIDEON

Why didn't you just knock?

TYLER

I wasn't raised to do that. Knock on doors and shit. No. If you're at someone's place and you want them to know you're there, you never knock. Ever. That, and because you told me if I made a sound you would shove a pipe down my throat. I considered that a deterrent.

GIDEON

You have to understand--

TYLER

I understand. A flea has more meaning to you than I do. Crystal clear.

GIDEON

No, man. It was that drug.

TYLER

The drug?

GIDEON

You shoved it down my throat and after that it's all blackness.

TYLER

You--

OLIVIA

This must be your son.

GIDEON

What?

OLIVIA

He looks like you.

GIDEON AND TYLER

Fuck, no.

OLIVIA

And you talk alike. Now, listen to me--

TYLER

Are you on a drug, also, 'cause--

OLIVIA

I've never taken any drugs--

TYLER

What about when you went to, uh, the you know that head place, where the latest fashion is straight jackets.

OLIVIA

How do you know about that?

TYLER

YOU'RE FUCKING LYING TO ME.

OLIVIA

Definitely father and son and--

GIDEON

Wait. Wait, wait, wait. I do not think he's my son.

OLIVIA

How would you know?

GIDEON

Because I think I would remember something like that.

OLIVIA

You sure?

GIDEON

Forget that I have a son?

OLIVIA

Could be.

TYLER

No.

OLIVIA

Maybe you're not father and son but either way, you both feel--

GIDEON

Well, yeah--

TYLER

I mean--

GIDEON

Sometimes, I--

TYLER

Yeah, it's like a sometime thing--

GIDEON

But there are lots of times where I don't feel that.

TYLER

He's right. Many times I don't feel it, either.

OLIVIA

OK! So sometimes you feel like you're father son and sometimes you don't--

GIDEON

I think that's fair.

TYLER

I could agree to that.

GIDEON

Sometimes, yes--

TYLER

And sometimes, no--

GIDEON

And sometimes--

OLIVIA

SHUT UP. The thing is, I was at the Met last week. I saw a father and son together. You two should try that. Now. Quick. Before they close.

GIDEON

The met?

TYLER

Who met?

GIDEON

You're trying to confuse us, aren't you?

OLIVIA

The Metropolitan Museum of Art. They have this whole father/son thing going on, now, and you both should just run, don't walk, there now.

(Gideon grabs Olivia, holds the knife to her throat.)

GIDEON

You're trying to get rid of me.

OLIVIA

No.

TYLER

Gid, don't go over the hill.

GIDEON

What does that mean, “Over the hill?” You put that into his head, didn’t you? I am not old. You want to go around telling people I’m old, before you do, watch your life gush out of your throat.

TYLER

Gid, fuck, man. What are you doing?

GIDEON

I’m going to fucking kill her, that’s what.

TYLER

Stop it.

OLIVIA

When did I say you were old?

GIDEON

Wouldn’t I have to be old to be his father?

OLIVIA

It depends on when you had him.

(Olivia elbows Gideon, knocking him off her.)

OLIVIA

Y You God damned fucking bastard. How dare you barge into my life--

GIDEON

I thought I was your life.

Knock me around, like you did? You think you can do that are there aren’t going to any fucking retaliation?

TYLER

I have another pill, if you want one.

GIDEON

Where?

OLIVIA

YOU’VE HAD ENOUGH. Tyler, give me that pill.

(Tyler pops the pill in his mouth.)

TYLER

Mother of Trash-cans, I just took it.

OLIVIA

And you have no idea what it is?

TYLER

A pill.

OLIVIA

What kind of pill?

GIDEON

See, this older thing is, like, uh, I don't know, like getting under my skin.

TYLER

Wrinkling it, too.

OLIVIA

Gideon, my love, you're younger than like most of the world.

GIDEON

Really?

OLIVIA

Would I lie to you?

GIDEON

Yes. Oh. OK, then. Then that's OK. All right.

OLIVIA

Tyler--

TYLER

What--?

GIDEON

Is anyone even interested in me at all or should I just stand here being ignored?

OLIVIA

Tyler, you poor thing. Look at you. You look like you haven't eaten in months. Or showered. Make yourself at home. Just don't sit anywhere.

(Olivia gets a cloth from a drawer.)

TYLER
What are we doing here?

GIDEON
I'm trying to find you a home.

TYLER
Why can't I live with you?

GIDEON
Where?

TYLER
Where-ever you are.

(Olivia gives Tyler the clothe.)

OLIVIA
Use this to sit on, and you can sit wherever you want.

TYLER
That's it. I'm vanishing.

OLIVIA
Let me give you something to eat first.

(Olivia makes a sandwich.)

TYLER
I'm expected to chew when I've vanished?

OLIVIA
Gideon, explain to him he hasn't vanished.

GIDEON
You didn't vanish.

OLIVIA
Brilliant.

TYLER
I'm still here?

GIDEON
You bet.

On what?

TYLER

(Olivia gives the sandwich to Tyler. Eats it fast.)

OLIVIA

How about a shower and some clean clothes?

TYLER

If you feel like it.

GIDEON

She meant you.

TYLER

I already showered this year.

OLIVIA

Come on, sweetie.

TYLER

“Sweetie?” If I wanted a mother I would have hired a whore and role played.

OLIVIA

Healthy as that sounds, why don’t you let me show you to the shower?

TYLER

Are you gonna be gone when I come back?

GIDEON

I’ll be right here.

TYLER

How do I know that?

GIDEON

You have to take it on faith.

TYLER

How am I supposed to have enough faith to believe in faith?

OLIVIA

Come with me.

(Olivia leads Tyler into the next room. Gideon follows them, keeps his eyes on them. Olivia returns.)

OLIVIA

You hurt one hair on that child's head and swear I will--

GIDEON

After you broke up with me, I forgot about the indignity of it, and I offered to stay and help you get back on your feet, again.

OLIVIA

More like you stalked me.

GIDEON

Which at the time, you thought was very romantic.

OLIVIA

At the time, I was a very ill woman. I have a date coming over.

GIDEON

A date?

OLIVIA

A date. Another man. A man I want to be with.

GIDEON

Is this the way it's going to be with you? Push/pull?

OLIVIA

Get the fuck away from me.

GIDEON

Hey! Don't move away from me like that! I hate that.

OLIVIA

I'm not --

GIDEON

Call this man and tell him you changed your mind.

OLIVIA

You've never left anyone?

GIDEON

Of course.

OLIVIA

That was OK?

GIDEON

That or suffer.

OLIVIA

OK for you to leave someone but not me?

GIDEON

Yes.

OLIVIA

I'm not who I was, anymore. I'm strong, now.

GIDEON

Of course.

OLIVIA

You can kill me, but you can't hurt me.

(Enter Tyler, not showered and still in his rags.)

GIDEON

You didn't shower.

TYLER

No.

GIDEON

Or change.

