

Grape Leaves

by Alexander Attea

Alexander Attea
6165 N Winthrop #202
Chicago, IL 60660
(716) 392-3418
alexander.atea@gmail.com

Characters:

GRANDMA THERESA	Gentle, opinionated, and resolutely not listening to anyone else. (W, 60s-70s)
MARCUS	Lost in a curious way, then in a lost way. (M, 20s)
ELIAS	Trying so hard to be liked by everyone. (M, 40s-50s)
ROSIE	Not-so-successfully hiding her impatience for other people. And herself. (W, 20s)
MAROUN	A memory. (M, any age.)
COUSIN KENNY	In constant pursuit of bygone glory days. (M, 40s-50s)
FATHER DAOUD	If he wasn't a priest he would've been a pretty good local politician. (M, 30s-40s)
KATIE	So chill, like ridiculously chill, like how does she do it? (W, 20s)
NAOMI	Not easily surprised. (W, 30s)
BOYFRIEND BILLY	Moms love Boyfriend Billy. (M, 20s)
HUSBAND BILL	Has really good posture and somehow that's a personality trait. (M, 30s)
Also:	ATTENDEES, REPORTER, CAMERAPERSON

Time: The near future.
Act One: morning.
Act Two: afternoon.
Act Three: evening.

Place: The Lebanese Festival in Buffalo, New York.

Notes on the text:

- Doubling is welcome as the production sees fit.
- It gets hotter and hotter throughout the play — until it doesn't.
- On the Festival's attendees: feel free to be creative with how the guests of the Festival are represented. My intention is for the Festival to feel more and more full with each passing scene; how you achieve that fullness I'll leave up to you.
- "Go Bills" has the same intonation as "see you later" or "I love you."

Prelude

GRANDMA THERESA, demonstrating how to make grape leaves.

GRANDMA THERESA

First, of course, you start with the leaves
little green things
you can buy them at the store
they come in a jar
but I've found them on the side of the road before
not these ones, don't worry
but give them a nice rinse
one by one
just to be safe
a little bath for the little guys
then you set them aside, lay them flat to dry —
do you remember, Marcus
when you and your sister were little you used to spend the night with me
you woke me up one night because you heard a monster in my room
but it was only my snoring!
now you're almost all grown up
look at you
I can't believe it
anyway, what comes next?
now that your leaves are off to the side
getting nice and dry
next comes the best part —
the stuffing

Shift.

Act One

One

We're at the Lebanese Festival in Buffalo, New York.

It takes place under a large tent in a church parking lot.

Folding tables, folding chairs, large trash bins.

A sign: "Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Catholic Church presents the Annual Lebanese Festival, Buffalo, New York."

There's a food counter with signs that read:

"Falafel Plate 10 tickets

Kibbeh Plate 12 tickets

Shawarma Plate 12 tickets

Wraps (falafel, kefta, shawarma) 8 tickets

Tabbouleh 6 tickets

Spinach Pie 5 tickets

Zaatar Bread 5 tickets

Hummus Plate 6 tickets

Grape Leaves 5 tickets

Baklava 4 tickets"

It's a summer morning. The sun is up.

MARCUS enters, listening to music.

He's holding the phone to his ear because his headphones are broken.

With his other hand, he tries to put large black trash bags into trash bins.

It's not going well.

It doesn't matter, though — he's enjoying the music. Maybe he sings along a bit.

MARCUS *re: a stubborn bag*

Come on

fit

in

there

ELIAS enters.

ELIAS

What are you doing?

MARCUS *it's obvious?*

Bins

bags

like you said

MARCUS struggles some more.

ELIAS

Be smarter than the garbage, kid
do you have to be listening to that?

MARCUS

It keeps me motivated

ELIAS

The amount of stuff left to do should keep you motivated
my grandfather worked his ass off when he came here
to make a life for this family
if he saw you like this
barely working
he'd —

MARCUS

He'd disown me
I know

ELIAS

He'd disown you
yeah

MARCUS

Message received

ELIAS *re: a trash bin*

You missed this one
I don't know how you listen to that shit

MARCUS

I don't know how you listen to Peter Gabriel

ELIAS

Gabriel's classic!
Sings.
"Why don't you call my name? Sledgehammer!"

MARCUS

Uh huh

ELIAS

Where's your sister?

MARCUS

She did one bag and then disappeared
why?

ELIAS

Maybe she's with your grandmother

MARCUS

In the kitchen?
I don't think so

ELIAS

You kids could learn a thing or two from Mother Theresa —

MARCUS

Grandma —

ELIAS

Better learn while you can
you'll miss her recipes when she's gone

MARCUS

Jesus, dad

ELIAS

Lord's name, kid

ELIAS' phone rings. He answers.

Hey!

yeah where are you?

alright, I'll be right there

ELIAS hangs up.

Hey, have you seen my —?

ELIAS pats his pockets and wanders away absentmindedly.

MARCUS

Your what?

dad?

MARCUS shakes his head and keeps listening to music.

He's done with the trash bags so he starts dancing a bit.

ROSIE enters, watches him for a few beats. MARCUS doesn't notice.

ROSIE

You need to work on your form

MARCUS

Oh

hah

yeah I guess

hey

ROSIE

Hey

MARCUS

Maybe I should've gone to your fancy dance school

ROSIE

Shut up, you know it's not fancy

MARCUS

Dad's looking for you

ROSIE

Why?

MARCUS

He didn't say
where'd you go?

ROSIE

My secret spot

MARCUS

Where's your secret spot?

ROSIE

—
It's a secret, Marcus
that's the whole point

MARCUS

I won't tell

ROSIE

Where does he have you stationed today

MARCUS

Trash duty
as usual

ROSIE

Hah
have fun

MARCUS

What about you?

ROSIE

Ice cream
with Katie

MARCUS

Lucky

ROSIE

It sucks
there are too many kids
I hate kids
they're loud and dirty and loud
and it makes me want to chop off their grubby little fingers
with an industrial like
paper cutter

She demonstrates with a sound effect —

schink!

MARCUS

Well
try not to maim anyone today

ROSIE

No promises

She looks around.

I hate this

I hate being home for the summer

I hate dad putting us to work at this stupid place

who cares about the Lebanese Festival

in fucking Buffalo?

MARCUS

Yeah

ROSIE

I can't wait to graduate and go live somewhere big and never come back home

MARCUS

You'd leave me here like that?

ROSIE *turning to leave*

Watch me

MARCUS

Where are you going?

ROSIE

Nosy nosy, Marcus.

ROSIE exits.

MARCUS puts his music back on.

He keeps working.

Shift.

Two

COUSIN KENNY approaches ELIAS.

COUSIN KENNY

— Is that Elias fucking Mansour?

ELIAS *looking over*

Kenny?

Kenny Khoury?

COUSIN KENNY

I had a feeling I'd see you here, cousin!

come here

how've you been

COUSIN KENNY hugs ELIAS.

ELIAS

I've been

yeah

what are you doing here

I haven't seen you in

god

how long's it been

COUSIN KENNY

What, I can't come back to the old hometown?

the old seven one six?

look at you though

you poor bastard

what's your hair running away from

ELIAS

You

probably

it knows you're no good for me

COUSIN KENNY

Have a drink with me

they still got the beer tent here?