TYLER

Inside I've gone through tremendous changes.

OLIVIA

Get out, Tyler. Get out, now. Run.

(Gideon throws his arm around Olivia's shoulder, getting ready to break her neck.)

GIDEON

She doesn't mean that--

OLIVIA

He's a maniac.

TYLER

Calm down, you two. I just wasn't in the mood to shower. No need to impregnate rats about it.

OLIVIA

He's trying to break my neck.

TYLER

And the whole clothes bit? Knew that wasn't real.

OLIVIA

Believe me.

GIDEON

Shut up, already.

TYLER

Geez, Gideon, you don't have to be like that, just because she lied about the shower.

(Gideon lets Olivia go. She goes to her room.)

GIDEON

Where'd she go? She just--

TYLER

Why do you have to be such a mean fucker, huh?

GIDEON

I'm not.

TYLER

You just practically broke her neck.

GIDEON

I was just--

TYLER

No. You weren't. You were really hurting her. You God, damned fuck-face.

GIDEON

Hey.

TYLER

Turd.

GIDEON

Don't--

TYLER

Chicken. Only a chicken would try to hurt a woman. Men who hurt women are the scum of the earth. Men who hurt women should have their arms cut off. Men who hurt women should have their dicks sliced open. I'm sorry I ever met you.

(Olivia enters the room with a washcloth, soap, small container of water, and clothes.)

OLIVIA

Sit on the couch.

TYLER

Why--?

OLIVIA

Will you please, very kindly, sit on the couch, for me?

GIDEON

Tyler, sit on the fucking couch.

(Olivia and Tyler sit on the couch. Olivia takes the washcloth, wipes the filth off his face.)

OLIVIA

Sit still.

GIDEON

What are you doing?

OLIVIA

Washing his face. I want to see what he looks like.

(Olivia finishes washing Tyler's face.)

OLIVIA
You're not bad looking.

GIDEON
Give me that washcloth.

(Gideon grabs the washcloth, and roughly washes Tyler's face. Tyler jumps up.)

TYLER
Don't touch me or I'll fry you for dinner.

OLIVIA
Tyler!

TYLER
He lays a hand on you one more time--

GIDEON
You'll what?

(Olivia takes the towel away from Gideon, holds Tyler's face to keep washing him.)

TYLER
You want to have sex with me?

GIDEON
What?

OLIVIA
I'm old enough to be your mother.

TYLER
Next, you're going to be telling me I'm young enough to be your son.

GIDEON
That's just saying the same thing twice from the different side.

OLIVIA
Give me your hands.

TYLER
Promise to give them back?

OLIVIA

What? Oh.

GIDEON

You know what? My father was a butcher. Guess what skills I learned.

(Gideon takes out his knife, holds it to Tyler's throat.)

OLIVIA

Tyler, Gideon is very sensitive. He thinks everyone hates him. It makes him crazy. So, it would be really great if you could calm down stop being rude to him.

TYLER

Me? He--

GIDEON

Hear that, Tyler? Sensitive. Just the smell of Olivia's hair makes me all, all inside. But the worst part--

OLIVIA

Then call someone.

TYLER

Who?

OLIVIA

I don't know. Anyone.

GIDEON

Call the front desk...uh-oh...you can't do that.

TYLER

You mean?

OLIVIA

So, stop with the attitude toward him.

GIDEON

Listen to your mother--

OLIVIA AND TYLER

"Mother?"

Olivia. GIDEON

What? OLIVIA

I mean, listen to Olivia. GIDEON

OK. TYLER

(Tyler presses his ear to Olivia's arm.)

Tyler, try to get it. OLIVIA

Yeah. He was just trying to hug me, there, wasn't he? Weren't you? TYLER

Right in the square of it. GIDEON

If you want to hug me, it's OK. TYLER

Next life. GIDEON

But-- TYLER

My father never hugged-- GIDEON

I thought-- OLIVIA

No-- GIDEON

Didn't he--? OLIVIA

Not that I remember. GIDEON

OLIVIA

Right.

TYLER

People are so afraid to be touched. There are special prison cells under Alaska for people who want to hug someone they've just met. That's why men tie their ties so tight. Trying to choke down all their impulses.

GIDEON

I don't even wear ties.

(Olivia takes Tyler's hands and washes them. She rolls up his sleeves and washes his arms. She hands him the clothes.)

OLIVIA

Go and change.

TYLER

I--

OLIVIA

Out.

GIDEON

Do you know what "out means?"

TYLER

You--

OLIVIA

1, 2 --

TYLER

Oh, brother, don't have a triangular hot-dog.

(Tyler takes the clothes and exits.)

GIDEON

You think you can get him on your side and turn on me?

OLIVIA

Not everything is about you.

GIDEON

Nothing is about me.

OLIVIA

Like I haven't thought about you every day?

GIDEON

You have?

OLIVIA

You're there inside me, every fucking, fucking moment.

GIDEON

No--

OLIVIA

I got so horny just thinking about you, I had to go to a public bathroom once and --

GIDEON

That's for a lot of people, that.

OLIVIA

I do nothing but think about kissing you. I miss kissing you. You always were the world's greatest kisser. Kiss for hours. We couldn't get enough--

GIDEON

Take me back.

OLIVIA

You're going to have to hold a knife to my throat, again, for me to even consider that.

GIDEON

I shouldn't have done that. I will never, ever, ever, do that, again.

OLIVIA

Right.

GIDEON

Kill me.

OLIVIA

And go to jail?

GIDEON

I won't say a word.

OLIVIA

You'd find a way.

I fuck everything up.

OLIVIA

It was the drug.

GIDEON

It was the drug.

OLIVIA

Absolutely.

GIDEON

I would never really act that way and since I wouldn't, I didn't. Why did I just get so upset with myself for? It doesn't matter. All that matters, now, is you. Kiss me.

OLIVIA

No.

GIDEON

Kiss me.

OLIVIA

Never.

GIDEON

Kiss--

(Gideon grabs Olivia. They kiss, out of control.)

OLIVIA

Get off me.

GIDEON

There it is. Push/pull.

OLIVIA

Don't you know what's wrong?

GIDEON

You hate me.

OLIVIA

I'm completely in love with you, and you're the worst thing that's ever happened to me.

GIDEON

See, right here, there, I'm not really following.

OLIVIA

You--

GIDEON

I was having problems. I'm past that, now

OLIVIA

You are so deeply disturbed that for me to want you, makes me just as disturbed, and I will not go back. I will be healthy.

GIDEON

Working one thousand hours a week and no friends?

OLIVIA

You've been following me.

GIDEON

I worry about you like the blood in my veins is going backwards.

OLIVIA

You're a drunk.

GIDEON

I'm not. I haven't had a drink in the five years since you dropped me like--

OLIVIA

And what's this?

(Olivia rolls up one of Gideon's sleeves. There are needle marks.)

GIDEON

Stop it.