I could go for a Labatt

ELIAS

Yeah

but it doesn't open until —

it's ten in the morning, Kenny

COUSIN KENNY

We used to start earlier than that, didn't we?

out on the lake

classic Molson and eggs?

come on

ELIAS

I'm trying to cut back on that stuff, Ken

COUSIN KENNY

What's this now?
the Big E going sober on me?
what has the world come to

ELIAS

Good question

COUSIN KENNY

Ah, I know
I know
I heard about your whole
thing
you know
I'm sorry

ELIAS

Thanks
yeah these things
happen

COUSIN KENNY

How are the kids taking it?

ELIAS

Fine
I think
yeah

COUSIN KENNY

Listen if you ever need to talk
you just let me know
we can talk

ELIAS

Kenny
you didn't answer my calls for
what
four years?

COUSIN KENNY

Was it
hey I'm sorry
look at us though this is what I love about us
you're my cousin
we see each other and we're right back into it
you know?
like no time's passed
want to play some backgammon?
want a Turkish coffee?

ELIAS

How long are you in town for?

COUSIN KENNY

In town?
I'm moving back

ELIAS

You're

COUSIN KENNY

I'm **back**, E!
this is why we gotta
you know
celebrate!

ELIAS

I didn't know
you don't tell me these things
why doesn't anyone tell me things

COUSIN KENNY

It was getting bad down there, cousin
Florida
flooding
heat waves
shelves emptied at grocery stores
I mean it's happening all over the South
but Florida
look at someone wrong and get shot
you know?
I looked at Buffalo and thought to myself
after all those years of everyone laughing at us about the snow
hah
now it's the place to be
I thought
if things are getting like this
I gotta get out of here
I gotta spend my time with my daughter
that's what's important, right?
like what you and your kids have
you're close to each other

ELIAS

—
yeah
yeah

COUSIN KENNY

Fortune's coming our way though
I can feel it
it's a new day in Buffalo
a fucking — oasis

ELIAS

What do you make of it?

COUSIN KENNY

What do I make of it?
world's changing, E
we gotta change with it

ELIAS

Hey
and more Bills fans

COUSIN KENNY

That's right go Bills

ELIAS

Go Bills

COUSIN KENNY

Listen though
I need some work
you know of anything?

ELIAS

Not off the top of my
I'll let you know

COUSIN KENNY

They pay you for helping out here?

ELIAS

A bit
yeah

COUSIN KENNY

How do I get in on that

ELIAS

Talk to the priest
Father Daoud

COUSIN KENNY

Daoud

ELIAS

Yeah
new guy

COUSIN KENNY

Thanks for looking out, E
us cousins
we look out for each other

GRANDMA THERESA enters, carrying a tray of food.

She wavers a bit.

ELIAS
Hey, Mother Theresa, you need help?

GRANDMA THERESA
I got it, I got it

ELIAS
You're getting old, ma
let me help you

GRANDMA THERESA
You shush
I'm fine
look at me

*She sets the tray down at the food counter.
Ta da!*

ELIAS
She doesn't listen to me

COUSIN KENNY
She's fine

GRANDMA THERESA
I can hear you

ELIAS
I don't just want you to hear me
I want you to listen
okay?

GRANDMA THERESA
Hi Kenny
I always knew you'd come home
come here give me a hug
GRANDMA THERESA hugs COUSIN KENNY.

COUSIN KENNY
Good to see you, Theresa

GRANDMA THERESA
You too, honey
you too
I'll be right back
few more trays inside

GRANDMA THERESA exits.

ELIAS

Want a spinach pie?

COUSIN KENNY

Yes

ELIAS goes to the food counter, picks up two spinach pies.

yella, yella

ELIAS

Calm down calm down
here

ELIAS and COUSIN KENNY eat.

ROSIE enters.

ROSIE

Oh

ELIAS

Hey kid
I was looking for you
for um
— why was I looking for you?

ROSIE

I don't know
but I gotta
you know
ice cream

ROSIE exits.

GRANDMA THERESA enters with a tray.

She looks at the food counter.

GRANDMA THERESA

Did you take a spinach pie?

ELIAS

— No

KATIE enters, sees COUSIN KENNY.

KATIE

Dad —

KATIE runs to COUSIN KENNY.

They hug.

Shift.

Three

The ice cream counter.
ROSIE and KATIE.

ROSIE

I don't even know why we have to be here right now
no one wants ice cream in the morning

KATIE

Yeah

ROSIE

Every year it's the same thing
Rosie and Katie at the ice cream counter
I'm bored
are you bored

KATIE

I don't know

ROSIE

I could be doing
like
anything else
instead of sitting here

KATIE

Do you want to go?
I could cover

ROSIE

No
then I'd have to
you know
do something
my dad would make me be productive
or whatever

KATIE

He's really sad
isn't he
I can tell
about your mom and everything
my dad was saying
he's not himself

ROSIE

Oh
yeah I don't
I don't know

KATIE

Have you talked to him?

ROSIE
Not really

KATIE
Maybe you should

ROSIE
Yeah maybe

KATIE
How's school, though?

FATHER DAOUD enters.

FATHER DAOUD
Ice cream!

Pause.

ROSIE
— Yeah

FATHER DAOUD
Cool
very cool
love to see it
keep up the good work!

*FATHER DAOUD exits.
ROSIE and KATIE look at each other.*

ROSIE/KATIE *hushed*
(Father Duuuuuude.)

KATIE
I'm obsessed with that guy

ROSIE
Why?

KATIE
Because he has such a punchable face

ROSIE
You're **right** he **does**

KATIE
Yeah
but
yeah
how's school?

ROSIE

Oh
 it's good
 I mean like
 it's hard
 and it kind of sucks
 and I'm always so tired I want to tear my eyes out
 or quit
 sort of because I'm tired
 and sort of because I'll never have the arms Cerise has
 Cerise has incredible arms
 everyone's constantly talking about them
 their shape
 their power
 their movement
 and like how am I supposed to even compete with arms like that
 my arms are just
 arms
 but yeah I mean
 it's good I'm learning a lot so that's good

KATIE

You have nice arms

ROSIE

I guess
 thanks

KATIE

Very dancer-y arms

ROSIE

But what about you
 how's your
 job
 your big kid UB office job in an office

KATIE

Yeah it's same old same old
 kind of stressful
 we got more applicants this year than my boss has ever seen
 apparently
 so it's a little overwhelming
 we should hire more people
 I've told him we should hire more people
 but we didn't
 so
 it's all on my plate

ROSIE

Yikes

KATIE

And with my dad back it's like

it's nice
but also I feel like I have to like be around for him now?
and is this just what being an adult is?
you end up somewhere and you're just
there
forever?

ROSIE

You should quit your job
move somewhere

KATIE

Well
I do need the money

ROSIE

You can find another job

KATIE

Let's talk about something else
how are things with Boyfriend Billy??
tell me about that

ROSIE

Things are good
he's actually coming to the festival
he said he'd be here soon

BOYFRIEND BILLY enters.

BOYFRIEND BILLY

Talking shit about me?
hey babe
look at you, hard at work

ROSIE

Shut up
hi

KATIE

Hi Billy

ROSIE

This is my cousin Katie
second cousin I guess

BOYFRIEND BILLY

Hi

BOYFRIEND BILLY kisses ROSIE.

can I have an ice cream

ROSIE

Do you have a ticket?

BOYFRIEND BILLY

No
I need a ticket?

ROSIE

Yeah
those are the rules

KATIE

And it actually start at three tickets
for ice cream

BOYFRIEND BILLY

I thought you'd hook me up

ROSIE *teasing*

Why would I do that?