OLIVIA

You shoot up, now, also?

GIDEON

How did you know?

OLIVIA

Drugs your new addiction?

GIDEON

I am not addicted. I only shoot up on weekends, if it's Monday through Friday, or a special occasion. Or something. I had thought--

OLIVIA

And the pills?

GIDEON

I can get off everything if you--

OLIVIA

I'm not a lifeboat.

GIDEON

I'm drowning without you.

OLIVIA

Learn to swim.

GIDEON

I've tried. But do you know what the conditions of the swimming pools are around here? I've tried taking classes, but then they always want money, and...Oh. You didn't mean--

(Olivia takes Gideon's face in her hands and kisses him on the mouth.)

OLIVIA

My only light. Don't fade out on me.

GIDEON

You're really confusing.

OLIVIA

In my heart--

GIDEON

You're just trying to trick me.

(Olivia tackles Gideon, kissing him. He struggles to get away. She overtakes him until he gives up, surrenders to her, responds completely. Enter Tyler in new clothes.)

OLIVIA

Get out of here.

Olivia.

GIDEON

(Olivia gets up, slaps Tyler hard across the face.)

OLIVIA

I said, get the hell out.

GIDEON

Olivia!

OLIVIA

Give me your knife.

GIDEON

No.

OLIVIA

I swear, you give me your knife or I'll fucking kill you.

TYLER

Is this not a good time?

GIDEON

No, no, no, Tyler. For you, it's always a good time. Olivia, here, she just forgot who she is for a moment.

OLIVIA

Look at you.

GIDEON

Yeah. Wow. Like. Inside it.

TYLER

No--

GIDEON

Yeah, man, you're the--

TYLER

I'm not--

OLIVIA

You really--

TYLER

I do look cool, don't I? Three sizes too big. But hey, you know, there, and that.

GIDEON

An arrow that hit it's exact mark.

TYLER

Thanks, Gid.

OLIVIA

I can't go back.

GIDEON

Don't say that.

TYLER

To work?

OLIVIA

I'll lose my mind, again.

TYLER

Quit.

GIDEON

You won't.

OLIVIA

Inside you're dark and bright, a million irresistible invitations.

TYLER

I lost myself twelve times, and each time it was the strangest thing not to exist--

GIDEON

You never --

But then I found a new self--

GIDEON

Where? In your box?

TYLER

And that was even better than my old self, which by this time, had skulked away, and thrown itself into the river of lost fish.

(Olivia pats the couch for Tyler to sit next to her. He does. She takes out a brush and brushes his hair.)

TYLER

What are you doing to do to me, lady? Hey, ouch. Do you have to brush it so hard. Are you crying?

OLIVIA

No.

TYLER

Oh, I love lying, also. That's why I lie all the time. But then I thought about it, you know, between other thoughts, right in the rectangle of it, lying is in a way, dishonest. That's why I never lie. No one's ever brushed my hair before.

OLIVIA

I believe that includes you.

TYLER

Yeah, but be careful, please. A lot of people are saying they like my hair. On my scalp!

GIDEON

Am I just invisible here?

(Gideon takes out a bottle of pills. Swallows them. Olivia continues to brush Tyler's hair.)

OLIVIA

Your hair is gorgeous, I say in a completely platonic way.

GIDEON

What about my hair?

TYLER

Here. Let me.

GIDEON

You me what?

OLIVIA

Not you.

GIDEON

The two of you are sitting there just IGNORING ME.

TYLER

Give me the brush and turn around, now, before it becomes the moment after this one.

(Olivia turns around. Tyler brushes her hair.)

GIDEON

Let me tell you something, while the two of you sit there brushing each other's hair--

OLIVIA

You're jealous.

TYLER

As if the world wasn't on fire, as if galaxies weren't flying the fuck out of the universe to get away from us. Do you know that according to the National Geographic channel, as recently as four billion years ago the earth was nothing but ocean. It was an ocean planet. Like, the whole place. That's why they invented swimming.

GIDEON

The dead are putting on the faces of living people and--

TYLER

You're the one with the beautiful hair. I shouldn't even be around you.

GIDEON

A lot of people feel that way.

TYLER

NOT YOU.

OLIVIA

Stop.

GIDEON

You shouldn't be around her, Tyler. The only, the only, only, reason you're here is because of me, and that's because I got the moon following me.

TYLER

OK.

OLIVIA

I don't mean brushing.

TYLER

OK.

GIDEON

Anyone want to brush my hair?

OLIVIA AND TYLER

No!

GIDEON

You know, three thousand souls just crashed through the window and the two of you didn't even notice--

OLIVIA

The lease on this apartment doesn't allow for that many so I'm afraid you'll have to ask most of them to leave.

TYLER

They're all over me now, trying to take off my clothes, they haven't had sex in sixty thousand years.

OLIVIA

I'm dying from jealousy here.

GIDEON

They come out of the cracks in the sidewalk and then people look at me like I'm odd.

TYLER

Some people are just intuitive that way, Gid.

GIDEON

My life is seeping out under my pants.

OLIVIA

You took something again. Didn't you?

GIDEON

Me? What? Never. You have something seriously wrong with you. You two sit here brushing each others' hair as if I'm no longer in the room.

OLIVIA

I'm just taking care of the boy. Child.

TYLER

Tyler!

GIDEON

Now, you've got him talking to himself. Do not ignore me.

OLIVIA

We didn't mean to ignore you.

GIDEON

Really?

TYLER

OK., OK, everyone calm down, here. Having never lived on the streets, you two think this is an oh, so wild, dangerous, situation.

OLIVIA AND GIDEON

It is.

TYLER

No. It's not. You want it to be, but it just ain't.

GIDEON

Don't you ever just get tired, tired of--

OLIVIA

No. I don't.

Like it's something lying on the floor you could pick it up and instead of it just being dirty clothes you've been promising yourself, one more broken promise to yourself, one more disappointment, you could just pick it up and it would be a reason to live, and you could say to yourself, maybe even feel, a reason you could show to people passing you on the street--

OLIVIA

Show to people?

GIDEON

Who don't really care about you when the sun rises or the sun sets, or the sun just loses it's fucking mind and starts spinning everywhere, confusing the hell out of everyone, even hope, passes faster than shadows--

OLIVIA

You know what really scares me? I actually follow you.

GIDEON

I never noticed .

OLIVIA

I think about that all the time.

GIDEON

So the person they live with doesn't know that home isn't home that's a home that could be a home, hold it up and say, "Hey, here, right hand my hand, I have a reason for living.

OLIVIA

See. Always hope.

Until, of course, you fall on your face and someone steals the rag that was your pretense of hope and why get up, stand up and do what, live? Who the hell wants that? He needs a place to live.

OLIVIA

Tyler?

GIDEON

Tyler needs a place to live. He spent an entire winter clinging to a church steeple singing to the statues--

TYLER

Angels-

OLIVIA

Singing?