BOYFRIEND BILLY

Come on
you're not going to

ROSIE

No

BOYFRIEND BILLY

How about this
how about you give me the ice cream
or I leak your nudes

ROSIE

—
what the fuck, Billy

BOYFRIEND BILLY

I'm hungry
who would even know
if you snuck one to me

ROSIE

My dad would
come on
let's get you some tickets
Katie, do you mind covering for me?

KATIE

Oh
yeah sure

ROSIE

You're the best

MARCUS enters.

MARCUS

Oh hey Billy

BOYFRIEND BILLY

What's up dude!
good to see you
what are you up to?

MARCUS

Oh you know
trash

BOYFRIEND BILLY

Living the life I see
hah
oh
actually
can you throw this out for me?

BOYFRIEND BILLY hands MARCUS something weird and a little gross.

MARCUS

Oh
sure
no problem

BOYFRIEND BILLY

Thanks

ROSIE

Come on

ROSIE and BOYFRIEND BILLY exit.

KATIE

Who are you?

MARCUS

What?

KATIE

You just
like
let things happen to you
don't you?

MARCUS

What else am I supposed to do?

*KATIE just laughs.
Shift.*

Four

COUSIN KENNY approaches GRANDMA THERESA at the food counter.

COUSIN KENNY

Aunt Theresa
can I get a kefta wrap

GRANDMA THERESA

Coming right up

COUSIN KENNY

I missed this, you know?
not much good Lebanese food where I was

GRANDMA THERESA

We were worried about you, Ken

COUSIN KENNY

Hey
no need
I'm back now
I'm taking care of myself
you can keep an eye on me

GRANDMA THERESA

I kept my eyes on you enough when you were younger
you and Elias

COUSIN KENNY

Hah
you're right
he's doing okay, though?

GRANDMA THERESA

He's okay
you know him
he'll distract himself until he is

COUSIN KENNY

And the kids?
man they've grown up
last time I saw them was
I don't even remember

GRANDMA THERESA

Well here's Marcus
MARCUS is there.
have you seen your cousin is back?
come say hi

MARCUS

Hi

GRANDMA THERESA

Or — you're cousin with his father
so
once removed?

COUSIN KENNY

Something like that

GRANDMA THERESA

I can never keep it straight

FATHER DAOUD walks through, addressing random attendees.

FATHER DAOUD

Hello hello
how are we doing over here

GRANDMA THERESA

Hi Father
how are you

FATHER DAOUD

Lovely to see you, Theresa

COUSIN KENNY

Father Daoud
nice to meet you
Kenny Khoury
I used to go to this church when I was a kid

FATHER DAOUD

Welcome back

COUSIN KENNY

I was wondering
how do I get on the payroll here
get my hand in that donation basket
hah
let me help out with the festival, you know?

FATHER DAOUD

Oh
yes
um
let me think about it
it's my first year
so I'm still learning how it all comes together
thank you for —
thank you

Sees MARCUS.

hello, thanks for coming!
first time at the festival?

MARCUS

No

FATHER DAOUD

Oh wow, that's great
how'd you hear about us?

MARCUS

—

I'm Lebanese

GRANDMA THERESA

That's my grandson, father
Elias' son

FATHER DAOUD

Oh
of course
great, wonderful
well
enjoy yourselves

FATHER DAOUD exits.

MARCUS

Did he not think —?

GRANDMA THERESA

Oh, honey
don't even think about it
sometimes I look at you grandkids and wonder what my father would say
if he could see you
I bet he'd be surprised you're Lebanese

MARCUS

Oh
well
okay

GRANDMA THERESA

He and my mother came to America after giving up everything
and worked so hard to build a life for themselves
he had a cart and would sell anything he could

COUSIN KENNY

You don't know this story?

MARCUS

No

GRANDMA THERESA

And business grew

until he could buy a storefront
then a warehouse
and I think if he saw you and your sister
he'd be pleased to see all his work meant that someday
his grandkids could speak english
go to college

MARCUS

But he wouldn't think I was Lebanese?

GRANDMA THERESA

Honey

I think you're totally different from anything he could have imagined

MARCUS

Yeah

I should

um

get back to work

there's a lot to do

MARCUS exits.

COUSIN KENNY

Weird kid

looks just like Eli when he was young

he's got the Mansour nose

GRANDMA THERESA

Does he?

I'd never noticed

Shift.

Five

MARCUS is cleaning up tables, carrying trash.

ELIAS approaches MARCUS.

ELIAS

Hey kid
do you know where your sister is?

MARCUS

What?
no
she went to —
no, I don't know

ELIAS

Okay
well
I wanted to talk to you both about this
but
anyway
can we talk?

MARCUS

Oh
I'm a little busy
trying to

ELIAS

It'll only be a minute

MARCUS

Um
okay
yeah

ELIAS

Thanks
have a seat

They sit.

There are festival goings-on around.

MARCUS

Everything okay?

ELIAS

I just wanted to talk to you
about the divorce

MARCUS *(is this the best place/time for this conversation?)*

— oh

ELIAS

I know things have been
weird
between us
and I want you to know that I love you
both your mom and I
we both love you and your sister
and this is just
you know
what was best
for both of us
but if there's anything you want to know
or anything you want to talk about
you can talk to me
I want you to know
you can always talk to me
whenever you want, kid
okay?
I'm here for you
and your sister
so

MARCUS

Yeah

ELIAS

I don't want you to think —
I don't know
I know I made mistakes
who doesn't
raising my voice more than I needed to
or
being too hard on you or
anything
I did try my best
I always wanted to
you know

MARCUS

Yeah

ELIAS

Do my best
for you and your sister

MARCUS

For sure

ELIAS

So
I guess the main thing is
I'm sorry
if I did anything like that
anything that hurt you

or
anything
I hate the thought that I could have —
I don't like the person I was
and I want you to know you can always talk to me

MARCUS

Yeah
I know

ELIAS

Your sister too
I wanted to tell you both this
but
I don't know where she is

MARCUS

Yeah
I think Billy's here
so she's probably with him

ELIAS

Oh, Billy's here?

MARCUS

Yeah

ELIAS

I like that kid

MARCUS

Yeah

ELIAS

Anyway though
there is something else
um
I don't really know how to start this
so I'll just
I've met someone
after your mom and I
I did meet someone
and I think I'm going to ask her to marry me
I just wanted to let you
um
know

MARCUS

Oh

ELIAS

I mean
the wedding's not going to be for a while
but

I'd love for you to be there
you know?

MARCUS
Um

ELIAS' phone rings.

ELIAS
Hold on a second, kid
ELIAS answers the phone.
yeah
right yes okay
I'll be right there
ELIAS hangs up.
hey I'm looking for my
uh
have you seen — ?

ELIAS looks around.

MARCUS
I don't know what you're looking for, dad

ELIAS
Just my
um

ELIAS absentmindedly exits.
MARCUS stands and keeps cleaning up.
Shift.

Six

FATHER DAOUD gets on the mic.

FATHER DAOUD

Hello everyone

kifak

hi

if I could get everyone's attention

only for a minute

thank you

People have gathered.

I just wanted to say a few words

to welcome you all to the

Our Lady of Lebanon

Maronite Catholic Church's

87th

Annual

Lebanese Festival!

Cheers!

It's really wonderful to see

such a great celebration of the community

here in Buffalo

and I'm so happy to be here

celebrating my first Lebanese Festival with you all!

Polite applause/light cheering.

I've got to be honest

when I was coming to Buffalo

I was scared about the winters

and the heartbreaking football

so I prayed

for a strong community

inshallah

to weather the storms of snow and heartbreak with me

storms are best weathered together

and well, what do you know

this winter seemed fairly mild

and the Bills haven't broken my heart too badly

(yet)

the only thing that's broken my heart so far

is how many of you leave mass **right** after taking communion

but we'll work on that

anyway

God answered my prayer for a strong community

you've made me feel so welcomed here

and so I wanted to say thank you

God bless you all

enjoy the food and the company

and let's make this the best Lebanese Festival in the world!!!

Cheers again!!!

Now let's dance!

Music!

A dance party!

*Everyone dances the Dabke.
The music is blaring.
ELIAS and COUSIN KENNY get right up in the middle of the stage.
ROSIE has appeared, with KATIE.
They're guiding BOYFRIEND BILLY through the steps.
The ATTENDEES are dancing.
MARCUS hangs back and watches. GRANDMA THERESA shuffles up next to him.*

GRANDMA THERESA
Aren't you going to dance?

MARCUS
Me?
nah

GRANDMA THERESA
You should

MARCUS
I don't really know the moves
and you're one to talk
you should dance

GRANDMA THERESA
Ah
I'm too old for that

MARCUS
No you're not

GRANDMA THERESA
Don't contradict your grandmother

MARCUS
Hey
I was wondering
do you think you could teach me some of your recipes?
I'd like to learn

GRANDMA THERESA regards MARCUS.

GRANDMA THERESA
No

MARCUS
What?

GRANDMA THERESA
I don't want to

MARCUS
Why not?

GRANDMA THERESA

I'm too young to be passing on recipes
and all that nonsense

MARCUS

Don't you want me to know how?
the special family tricks and secrets and everything

GRANDMA THERESA

Bah
I make it up as I go

MARCUS

But —

GRANDMA THERESA

You should dance, Marcus

GRANDMA THERESA shuffles off.

MARCUS continues to watch everyone dancing the Dabke.

KATIE

Come on, Marcus

ELIAS

What are you doing, kid?
get up here

COUSIN KENNY

Don't be shy

BOYFRIEND BILLY trips over his feet while dancing, falls, and knocks over a trash bin.

The trash goes everywhere.

ROSIE

What the fuck, Billy

ELIAS

You okay, kid?

BOYFRIEND BILLY *getting up*

Yeah
thanks
Rosie's got me tripping over myself

ROSIE

I was telling you what to do and you couldn't do it
get better at dancing

BOYFRIEND BILLY

Get better at teaching

ROSIE

You're such a fucking idiot
let's go
you've got everyone fucking looking at us

ROSIE shoves BOYFRIEND BILLY. He stumbles.

BOYFRIEND BILLY

Okay
sorry
I'm sorry

ROSIE and BOYFRIEND BILLY leave, passing MARCUS.

ROSIE

Get out of the way, Marcus

ROSIE and BOYFRIEND BILLY are gone.

MARCUS

I got it

*MARCUS starts cleaning up the trash.
The festival starts to pick back up, swirls around.
Shift.*

Seven

*MARCUS is cleaning up the knocked-over trash can.
Among the trash, MARCUS has found a necklace with a Maronite cross pendant.
He looks it over, runs his fingers over it.
FATHER DAOUD enters.*

FATHER DAOUD

You should wear it

MARCUS

It doesn't look weird on me?

FATHER DAOUD

What kind of a priest would I be
if I told you the very symbol of our faith looked weird

MARCUS

It's got too many arms

FATHER DAOUD

You'll have to take that up with god
it'll look good on you

MARCUS

Thanks

FATHER DAOUD

Happy to help
are you enjoying the festival this year?

MARCUS

Good yeah
it's good
how about you
your first one

FATHER DAOUD

It's great it's really great
it was a lot of work
a big learning curve
and dealing with the supply chain
making sure everything got here
that was
a lot

MARCUS

Yeah

FATHER DAOUD

But it's been great
it's really really
—
I'm still trying to acclimate

I think
I still feel a bit like an outsider
a kid at an aquarium
tapping on the glass

MARCUS

I know how you feel

FATHER DAOUD

I had a feeling you might
can I ask you something?
a favor?

MARCUS

Um
sure

FATHER DAOUD

Would you be able to
would you want to
help me out?
with the festival
going forward
you know this community
you know Buffalo
it's getting bigger
this city
it's on the rise
and all these new people
I want them to come here
to this festival
to our community
can you help me with that?

MARCUS

Oh
um

FATHER DAOUD

I think we can make something really special here

MARCUS

Don't you think my dad would be a better —

FATHER DAOUD

Your dad
your grandma
they already do so much for this festival
and there are a lot of young people moving to Buffalo
there's a reason I'm asking you

MARCUS

You don't want anyone else to —?

FATHER DAOUD
I'm asking you, Marcus

MARCUS
Okay
yeah
I'll do it

FATHER DAOUD
Wonderful
this is exciting, isn't it?

MARCUS
What should we do first?

FATHER DAOUD
Here

FATHER DAOUD puts the necklace on MARCUS.

MARCUS
Oh
thank you

FATHER DAOUD
Don't mention it
you look good, habibi

*FATHER DAOUD exits.
MARCUS is alone.
Or — no, MAROUN is there.
MARCUS' Lebanese great-grandfather.
An apparition.
MAROUN pushes a cart with flowers, bread, candy, newspapers.
They regard each other.*

MARCUS
You're —
MAROUN nods.
what do you think
MAROUN approaches MARCUS, takes the Maronite cross pendant in his hand.
if you met me
if we had known each other
would you be happy or
would you disown me

MAROUN
انظر لحالك
انظر لحالك

¹ "Look at you. Look at you."

MARCUS

I don't understand
I can't understand you

MAROUN deflates a bit.

MAROUN goes back to his cart and disappears.

MARCUS looks at the necklace, then around at the festival.

End of Act One.

Interlude

GRANDMA THERESA continues her lesson.

MARCUS is there.

GRANDMA THERESA

The stuffing
my favorite part
usually I use rice
but because of the shortages
I've been using quinoa
sometimes
my mother would kill me if she saw
but I once had part of a spatula get accidentally chopped off
and blended into tiny tiny pieces in the hummus my mother was making
and she barely noticed
so
what harm is some quinoa going to do
hah
she did pause when she bit into it
and I held my breath as she chewed
but she didn't say anything
so neither did I
hah!
— chickpea shortages too, now that I'm thinking of it
what will we eat?
anyway
what next
right
you'll cook the quinoa on its own
and at the same time cook your onions, garlic, parsley, basil
once everything is cooked you'll mix it all together
add some lemon juice
and we'll get ready to wrap these up

Shift.

Act Two

One

MARCUS is putting up new signs by the food counter that read:

"Hamburger 10 tickets

Cheeseburger 12 tickets

Turkey Burger 12 tickets

Chicken Sandwich 12 tickets

Hot Dog 8 tickets

Fries 6 tickets"

And over everything, a new big sign that reads: "The Buffalo Lebanese Festival."

After he's done, MARCUS takes out his phone and records a video of the signs.

Then, he walks over to the ice cream counter, where KATIE is.

He's still filming.

MARCUS

Here at Buffalo's Lebanese Festival
it might be as hot as like
Tripoli in August
but don't worry
you can cool down here at the ice cream counter
with the one and only Katie Khoury

KATIE

Yeah
hi

MARCUS

Look at this selection

KATIE

You've been to Tripoli?

MARCUS *stops filming*

No
how's the ice cream holding up?