TYLER

Yeah, and you left out the part about all the angels adding in the harmonies no matter how fierce the snowy winds blew. That is, until they glanced down and noticed people pointing up at them. Then they got all rigid. Fuckers.

(Tyler sings.)

Oh, original sin, and all that shit, you win, you win, yeah, yeah, yeah. Oh, original sin, and all that shit, you win, you win, yeah--

OLIVIA

Is that on I-tunes?

TYLER

It fucking should be, shouldn't--?

GIDEON

He needs a home. He needs warmth and comfort.

OLIVIA

Home isn't always what it's built up to be at Christmas.

GIDEON

He needs a home.

OLIVIA

I wish I'd never--

GIDEON

He needs a home.

OLIVIA

Good luck finding him somewhere.

GIDEON

I already have.

OLIVIA

Where?

GIDEON

Here. With you. He's going to live with you. You want him to rot on the streets?

TYLER

You said she promised.

GIDEON

I lied to you. OK? I picked you up out of the garbage to give you hope.

OLIVIA

You told him he was going to live here?

GIDEON

You got a problem with that?

TYLER

Yeah.

OLIVIA

You want him to have a place to live, bring him to your place.

GIDEON

My place? I live in a room with a bathroom down the hall. I can barely fit into it. I have to walk sideways just to get to the bed. You dropped me, again. Again, again, again, again, again, and you don't give a shit about a poor homeless boy with no place to live.

TYLER

"Homeless" kind of captured the idea. Adding "with no place to live" is repetitive and also redundant, according Big Bird and Big Bird knows everything.

GIDEON

You see what I have to put up with?

OLIVIA

How long have you been living on the streets?

TYLER

You saying there's something wrong with me? I need that like I need a bullet in my elbow.

OLIVIA

Of course not, honey.

TYLER

So, what, am I living with you, or not? I need to know, now.

OLIVIA

You can stay here for a day or two. But not live. Of course, not. Although, I always did want to have a child. I didn't want to go through the process of having a child if you know what I mean.

TYLER

Sounds painful as shit.

OLIVIA

I just couldn't bare to have a child.

TYLER

Something wrong with you down there?

OLIVIA

It would be too painful.

TYLER

You never heard of drugs?

OLIVIA

I cannot bring another person into this world with my blood.

TYLER

Wouldn't they have their own?

GIDEON

What's wrong with you?

OLIVIA

You.

GIDEON

Me?

OLIVIA

You.

GIDEON

I have to tell you, that, uh, it, uh--

TYLER

Hurts like hell and makes you want to die?

GIDEON

Yeah. That, there. That. Slide up or down it, it--

TYLER

It means-

OLIVIA

I don't need a God damned interpreter.

TYLER

Those were the last words I'll ever speak.

OLIVIA

What's wrong with me, is you. I thought after five years I'd be over you, but no, every thought I think--

TYLER

Every step you take. Oops. I already spoke my last words.

OLIVIA

About you. I look at people and all I see is you. I look in the mirror, and it's you I see.

TYLER

Maybe the mirror's broken. Opps, again.

OLIVIA

I can't date. Sometimes I can barely work. I just sit there, knowing I should do something, but I'm paralyzed by you and you are the most, the very most troubled, fucked up, out of his mind man I've ever known.

GIDEON

Is that like a compliment or walk around it and it's a put down?

OLIVIA

Can't you see what you do, are doing to me?

GIDEON

Marry me.

TYLER

Vomit.

OLIVIA

Never.

GIDEON

Never. That's like a long time. Like a really long time. I mean, the universe goes on forever, but eternity, who can even begin to grasp that. There must be seventy-five galaxies and that's just start. Space just--

OLIVIA

Focus.

GIDEON

I almost forgot. You were rejecting me. Please, go on.

OLIVIA

Gideon, don't take me back.

GIDEON

I have to.

OLIVIA

I'm lost in you.

I'm found in you.

GIDEON

You're going to kill me.

OLIVIA

Try to avoid negative thinking.

GIDEON

It won't be your fault.

OLIVIA

What if I gave up killing?

GIDEON

You really kill people?

OLIVIA

I don't know if now is the best time to talk about that.

GIDEON

But you want to kill me, don't you?

OLIVIA

If you have to put it like that, yeah, uh, yeah. But that's like, anyone I know. Not that I really know anyone, I--

GIDEON

You're a riptide.

OLIVIA

Weren't you paying any attention at all when they invented swimming?

TYLER

(Olivia kisses Gideon deeply on the mouth, won't let go.
They kiss, fall on the floor, keep kissing.)

See, Gid, you're not being ignored, now. In fact, I'm getting this slow feeling creeping up the back of the socks I used to wear that I'm the one being ignored. Not this way, not that, not with green eggs, and not with hats. FUCKING RUDE!!!

TYLER

Tyler, I'll make some calls, maybe Foster Care --

OLIVIA

TYLER

I'd rather stick my head into drying cement.

OLIVIA

If you don't want that, I won't do it. You can't live here. I'll help you in whatever way I can.

GIDEON

She'll help you in any way she can.

TYLER

Whatever. She said that. You said any way. I mean, for God's fucking sake, get it together. Diamorphine brain. You got a lot of money?

OLIVIA

More than God.

TYLER

God doesn't have money. Does He? Do you have to pay Him or something to get into, but wait, that doesn't even exist, only Hell is real.

GIDEON

What do you do, go to work, come home, and be alone for all these years?

OLIVIA

Yes.

GIDEON

What about that date you were expecting?

OLIVIA

What are you planning to do to us?

GIDEON

Us?

OLIVIA

Me and the child.

GIDEON

It's you. It's always been about you. Even with all the others, it's always been about you.

OLIVIA

Others?

GIDEON

Yeah, like. Make you fall in love with me, again.

OLIVIA

You're halfway there.

GIDEON

Fall in love with me or kill you.

OLIVIA

That would kind of ruin your mission, don't you think?

TYLER

I wasn't always homeless.

OLIVIA

I assume you weren't born in an abandoned building.

TYLER

I was born into a fish bowl. See how I've evolved? I used to live in a box because I lost my job at The Angry Dog. That cafe down on, what's that street, you know, the one next to the other one?

OLIVIA

Which?

TYLER

You been on that street?

GIDEON

What does it matter?

OLIVIA

Maybe?

TYLER

This guy had only one tooth, and I think he was born that way, was the cook, scared the shit out of customers if they complained about the food or wanted it cooked without salt or something--

GIDEON

Who cares? I--

TYLER

Stranger than a planet spinning backward. He fired me. Can you believe it? One tooth in his mouth and he fired me --

OLIVIA

For--?

GIDEON

I'm losing my patience here.

TYLER

Just because I drank a tiny bit while working. Imagine, saying two bottles of Ripple was too much.

GIDEON

And I didn't have much when I came in.