KATIE

Depleted
melted
I sold most of it during my first hour here
and the ones that are left have seen better days

MARCUS

Haven't we all
shouldn't let them go to waste though

KATIE

Yeah I know yeah
hah
look at you taking charge

Father Dude gives you an ounce of responsibility
and you run with it

MARCUS

Yeah we're like
going to make this the Biggest Festival in Buffalo
or something
I'm trying to convince him to put in a bounce house

KATIE

So you're like
a big shot around here now

MARCUS

Nah
I'm just helping out a little more
I'll tag you
do you follow the festival account?

KATIE

I don't —
there's a festival account?

MARCUS

Yeah
I followed you

KATIE

I'll check

MARCUS

You've got to
my video posts have been getting like
a hundred thousand views

KATIE

Look at you go
moving up in the world

MARCUS

Hah
something like that
I wouldn't have thought
you know
last year I felt stuck
but now —
I guess time feels weird
you know?

KATIE

Yeah

MARCUS

I don't know what it is

KATIE

No
 yeah
 I mean
 it does
 it feels weird
 it feels like a couple weeks ago
 I was new at UB
 the new girl in the admissions office
 and I still feel like that
 like I'm
 still unsure
 learning
 but here I am
 and it's been years
 and I'm training someone new
 newer
 I'm the one who's supposed to know things
 and I do know things
 but
 I don't want to
 we're in the fastest growing city in the US
 and I should be **doing** things
 like
 I should be a **god**
 I should have a pilot's license
 I should be jumping off cliffs into clear blue lakes
 and inventing the cures to diseases
 I was supposed to have done something by now

An ATTENDEE we haven't seen before enters.

ATTENDEE

Can I have a fudgesicle?

KATIE

Yeah
 three tickets

ATTENDEE

Thanks
 this is great to see
 you know
 the culture and everything
 I didn't know
 you think of Lebanon
 and you think of
 I don't know
 fighting in Beirut
 or explosions
 or —
 but the food
 it's really good

MARCUS
Have you tried the warak enab?

ATTENDEE
The what?

MARCUS
The grape leaves
they're the best
my grandma makes them

ATTENDEE
Don't you mean dolma?

MARCUS
We call them warak enab

ATTENDEE
Are you Lebanese?

MARCUS
Of course, akhi

ATTENDEE
Thanks
I'll try them
see you later

MARCUS
Ma'a salama, friend
come by the beer tent later

The ATTENDEE exits.

KATIE
Warak enab?

MARCUS
Yeah that's what they're
you know
called
that's what we call them

KATIE
We call them grape leaves

MARCUS
People want the authentic experience
it's what they're coming for, right?
so that's what I'm giving them.

Shift.

Two

MARCUS is behind the bar in the beer tent. Stocking.

COUSIN KENNY is there, drinking a bottle of Labatt Blue beer.

COUSIN KENNY

And it'll be soon
you know?
it's gonna be soon

MARCUS

Yeah
— what?

COUSIN KENNY

What is this?
you tuning me out now?

MARCUS

No
sorry I was just focused on

COUSIN KENNY

What I was saying
is
soon there'll be more of them than us
right?
people from god knows where
coming to our city
overtaking our festival
having never seen the Dabke
never eaten zaatar
never seen snow
god bless 'em
treating us as some novelty
some reprieve
after running from their climate catastrophe lives in Scorchdick New Mexico or whatever

MARCUS

Didn't you come back because you were running from your climate catastrophe life in Florida?

COUSIN KENNY

I'm here to be with my daughter
let me have another Labatt please

MARCUS

For sure

MARCUS gets another Labatt Blue for COUSIN KENNY.

COUSIN KENNY

Got it's hot
have a drink with me

MARCUS

I'm working

COUSIN KENNY

You work too hard
you've earned it

MARCUS

—

COUSIN KENNY

Don't let me drink alone, kid

MARCUS

Alright
alright

MARCUS gets himself a Labatt Blue.

COUSIN KENNY

That's what I'm talking about
hey
kesak
cheers

MARCUS

Kesak

COUSIN KENNY *takes a drink*

You should be proud of yourself, Marcus
you're a good kid
you're learning
you used to be this little goddamn mouse
I couldn't believe you were Eli's son
I could barely believe you were Lebanese
hah
but you're coming up
you're turning out right

MARCUS

Oh
thanks Kenny

COUSIN KENNY

You're not going to end up like me
I can see that
working some maintenance job at UB
but hell
I'm lucky to have something at all
you know Katie works in admissions there?

MARCUS

Yeah

COUSIN KENNY

I keep asking her to have lunch with me
 it'd be nice to
 you know
 have lunch together
 but she's always busy
 like she can't make the time for her own
 like she doesn't want me around
 and
 I wish I'd had a son
 you know?
 I wish I'd had a son

MARCUS

—

COUSIN KENNY

Don't tell her I said that

ELIAS enters, with NAOMI.

ELIAS

And here's the beer tent

NAOMI

Oh wow it's so **cute**
 I mean it's a beer tent
 and I guess all beer tents kind of look the same
 but this one's **cute**
 and the hot bartender doesn't hurt
 ha ha
 am I right?
 I'm only kidding
 don't listen to me
 hi Marcus

MARCUS

Hi Naomi

COUSIN KENNY *giving NAOMI a hug*

Good to see you, honey

NAOMI

I've been looking forward to this so **much**

ELIAS *seeing MARCUS' Labatt*

What is this
 you drinking on the job, kid?

MARCUS

Oh
 I —

NAOMI *continuing*

And finally getting to **see** all of it
and hear the **music**
it's a little loud, it's not my favorite
(what are they saying, do you know what they're saying?)
but it's great
it's so great

ELIAS

Yeah
this is it
this is the festival

COUSIN KENNY

First time, yeah?

NAOMI

Yeah
first time
he's told me **so** much about it
oh I have to remember to take some —

COUSIN KENNY

Want a beer or anything?

NAOMI

One second
I should —
NAOMI takes a few pictures/videos, of herself, of the festival.
don't worry Marcus I'll tag
and

ELIAS

Do you want some food?
you hungry?

NAOMI

Yes
definitely
what should we get?

COUSIN KENNY

I was going to grab something
we should get some platters
little bit of everything

ELIAS

Let's do it

NAOMI

Yayyyy
see you, Marcus

MARCUS
Bye

ELIAS, COUSIN KENNY, and NAOMI leave.
MARCUS notices a full trash can behind the bar, takes it and exits.
BOYFRIEND BILLY enters.
He looks around.
No one's there.
He jumps over the bar and gets himself a beer.
He savors a sip.
MARCUS enters.

MARCUS
—

BOYFRIEND BILLY
—

MARCUS
What are you doing back there

BOYFRIEND BILLY
No one was here
so I

MARCUS
You can't be back there

BOYFRIEND BILLY
Okay
yeah
I'm

MARCUS
Did you pay for that

BOYFRIEND BILLY
I was gonna
hold on

BOYFRIEND BILLY jumps back over the bar, puts a few bills down.

MARCUS
What are you doing here

BOYFRIEND BILLY
Is Rosie around?

MARCUS
Why are you here, Billy?

BOYFRIEND BILLY

Hey man
listen
it's good to see you
how've you been

MARCUS

She told me what you did

BOYFRIEND BILLY

Did she tell you what she did?

MARCUS

I should
like
hit you
or something

BOYFRIEND BILLY

Hah okay yeah guess it runs in the family

MARCUS

You should get out of here
you shouldn't be here

BOYFRIEND BILLY

I'm just having a drink can you let me finish my drink thanks
I paid for it
Sips.
want to hear a funny story?

MARCUS

No

BOYFRIEND BILLY

Cool okay

Pause. They sit in silence for a few moments. BOYFRIEND BILLY drinks. Then —

so after the breakup I wasn't doing so hot
I was sad and getting broke
and I needed a new job
have something to do with myself
you know?
so I started applying
luckily there are all sorts of things available
so many companies here now
looking for people
I could've had my pick
but I wanted to find something in the food industry
right?
that's where all the money's going to be
the foreseeable future
food and energy
and cooling
which is energy

but anyway
 I'm filling out this one application
 and it gets to the part where there's like the self identification questions
 and there was the question about race or ethnicity
 and it had white and black and hispanic
 and asian and pacific islander and native american and everything
 two or more races
 everything
 but it didn't have middle eastern
 and it made me think about Rosie
 and you and your dad
 and it pissed me off a little bit
 I don't know why but it made me mad
 and
 yeah so I didn't finish that application

MARCUS

—
 why's that funny

BOYFRIEND BILLY

I don't know
 I just thought it was um
 I don't know

MARCUS

That's kind of fucked up
 that you thought that

BOYFRIEND BILLY

Is that fucked up?
 I thought it might be kind of fucked up

They kind of can't help but laugh.

MARCUS

So yeah
 uh
 I get why you're here
 but you can't
 you know
 you can't be here

BOYFRIEND BILLY regards MARCUS.

BOYFRIEND BILLY

What is it with you

MARCUS

I'm just saying

BOYFRIEND BILLY

No tell me
 do you like make an effort to suck

MARCUS

What

BOYFRIEND BILLY

Rosie and I would talk about it all the time
you just
exist
she felt like she barely knew you
probably still does

MARCUS

Um

BOYFRIEND BILLY

She's here, right?
she's usually here
I have to go talk to her

MARCUS

Wait —

BOYFRIEND BILLY

See you around, Marcus

*BOYFRIEND BILLY leaves.
Shift.*

Three

ROSIE runs into ELIAS and NAOMI.

ELIAS

Rosie!
I didn't know if you were coming this year

ROSIE

Why wouldn't I come this year?

ELIAS

I don't know
you've got
a lot going on

ROSIE

I guess

NAOMI

Hi Rosie
how are things you look great I **love** this outfit

ROSIE

Thanks the shorts are new and
things are
yeah

NAOMI

Are we the same size
I'd love to wear something like that

ROSIE

I don't know
is Katie around?

NAOMI

She was at the ice cream counter

ROSIE

Cool okay see you guys later

ROSIE exits.

NAOMI

Was that okay?

ELIAS

What?
yeah

NAOMI

I think she might hate me

ELIAS

I think she might hate everything

NAOMI

Is she still
like
about you and her mom?

ELIAS

I
don't know

NAOMI

Have you talked to her about it

ELIAS

Well
here and there
a bit
yeah

NAOMI

Here and there
hasn't it been long enough?

ELIAS

It has
we talked after it happened
you know
after things settled down a bit
cleared the air
I think it might just be how she is
intense and guarded
I worry that I made her that way
I worry that she'll never want to really talk to me
or her grandmother
you know
Theresa makes comments about how skinny she is
she still tries to give her all sorts of food
even though she knows she's been vegan since
I don't know how long
I think we're all pushing her away

NAOMI

She's here though

ELIAS

I don't know how to talk to her
I should know how to talk to her

NAOMI

Sometimes you just have to start
it doesn't have to be complicated

ELIAS

Yeah
she scares me
hah

NAOMI

Hah
I see that
you clam up

ELIAS

Oh no

NAOMI

Alright let's workshop

ELIAS

What?

NAOMI

Let's workshop
okay
so
when I was in LA
(**wow** that already seems like a lifetime ago)
this friend and I had a bit of a falling out
have I told you this story?
I don't remember
at first it wasn't anything
you know?
she got upset that there were a couple times that a few of us went out without her
like a brunch or two
and at one of them, her ex was out with us
but like
she was out of town?
you know?
that was when she decided she needed to
"try living in rural Ontario for a month because she can't **deal** with all of this right now"
which didn't last long
and anyway we were also friends with her ex?
and I wasn't trying to take sides or anything
things just didn't work out between them
and that's fine that's cool no big deal
but after she came back she was all like mad about it
and wouldn't talk to me
and we kind of just
drifted apart a little bit
saw each other once in a while
but not really much
we'd always kind of half-heartedly say we should catch up but we never did
until at this one party we just had it out
she started coming at me about how I never prioritized her
or something like that
and I started letting her have it

about she only ever gave a shit about herself
 and then she threw a wine glass at me
 and yeah
 after that the friendship was over basically
 and I wish I'd handled it better
 said something earlier
 talked it through before we started drifting
 because I did like her
 she could make me laugh more than anyone
 I would've said things differently if I wasn't saying them in the heat of the moment
 maybe things would've been okay
 you know?

ELIAS

Yeah

NAOMI

so
 how would you say things to Rosie?
 in an ideal situation?

ELIAS

Um
 I'd say
 Hi kid
 um
 Do You Hate Me?

NAOMI

Hah
 be serious

ELIAS

Okay okay
 I'd say
 what would I say

COUSIN KENNY enters with food. A lot of food.

COUSIN KENNY

I hope everyone's hungry

ELIAS

You're the best, Kenny

COUSIN KENNY

I know

NAOMI

It all looks so **good**
 I don't know where to start
 hold on —

NAOMI takes some photos/videos of the food, picks up a grape leaf, takes a video of herself taking a bite.

ELIAS

What do you think?

NAOMI

I like grape leaves
and this is really good grape leaf

COUSIN KENNY

You got her into grape leaves, eh?

NAOMI

Am I like
Lebanese now?

COUSIN KENNY

I don't know
when's Eli putting a ring on that finger?
then it'll be official official

ELIAS

Well
we were going to wait to say
but next year

COUSIN KENNY

Next year!
congrats!
do the kids know?

ELIAS

Not yet

NAOMI

We're telling them next

COUSIN KENNY

Well this is exciting news!
let's have a drink!

COUSIN KENNY exits.

ELIAS

I guess we're telling them today

NAOMI

How do you feel?

ELIAS takes her hands.

ELIAS

Good
I feel really good.

Shift.

Four

*GRANDMA THERESA is looking at the new signs over the food counter.
MARCUS enters.*

MARCUS

You like the new menu?

GRANDMA THERESA

Do we need all of this?
you can get a cheeseburger anywhere

MARCUS

It's what people want
it's what they're asking for

GRANDMA THERESA

Hm

FATHER DAOUD approaches.

FATHER DAOUD

Marcus
the TV crew is here to get some interviews
do you want to speak about the festival?

MARCUS

Sure
of course

FATHER DAOUD

Great

FATHER DAOUD waves a REPORTER and a CAMERAPERSON in.

REPORTER

Thanks, Daoud
hi folks, nice to meet you
we'll just do a quick interview with
remind me your name?

MARCUS

Marcus Mansour

REPORTER

Great
To FATHER DAOUD.
and he's the one who's been helping?

FATHER DAOUD

Right

REPORTER

Perfect

we'll have you talk a bit about the festival
 how it's changed
 what people can expect
 maybe a bit about the new menu, the food

The REPORTER sees GRANDMA THERESA

hi ma'am
 what's your name?

GRANDMA THERESA
 Theresa Mansour
 he's my grandson

REPORTER
 Oh
 that's great
 why don't we get you both together?

FATHER DAOUD
 Great idea

CAMERAPERSON
 Thirty seconds

REPORTER
 Is that okay with you two?

MARCUS
 Sure

GRANDMA THERESA
 Of course

REPORTER
 Lovely
 we love a family moment
 alright, you two ready?