OLIVIA

How will you get work?

GIDEON

As what?

OLIVIA

Not you.

TYLER

As what?

OLIVIA

Anything.

TYLER

I hadn't thought about that. I should though. Always good to be prepared for when it's time.

OLIVIA

When will that be?

TYLER

When I grow up.

OLIVIA

How old are you, now?

TYLER

Between sixteen and twenty-four.

GIDEON

What is this all of sudden? Him. Him. Him. Him.

OLIVIA

You don't know?

TYLER

You don't know if you've been on that street.

OLIVIA

What happened to your box?

GIDEON

Brilliant idea. Slice him up and put him in a box.

TYLER

No, thanks, Mr. T.

OLIVIA

Wasn't that your home?

TYLER

Probably mildewed from the rain, by now. You know, someone left a cake out in the rain once, and all these dogs came and shat on it.

OLIVIA

You want to go look for it?

GIDEON

Look for what?

OLIVIA

His box.

GIDEON

Why would he want to do that?

OLIVIA

Maybe he left something valuable.

GIDEON

Him? Valuable?

Maybe he had-- OLIVIA

How did you know that? TYLER

Know what? OLIVIA

About that boat, I made out of folded paper. TYLER

What kind of boat? OLIVIA

One that sank. GIDEON

It didn't sink. I loved it. I still do. TYLER

It might still be there. OLIVIA

Yeah. TYLER

Would you like to have it again? OLIVIA

Like insanity turning into windows. TYLER

Let's look for it, right now. OLIVIA

Not there. GIDEON

How do you know that? OLIVIA

Because we looked. GIDEON

TYLER

We did?

GIDEON

You were so out of it from trying to drown yourself, and all, all you could do is mumble incoherently, but since incoherent is my first language, we looked inside the box, and it was empty.

OLIVIA

Maybe he took you to the wrong box. I feel like we need to do a thorough search.

GIDEON

Olivia doesn't mean any of that. See, she and I are in love--

TYLER

What's so fucking special about you?

GIDEON

What?

TYLER

I said--

GIDEON

I heard what you said.

TYLER

Then why did you say "what?"

GIDEON

I couldn't believe you said that.

TYLER

You say "what" every time a politician talks? Just going around using that word all the time? What? What? What?

OLIVIA

You love hot fudge sundaes?

TYLER

Like running so fast on the moon, you make it rotate in a different direction.

OLIVIA

Then I say, let's go get one. Gideon, you want that, don't you?

GIDEON

Let me look at your teeth.

(Gideon goes to Tyler, opens his mouth and looks at his teeth.)

GIDEON

Fuck. Do you even know what a toothbrush is? No way I am pouring sugar down your throat to rot your teeth even more. After we get you to a dentist and get your teeth taken care of, then we can go for a sundae.

TYLER

I knew being born was a mistake.

OLIVIA

Imagine if we got you to a real hair salon? They could do wonders with your hair. Would you like that?

TYLER

Probably pull it out of my skull.

OLIVIA

Want to go, now?

TYLER

Sure. I can always set my hair on fire if I don't like what they do.

(Olivia and Tyler head for the door.)

GIDEON

You want a peanut butter and jelly sandwich?

OLIVIA

No, he doesn't.

TYLER

What kind of bread?

GIDEON

Whatever you want. A boy like you needs to eat.

TYLER

Holy eagle-milk, yes!

GIDEON

I'll make one right now.

TYLER

You probably don't even know how.

GIDEON

Hey. I was a rising chef, before--

OLIVIA

Rising where? Your veins?

GIDEON

Do you have any idea how hard it was to get off the horse?

TYLER

You have to take classes.

OLIVIA

Be careful or he won't let you stay up past your bedtime.

TYLER

My "bedtime?"

OLIVIA

You don't think you can stay here without following every rule, do you? You'll be in bed at bedtime every night, which could change every night, or it will be the end of you.

GIDEON

Finally!

TYLER

I don't like you, anymore.

OLIVIA

Yes, you do.

TYLER

I do?

OLIVIA

Your hair would be so gorgeous if I could just trim it a little bit.

Gorgeous?

TYLER

You can't even imagine it.

OLIVIA

Leave him the fuck alone.

GIDEON

(Olivia gets scissors.)

Just the tiniest bit.

OLIVIA

(Olivia walks towards Tyler but lunges at Gideon him with the scissors. They wrestle for it. Tyler jumps into a chair, curled up like a ball. He keeps peeping out at what is happening. After a battle, Gideon forces the scissors out of Olivia's hand. She bites his arm viciously. He slaps her as hard as he can, knocking her off him. She crawls away.)

GIDEON

EVERYBODY CALM THE FUCK DOWN. I SAID CALM THE FUCK DOWN. TAKE A SEAT. BOTH OF YOU.

TYLER

Tear the bones out of each other's toes, just let me out of here.

(Olivia and Tyler sit. Gideon sits. They all stare at each other suspiciously.)

Now, don't--

GIDEON

I--

TYLER

It's--

OLIVIA

I said don't talk!

GIDEON

OLIVIA AND TYLER

No, you didn't. Hey.

GIDEON

I'm saying it, now. Don't talk. Breathe. This is all your fault, Olivia, and I'm not even blaming you. Tyler, how do you think it makes me feel when you try to open the door?

TYLER

Is it locked up forever?

GIDEON

No.

TYLER

Are we stuck here for the rest of our lives?

GIDEON

Don't be ridiculous.

TYLER

So, this is bird with one wing that can't fly and spends all its time memorizing the dirt but eventually the wind will heal, not that it has health care, or anything, I mean, not that it can even afford health care, because every time it goes to the hospital, they send it to the vet but the vet tries to have sex with it because his marriage has just gone down the hill, which all started--

(Olivia bursts out laughing.)

GIDEON

You laughing at me?

OLIVIA

I'm laughing at Tyler.

TYLER

I told you people find me funny.

OLIVIA

Honey, where did you get your mind.

TYLER

I removed from Gideon before I was born which is why--

GIDEON

You what?

(Olivia shrieks with laughter. Tyler gladly joins in and laughs, also. Gideon, not wanting to be left out, laughs, also. They all laugh together, making the others laugh even harder, until their stomachs hurt, tears stream, they fall to floor, rolling around. Gideon rolls on top of Olivia, pins her arms down, his mouth almost touching her mouth. She doesn't fight him at all. She stares into his eyes. They memorize each other. She gets up.)

OLIVIA

I can't.

GIDEON

You can't not, not, not, but not.

OLIVIA

It's so scary that I can understand what you're saying.

TYLER

I sure the fuck don't. Gideon, please let me out. Please. Then you two can fuck and kill each other all you want in privacy. You know what they say, "Privacy is like morphine."

GIDEON

And what if I have feelings for you? Like protective feelings? Like you were my son or shit.

TYLER

Your son?

GIDEON

Yeah, like shit, like.