CAMERAPERSON
 Here we go
 three
 two

REPORTER
 Welcome back
 we're joining you from Buffalo's Lebanese Festival
 which is quickly becoming one of the most popular summer festivals
 in this city's incredible renaissance in these trying few years
 I'm here with Theresa Mansour and her grandson Marcus at the food counter
 tell me, what are you serving here?

MARCUS
 We have lots of things
 traditional Lebanese food to American favorites
 something for everyone

REPORTER

That's great
Theresa, do you have a specialty?

GRANDMA THERESA

I don't know about specialty
but
grape leaves

MARCUS

We call them warak enab

REPORTER

Do you make these?

GRANDMA THERESA

Yes I do

REPORTER

How long have you been making these?
and where'd you learn to make them?

GRANDMA THERESA

Well my mother did her best to teach me a long time ago
hah
but now I mostly make it up as I go

REPORTER

Can I try one?

GRANDMA THERESA

Of course

REPORTER

Thank you
I've never tried one of these before
The REPORTER takes a bite of a grape leaf.
mmm

GRANDMA THERESA

What do you think?

MARCUS

Good, right?

REPORTER

Delicious
you'll have to give me your recipe

GRANDMA THERESA

Hah
I don't know about that

MARCUS

She won't even share with me

REPORTER

Is that true!

MARCUS

I think stubbornness might run in the family

REPORTER

Well

even though she might not share her secrets with you

what do you think is the best part about your grandma's cooking?

MARCUS

Oh

yeah

I'd definitely have to say the

um

the altabawul

FATHER DAOUD

— The what?

MARCUS

Altabawul

the spice

FATHER DAOUD

Altabawul is urination

spice is altawabil

MARCUS

Oh I

I thought

REPORTER

Hah

not quite fluent yet, huh?

well

we'll be right back with more from the Lebanese Festival

CAMERAPERSON

And — great

I think we got it

REPORTER

Thank you all!

you were great

we're going to go talk to some more folks

The REPORTER and CAMERAPERSON exit.

MARCUS

I'm sorry, grandma

GRANDMA THERESA *not cruel, just straightforward*
You don't need to impress anyone, honey

MARCUS
I was just trying to

GRANDMA THERESA
Don't use Arabic if you don't know it
you'll just embarrass yourself
and me

MARCUS
I didn't mean to embarrass you

GRANDMA THERESA
On television no less

MARCUS
Yeah well
maybe this wouldn't have happened if you actually
you know
taught me something

GRANDMA THERESA
Like what

MARCUS
Like your recipes
like anything

GRANDMA THERESA
You don't want to learn from me

MARCUS
I do
I'm telling you I do
don't you want me to know the culture

GRANDMA THERESA
Look around
you're in it

MARCUS
I don't feel like I am

GRANDMA THERESA
Bah
where do you get this stubbornness from
I have work to do

GRANDMA THERESA exits.
MARCUS looks at FATHER DAOUD.

MARCUS

Did I really say urination?

FATHER DAOUD

Yes

you could talk to me anytime

you know

if you want to talk about the culture

MARCUS

Was it that bad?

the mixup?

FATHER DAOUD shrugs, nods, pats MARCUS on the shoulder.

FATHER DAOUD exits.

Shift.

Five

ROSIE is at the ice cream counter.

MARCUS enters.

MARCUS

Hey

ROSIE

Hey

MARCUS

Where's Katie?

aren't you both on ice cream today?

ROSIE

She went to get food

MARCUS

How long ago?

ROSIE

I don't know

it's fine I've got it covered

MARCUS

I just don't want you alone here for too long

ROSIE

I know you're in charge but like

I can do what I want, Marcus

I can be alone

MARCUS

It's just

I saw Billy earlier

I think he wants to talk to you

so

ROSIE

What

how much earlier

why didn't you tell me

MARCUS

I'm telling you now

ROSIE

Is he still here

MARCUS

I don't know

ROSIE
Fuck, Marcus —

ELIAS and NAOMI enter.

ELIAS
The two of you in one place
look at that!
like a miracle

ROSIE
What
do you want ice cream or something

ELIAS
No
no
there's something we want to talk to you about

MARCUS
Can it wait until later
I have to do a trash round
and

NAOMI
It'll just take a minute
your dad and I want to talk to you

ELIAS
We just wanted to let you know
that we've picked a date for the wedding
and it's going to be this time next year

ROSIE
Oh
cool

MARCUS
Yeah great!
that's great

ELIAS
So yeah of course we'd love it if you both were there

MARCUS
Of course

ROSIE
Yeah we'll be there

MARCUS
Of course we will
that's great

ELIAS

It's just a
yeah
a special time for us
and we want to share it with you

NAOMI

You know I love being a part of this family
and it would mean the world to your dad and I

ROSIE

We said we'd be there
we'll be there
of course

MARCUS

Congratulations

ROSIE

Yeah
congratulations

MARCUS

That's so exciting

ELIAS

And um
one other thing
I think we're going to be selling the house

ROSIE

— what?

NAOMI

It just makes more sense to downsize, you know?
it's just us
we don't need four bedrooms
it's just too much to upkeep
the cost of electricity with air conditioning
and there are people who need the space more
so we thought
why are we taking up all this space
when we could get by just fine with something smaller?

ELIAS

Exactly

ROSIE

But like
the house?
our old house?
Grandma's old house?
the house you grew up in?
you're selling the house?

ELIAS

I think it's for the best
it's okay to move on from things

ROSIE

Are you okay with it?
like really okay?
or are you just feigning okay because that's what she told you?

NAOMI

Your dad is perfectly capable of making his own decisions

ELIAS

I'm capable of making my own decisions, Rosie

ROSIE

I mean look at you!
it's like she's your fucking speechwriter!
she's a step away from being an actual stranger
and you're just spouting whatever she says!

ELIAS

You don't talk to us like that, young lady
it's my life
it's my decision
and Naomi is part of our family
so if you don't have anything fucking nice to say

ROSIE

Yeah
don't say anything at all
got it
thanks
you could've just told me to shut the fuck up
would've been a lot easier

ROSIE storms off.

ELIAS

I'm trying to be reasonable here

NAOMI

It's okay
it's okay
it's sensitive
we knew this wasn't going to be the easiest conversation
and you know
one day we'll probably look back at this and laugh
like Marcus' little interview
right?
urination?
hah
what were you thinking

ELIAS

Hah
yeah
you really shit the bed with that one, kid
you understand we have to sell the house, right?
it just makes sense
I'm sure your sister will come around

MARCUS

—

ELIAS

Come on
don't tell me you're mad too
it's just a joke
we're just kidding around
come here

*ELIAS hugs MARCUS.
Shift.*

Six

BOYFRIEND BILLY finds ROSIE.