TYLER

You called me your son.

GIDEON

I said like my son, not my actual son. God, that would mean I'd be responsible for you, and you'd probably follow me to work, and I don't know how my clients could deal with that.

TYLER

I 'LL CRACK MY SKULL OPEN AND CRY TEARS OF GRAVEL IF I HAVE TO BE A SON, AGAIN.

OLIVIA

Look what you've done to him. Let him go.

TYLER

Suddenly you don't like me?

OLIVIA

You're obviously--

TYLER

What? A typhoon in the center of an atom, a dark cloud chewing you up?

OLIVIA

You see a man setting fire to people on the street, you don't want to go near them.

TYLER

I can handle myself, myself. And get your mind out of the gutter.

GIDEON

Calm down.

TYLER

"Calm down." That's just what people say when they don't want to feel anything themselves, like "Are you OK." You could be fucking lying on the street, your skull cracked open, blood everywhere, and some idiot will come along and say "Are you OK?" Gideon, you dragged me into this--

GIDEON

What part of clinging to my leg while I tried to shake you off was my dragging... How 'bout I slice open your throat, and you can drink the coffee through the cut?

(Olivia picks up a magazine and throws it to Tyler.)

OLIVIA

Open it.

TYLER

To what?

OLIVIA

A page.

TYLER

Which page?

The page you open it to. GIDEON

I can do that. TYLER

(Tyler opens the magazine.)

Read it. OLIVIA

Maybe later. TYLER

Read it! GIDEON

OK! Don't have a pregnant peacocks that's never had sex. TYLER

(Tyler acts as if he is reading the magazine. He closes it.)

What do you think about that? OLIVIA

About what? TYLER

The article you read. GIDEON

Way cool. TYLER

Do you agree or disagree? OLIVIA

I can see both sides. TYLER

Be specific. OLIVIA

GIDEON

Now, you're both getting ready to gang up against me.

TYLER

Uh, the part, where, you know--

GIDEON

You can't read, can you?

TYLER

Should I renounce myself from the human race? Race is right. Everyone is racing to get ahead of the massive disappointment they feel about their lives.

OLIVIA

You wish you could read.

TYLER

Yes.

OLIVIA

Want me to teach you?

GIDEON

At this age?

OLIVIA

I'm too old?

TYLER

Me.

GIDEON

Maybe I should just set the place on fire. Burn us all alive.

(Olivia takes the magazine and opens it up.)

OLIVIA

First of all, what do you see?

TYLER

You're not going to believe me.

OLIVIA

Trust me.

Trust you? I don't-- TYLER

What do you see? OLIVIA

A magazine. TYLER

Besides that. OLIVIA

Your hands are holding it. TYLER

The article. OLIVIA

Words. TYLER

What else? OLIVIA

What else is there? TYLER

I'm burning this place down. GIDEON

The picture. OLIVIA

I see a picture. TYLER

The picture is a clue as to what the writing will be about. So, looking at-- OLIVIA

You must have gasoline here, somewhere. GIDEON

Flying. TYLER

What's the title? OLIVIA

F, F, Fl, Flying! TYLER

You're reading already. OLIVIA

Where is it? GIDEON

Wow, that's amazing! I didn't even know the word but seeing the picture and starting to...to-- TYLER

Sound out the letters. OLIVIA

Answer me! Where is the gasoline? GIDEON

You'll teach me to read? TYLER

I will. OLIVIA

Wow. TYLER

DO NOT IGNORE ME! GIDEON

Why would I have gasoline?...Wow. Which starts with a...a-- OLIVIA

W! TYLER

Why would I even think that? GIDEON

You are on it. OLIVIA

GIDEON

I can help him learn, too.

OLIVIA

Before or after you burn us all alive?

GIDEON

Are you trying to hurt me?

TYLER

If only my parents could have seen me read when they were alive.

OLIVIA

Your parents are dead?

TYLER

That's what "when they were alive" usually means.

GIDEON

Because I really don't like that. Being hurt. In the center of that.

OLIVIA

I had no--

GIDEON

My parents are dead, too.

TYLER

How do you know your parents are dead?

GIDEON

I was convinced at their funerals. I wasn't allowed to attend, so I observed from a mountain.

OLIVIA

It can't be all of us. My parents are dead, too.

TYLER

That makes everything so much easier. I mean, Thanksgiving?

OLIVIA GIDEON AND TYLER

UGH.

GIDEON

Why can your parents be dead and not mine? I exist.

OLIVIA

It's not supposed to be funny, but, I decided I didn't want to waste space on a shelf with two urns so, I poured them into one urn, so their ashes were all mixed up together. Kind of like they were in life. Mixed up together.

(Olivia's laughter is infectious, makes Tyler laugh, also.)

OLIVIA

And, well, if I tell you, you'll think I'm...Oh, OK. I'll just tell you. It's so funny. See, my mother was a battered woman--

TYLER

Your father must have hit her.

OLIVIA

And for awhile I thought, if there ashes are together in same urn, will he still be able to beat her up? You know, one ash slugging the other....OK, I can see from your faces, that was not funny at all.

TYLER AND GIDEON

Not to me. Me, either.

OLIVIA

Well, this is hysterical. There were these ladies who made Sunday brunches. "The Ladies That Munch." They invited me to bake with them, and there we were making brownies--

TYLER

You didn't.

GIDEON

You couldn't have.

OLIVIA

It was an impulse!

TYLER

Right into the batter?

OLIVIA

And later, there they all were. Forty such respectable women, munching on my parents!

TYLER

My stomach hurts.

GIDEON

Mine, too.

OLIVIA

They practically begged me to come back.

GIDEON

What did you say?

OLIVIA

The only appropriate thing I could. "I'm sorry. I don't have any other dead parents to contribute."

(They all laugh hysterically.)

TYLER

I met my father once.

OLIVIA

Really?

TYLER

Lots of people do.

OLIVIA

Where did you meet him?

TYLER

At the hospital.

GIDEON

My dad was so meek if you just thought about glancing at him, he fell over.

TYLER

You probably just didn't have the most fantastic chairs.

GIDEON

He was so violent.

OLIVIA

You said you met your father, again?

TYLER

On death row.

GIDEON

Your father was on death row?

TYLER

No, Gid, we thought that would be a really cool place to meet.

GIDEON

I'm sorry!

TYLER

I thought it was going to be the start of this whole father/son thing, and I'd cry every time I had to leave the jail and everything--

GIDEON

Sounds exhausting.

TYLER

But, the next day they gave him the needle, and that ended that. Turned out he was one of these serial stranglers, who just went around strangling everyone. Some people have hiccups. He wanted me to stay and watch, but I had so many things to do that day.

OLIVIA

Of course.

TYLER

People are always busy on the day their parents are executed.

GIDEON

Want me to hug you?

TYLER

If your life depends on it.

GIDEON

It does.

(Tyler goes to Gideon, rests his forehead on Gideon's chest. Gideon wraps his arms around Tyler. Tyler leaves his arms hanging limp.)

TYLER

This is such a meaningful experience.

(Gideon pushes Tyler away.)

GIDEON

You don't have to make fun of me.

TYLER

Don't explode.

GIDEON

I already did. Nobody picked up the pieces.

OLIVIA

Were you ever in school?

GIDEON

Of course...uh--

TYLER

Several days.

OLIVIA

Tyler, you'll need to have a home address to register for school.

TYLER

What about here, with you? Your idea Gid, don't feel left out.

GIDEON

Hey, I was--

OLIVIA

I'd have to adopt you.

TYLER

I find myself highly adoptable.

OLIVIA

I'll think about it.

TYLER

You will?

OLIVIA

I said it, didn't I?

TYLER

People say lots of things, like, "Sure, I'll feed you," or, "I'll unzip and it will just take a moment," or "don't worry, I'll untie you," and --

OLIVIA

You can live here, for now, day by day, we'll see how it goes.

TYLER

That makes life so much better than even a moment ago.

GIDEON

See, Tyler?

OLIVIA

But first, you did not drop out in 2nd grade. That would mean that's how old you were when you ran away from home.

GIDEON

I found you a home.

TYLER

I didn't run. I crawled. It's considered the world's fastest crawl. You can check it out on YouTube. I assume. I was being home schooled. They always had shades on all the windows so I never knew if it was morning or night, them being the nice people they were. But one detail, those fuckers drank three bottles of whiskey a night.

GIDEON

My parents...this is too amazing.

OLIVIA

Wish it as much as you wish, Gideon, you didn't come from a broken home.

GIDEON

But I was broken.

OLIVIA

You did that all by yourself.

GIDEON

All my life I've been praying for one, a family, and now, finally, being here, with both of you, it's happening--

TYLER

Us?

OLIVIA

You think you're going to turn us into a family?

GIDEON

God forbid, Olivia, I should have a morsel of the human experience--

TYLER

It's a little late for you now, Mr. Gideon, now isn't it?

(Gideon grabs Tyler, hurting him.)

GIDEON

What makes you, so God damned the King of everything all--?

OLIVIA

POLICE!!!

(Gideon let's go of Tyler, rushes to Olivia, covering her mouth. Tyler punches Gideon in the back. Olivia runs away. Gideon turns on Tyler.)

TYLER

Can heredity go backwards?

GIDEON

What?

TYLER

So, if I was going to inherit something from him, either it's in my blood, in which case I better stop donating blood because God knows how many people I may have infected with myself--

OLIVIA

You've got yourself worked up over nothing.

GIDEON

Olivia. The hardest thing I ever did was stepping out of that room.

OLIVIA

What room?

GIDEON

\$1,000 bucks.

OLIVIA

What about it?

GIDEON

Someone paid me \$1,000 to dress all corporate and shit. Seemed like a complete waste of money, since my clothes came off right away.

OLIVIA

Maybe they got off on that.

TYLER

Got off on what? His suit or him taking it off?

GIDEON

One day I said, as a joke, a joke, it was a joke, like I didn't even mean it or nothing, but I said-

TYLER

Tell us a joke. I want to laugh, again.

GIDEON

"Sure, you can suck my cock, for \$700," and they paid me!

TYLER

Ok, that's a fantastic joke!

GIDEON

Yeah. I couldn't believe it. So, the next time--

TYLER

There was another time? Oh, this is a superlative story. Go on. Go on!

OLIVIA

My, but you do love a good story.

GIDEON

This time not like so much as a joke or something but to test it out, test it out like, I said, "Sure, I'll stick it up your ass, but that's \$1,200 --"

TYLER

And they said "yes," and you were so amazed you decided, "Hell, why not--"

GIDEON

And made a career of it.

OLIVIA
Sad.

GIDEON
I would have gone into more details, but --

TYLER
Go into them. Go into them.

OLIVIA
He's a hustler.

GIDEON
Hustler, yes. But I'm not a whore. I'm an escort. But they don't want to be with me. You see, that's the inside of it. Right in that square.

TYLER
They book you by mistake?

GIDEON
They want to be with a fantasy of me.

TYLER
You ever get a client that's ugly?

GIDEON
I don't judge.

TYLER
Have you?

GIDEON
Of course.

TYLER
How do you deal with that?

GIDEON
I don't look at them. I fuck them. And I do it very, very, well.

TYLER
But what if they're like so --

OLIVIA

Tyler!

GIDEON

I told you, I don't look. I fuck. And I do it really, really, well.

TYLER

You have references?

GIDEON

Why? You thinking of --

TYLER

Oh, brother.

GIDEON

Of course, it's not always \$1,000 when you factor in discounts, prorating and stuff. If I had started earlier, I could be charging top dollar, but at my age, you have to struggle up that genital ladder. I asked the moon if I could go for a walk on it, you know, without any oxygen or gear or anything, and then I could be at peace because I would know those were my last moments. But the moon gleamed down on someone else, without even creating a shadow, and rotated their life so they could bare living.

OLIVIA

Are you all right, Gideon.

GIDEON

No, I not, Olivia. Why do you think I stayed away from you for five years. I was so ashamed of what I had become. A prostitute.

OLIVIA

You are not a prostitute.

TYLER

Liv, they pay him to have sex with them, I think there's only one logical conclusion, here.

GIDEON

If only I could have been still-born, come out of the womb already dead, instead dying more and more every year that I live.

TYLER

That's a little heavy.

OLIVIA

Look at me....LOOK....you're stoned again. What did you just take?

Some pills.

GIDEON

What kind of pills?

OLIVIA

And how am I supposed to know that?

GIDEON

You keep taking pills you don't know what they are, one day, one of them is going to kill you.

OLIVIA

That's the idea, isn't it?

GIDEON

Come to the couch.

OLIVIA

You think I need therapy or something?

TYLER

Gideon.

OLIVIA

Like, yeah, all right, now. Uh-uh.

GIDEON

Sit with me.

OLIVIA

(Gideon sits on the couch. Olivia sits next to him. She takes flowers out of a vase and starts putting them in Gideon's hair.)

For your hair.

OLIVIA

Do the flowers have mites?

TYLER

Have what?

GIDEON

TYLER

Hardly anyone knows about mites, and they're hard to see because they're invisible.

OLIVIA

There.

TYLER

Mites feed on flowers.

GIDEON

I've never heard of mites.

OLIVIA

Here.

TYLER

And all you need is one and no sooner than you know, your hair is infested.

GIDEON

Infested?

OLIVIA

Making it up.

TYLER

Like completely.

OLIVIA

There.

TYLER

They're immortal. That's why scientists are using them to study the possibility of life on other planets.

GIDEON

Are they contagious?

OLIVIA

A deity with flowers in his hair.

GIDEON

You put mites in my hair. You're trying to kill me. I'm going to--

OLIVIA

Gideon, listen really carefully, OK. If you continue this the only thing that's going to happen is you're going to go to jail.

GIDEON

You're saying things you don't mean.

If you free us, and we're here, if we're all here because we want to be, maybe we could be like a family. Maybe we could--

GIDEON

Get a dog?

Get married.

GIDEON

You know those dogs police use to sniff out cadavers and such? No one cares about them unless they're helping an investigation.

OLIVIA

We always talked about it. Let's do it.

GIDEON

If you ever find out just exactly how to have absolutely no idea who someone is, marry them.

TYLER

My parents would kill me if I became a hustler.

GIDEON

I thought they were dead.

TYLER

They're both holding onto the bottom of those pearly gates, losing their grips, now just praying they don't fall. And that's life.

OLIVIA

I was scared.

GIDEON

I know.

OLIVIA

My father--

GIDEON

What did he do? I'll kill him.

TYLER

I don't think so. He's in the brownies, now.

GIDEON

I always loved just sitting with my father when I was growing up. I don't know if it was him or if I was getting high off the fumes from his paintings. This huge abstract paintings that it would take a ship to install, and at his studio, his art studio, that is, he had this skeleton hanging, and I would examine all the parts of it, and ever since, everyone I see, I always see like not them, but just this skeleton with all this temporary flesh hanging around it.

OLIVIA

Your father was a mechanic.

GIDEON

A mechanic?

OLIVIA

One of them, anyway.

GIDEON

How many childhoods have I had, Olivia?

OLIVIA

The predicament you have, is if you simply had multiple personalities, a doctor could heal you, but when you only have one personality, and multiple childhoods, that keep multiplying, no sooner one goes away then another twelve pop up, well, how you ever supposed to solve that?

GIDEON

So, when people ask me what my childhood was like, like this one client who was trying to get some free over-time did once, what should I say?

OLIVIA

Try to change the subject?

GIDEON

I am meant to be here, and I am meant to be here with you, and you are meant to be with me. Will never let you go., So, I hope --

TYLER

Hope. Dope. They both kill. Take a pill. Write your will.

OLIVIA

Tyler, honey, my only orange, don't bring us down.

GIDEON

Kiss me, again.

(They immediately fall back into their passionate kissing. They begin to take each other's clothes off.)

TYLER

Sure, I'll watch.

(A gun falls out of one of Gideon's pocket. Olivia does not see it. Tyler sees it. Gideon sees Tyler looking at the gun. He quickly hides the gun in his clothes, again.)

GIDEON

Uh-oh.

OLIVIA

Tyler--

GIDEON

It's not Tyler.

OLIVIA

What is it?

(Gideon takes Olivia's hand and puts it on his crotch.)

OLIVIA

Oh.

GIDEON

Like a tissue that's been underwater for six years. I can't get hard, anymore, Olivia, unless I'm being paid. I'm too old.

TYLER

Tomorrow, you'll be older.

GIDEON

I'm doomed.

TYLER

"Doomed," hear that, Olivia? That's like a billboard saying "Run for your life."

GIDEON

You are getting on my nerves, kid.

TYLER

Go back to shooting up.

GIDEON

What's going to become of me, Olivia?

TYLER

Don't be so hard on yourself. Sorry.

OLIVIA

He's sorry.

GIDEON

Excuse me if I'm a little bit more concerned with being impotent.

OLIVIA

But with --

GIDEON

I want to make love for real. But how can I when I can't--

OLIVIA

You've been waiting for me.

GIDEON

You'll save me?

(Gideon gets down on his knees, clasps his hands together and prays.)

TYLER

What the fuck is wrong with him, besides, you know--

GIDEON

Dear God, thank you for Olivia. She is the angel I have been praying for you finally sent her to me.

OLIVIA

Sometimes it just takes time.

(Gideon gets off his knees.)

GIDEON

I'M RUNNING OUT OF TIME! I'd want to kill time, fucking murder it! Strangle the life right out of it! Getting older is like your arms getting shorter and shorter with more and more becomes out of reach. Time should be fucking illegal. Everyone and everything's about being younger. "Oh, I was hoping for someone younger," "You sure look younger in your pictures," "Is there anyone else that has your look but is younger?" You hear the one about the baby and the doctor? This baby is born, one moment out of his mother, the doctor slaps him. The baby starts to cry. The doctor asks "What's wrong? Did I hurt you?" No, the baby wails, "I want to be younger!" The only thing I want to be different about my life is to have a different one.

OLIVIA

Hold my hand.

GIDEON

I've never done that with a woman. Sat together and held hands with nothing else expected of me.

(Olivia reaches her hand out. Gideon lays his hand on top of Olivia's.)

GIDEON

I'm shaking. I'm a little nervous. Like nervous. First time and all.

OLIVIA

I'm going to wrap my fingers--

(Olivia gently wraps her fingers around Gideon's so they are holding hands.)

GIDEON

My head is spinning --

TYLER

Maybe you're dehydrated.

GIDEON

WHAT THE FUCK DO I HAVE TO DO TO GET YOU TO SHUT THE FUCK UP?

(Gideon grabs Tyler, picks him up to throw him against the wall. Olivia punches Gideon. Gideon drops Tyler.)

You punched me. GIDEON

You so much as -- OLIVIA

You punched me. GIDEON

You got that right, and -- OLIVIA

(Gideon doubles over in pain.)

What? OLIVIA

Hosp-- GIDEON

Hospital? OLIVIA

I want the tree -- GIDEON

A tree? OLIVIA

Treatments! Shock.! GIDEON

You've had--? OLIVIA

Get it out of me. GET THIS PAIN OUT OF ME. GET IT OUT! I'M GONNA DIE! GIDEON

I kind of like this. TYLER

Like it? GIDEON

Makes me feel kind of normal. Like in comparison. TYLER

GIDEON
This anxiety --

TYLER
Why is it that -- ?

OLIVIA
And you want to be a father to Tyler? God only knows how many children --

TYLER
Whenever people look in the mirror --

OLIVIA
You have out there I don't even know. Thirty? Sixty?

The only person they don't see is themselves?

GIDEON
I can't go on --

Then, go ahead and kill yourself, just do it and hope--

GIDEON
Hope? Hope is a God damned criminal.

(Gideon leaps at Tyler, strangles him to death.

Olivia jumps on Gideon's back.

Gideon throws Olivia off his back, strangles her to death.

He gets up, wanders the room, goes in and out of consciousness. He stares at the corpses, shocked, remembers, takes a pill --

He sits on the couch, hyperventilates, shakes violently.

He gets Tyler and Olivia, drags them both to the couch, placing them in sitting positions. He sits between them, his arms around their shoulders.

He suddenly pulls a gun out, abruptly aims it at his head.

Blackout.

Pause --

Pause --

No gunshot.

Lights up.

Empty stage.)

End of Play