BOYFRIEND BILLY

Hey
Rosie

ROSIE sees him, turns to leave.

wait
hold on

ROSIE

Why are you here

BOYFRIEND BILLY

I want to say something to you

ROSIE

I don't want to hear it

BOYFRIEND BILLY

I need to

ROSIE

I don't care what you need

BOYFRIEND BILLY

You hurt me
you abused me
you took me for granted
you got drunk and yelled at me
you made me feel like I wasn't enough for you
you made me feel like I could never be enough for you
I tried so hard
I really did, Rosie
I know you probably don't believe it but
I did work for you
I cleaned up after you
I made sure restaurants served food you could eat
I tried to surprise you
I planned weekend trips for us
I let myself become invisible
but still
you criticized me
you belittled me
you hit me
you made me feel small
and I want to thank you
because I'll never let myself be treated that way again

ROSIE

Fuck you
for you to stand there and say —
no

I wanted so much for us
 I know I made mistakes
 I'm sorry for the mistakes I made
 you deserved better
 but so did I
 I'm not here to pretend things were perfect
 but maybe this is just what it is
 maybe this is just what a relationship is
 what it's supposed to be
 bad sometimes
 but you work through it
 and you still try
 and you still care
 and you still make each other laugh
 and have little adventures
 and you forgive each other
 you go through ups and downs
 I was ready to try again
 remember we wanted to get a dog?
 I was ready to try getting a dog with you

BOYFRIEND BILLY

But I don't want to try
 that idea
 your idea of a relationship
 it doesn't work without communication
 it doesn't work if one person feels afraid to speak
 and I —
 I don't want to feel like that anymore
 I don't want to do this anymore

ROSIE

Obviously
 I know that
 I know you don't want do this
 you made that very clear when you started messaging another girl
 behind my fucking back
 so fuck you for this sob story, Billy
 get the fuck out of here
 go
 now

BOYFRIEND BILLY

But

ROSIE

You don't get to say anything more
 you get to leave

BOYFRIEND BILLY

Rosie

ROSIE

No

I don't want to see you
 I wish you were someone else
 just
 be someone else
 be someone better
 I want someone better
 someone with thick hair
 someone who can dance with me
 someone who laughs at my jokes
 and wraps their arm around my waist at dinner parties
 I want someone who looks at me like they can't believe I exist
 I want someone who can throw me into the air
 and catch me
 and if they throw me and I don't fall
 if I fly
 I want someone who runs in my shadow on the earth
 cheering
 shielding their eyes to look at me soaring

During this speech, ROSIE has been crumpling BOYFRIEND BILLY into a ball.

ROSIE erases BOYFRIEND BILLY's features.

ROSIE peels away pieces of BOYFRIEND BILLY and discards them.

ROSIE rearranges the BOYFRIEND BILLY into a new shape.

ROSIE unravels the shape.

It is HUSBAND BILL.

ROSIE and HUSBAND BILL look at each other.

HUSBAND BILL
Hello

ROSIE
Hello

HUSBAND BILL
I'm Bill

ROSIE
Bill
I'm Rosie

HUSBAND BILL
Hello Rosie

HUSBAND BILL sweeps ROSIE into a dance.

They dance.

Shift.

Seven

MARCUS finds FATHER DAOUD.

MARCUS

Father Daoud

FATHER DAOUD

Hey Marcus
go Bills

MARCUS

— go Bills
you know you usually say it at the end of the conversation
like a goodbye

FATHER DAOUD

Really?
you think I'd know by now

MARCUS

Can I talk to you?

FATHER DAOUD

Of course
you always can

MARCUS

Okay
so um
I wanted to thank you for everything
the opportunity
you know
I really appreciate it
but I don't think I'm going to help with the festival anymore
I don't think I can

FATHER DAOUD

Oh?

MARCUS

I don't think I'm right for it
I think I'm doing a bad job
I think you could find someone better

FATHER DAOUD

Why do you say that

MARCUS

The whole interview thing
and
I just feel like I'm wrong
like I'm not a good fit

FATHER DAOUD

Mistakes happen
 you're allowed to make mistakes
 I'm surprised by this, Marcus
 it seems to me like you care about the festival
 it's growing
 more people are coming
 you care about helping out
 and you're successful at it
 you're fulfilled by it
 am I mistaken?

MARCUS

No

FATHER DAOUD

How about this
 give it one more year
 and we'll see how you feel then
 how does that sound

MARCUS

Okay
 that sounds okay

FATHER DAOUD

Great
 you're doing good things, Marcus
 you're doing yourself proud

MARCUS

Yeah
 um
 yeah
 thank you

FATHER DAOUD

You're welcome
 go Bills

MARCUS

Hah
 go Bills

FATHER DAOUD exits.

MARCUS sees MAROUN is there.

am I making you proud
 I feel like I'm — not
 I feel like I'm trying to run toward something but I'm actually running away

MAROUN

² ما الذي أتجنبه؟ ما الذي أهرب منه؟

² "What am I running from?"

They are alone, they are out at sea, the wind whips around them.

MARCUS

I'm trying to
I don't know
understand
how do I understand
there's so much I don't
there's so much
missing
how do I find it

MAROUN

كل ما جاء من قبل ، كل ما ورثته ، لا يخدمني ، لقد تخليت عنه بالكامل. العالم الذي أتيت منه يتفكك. انها ليست لي. أستطيع أن أزرع قدمي على أرض جديدة وسأبني حياة صغيرة وهادئة. سأحدث لغة جديدة ، وسأشكل نفسي رجلاً جديداً ، وسأفرغ السماء لأعطيها لأولادي ، لأنها ملكهم للشرب.³

MARCUS

How can I understand
how can I find what I'm looking for

*MAROUN grabs MARCUS' hand, pulls MARCUS in, takes MARCUS' face in his hands,
looks at MARCUS searchingly.
MAROUN laughs.*

MAROUN

انظر لحالك
انظر لحالك⁴

*MAROUN pats MARCUS' face.
MAROUN dissipates.*

MARCUS

What does that mean?

End of Act Two.

³ "Everything that came before, everything I have inherited, it does not serve me, I have given it all up. The world I come from is disintegrating. It is not for me. I can plant my feet on new soil and I will build a small and quiet life. I will speak a new language, and I will mold myself into a new man, and I will drain the sky to give to my children, for it is theirs to drink."

⁴ "Look at you. Look at you."

Interlude

GRANDMA THERESA continues her lesson.

GRANDMA THERESA

How do you wrap it all up
 you have your stuffing
 you have your leaves
 so first you have to cut the stem off
 then a spoonful of stuffing
 and you wrap
 fold the sides and roll
 and
 well once you have them all rolled up
 you place them in a pot
 with olive oil
 layer upon layer —
 next will come the boiling —
 I remember
 a few times
 my mother
 folding
 rolling
 wrapping
 placing
 it seemed like hundreds of these little things
 these warak enab
 these grape leaves
 I remember her weeping
 softly
 still working but
 weeping too
 I never did understand why
 but more and more now I
 when I make these
 I weep too
 what a blessing, don't you think?
 to have this food before us
 to have our hands and our eyes and to perform this work that will nourish the people we love
 that's the thing it took me so long to understand
 wrapped in these little leaves are ourselves
 to share with others
 if we're brave enough
 anyway
 where was I
 right
 the boiling
 the last part is the boiling

Shift.

Act Three

One

*The big sign now just reads "The Lebanese Festival."
 The festival itself, tents and all, appears to be melting.
 HUSBAND BILL, by himself, is at the ice cream counter.
 He looks around.
 He takes an ice cream out of the cooler.
 It's extraordinarily melted.
 He still considers eating it.
 It's hot.
 He doesn't.
 He puts it back.
 MARCUS hurries through, with tarps.*

HUSBAND BILL

Gonna be bad today?
 inclement weather
 I saw

MARCUS

I don't know
 probably one of those heavy downpours
 we need it
 I'm sweating through my shirt

HUSBAND BILL

Should we — leave?

MARCUS

If you want
 I'll need to stick around either way
 but you know how the forecasts are
 never right anymore
 so unpredictable now
 it's probably fine
 this is all just to be safe

HUSBAND BILL

We're in your hands, boss

MARCUS

Hah
 don't put that on me

MARCUS exits.

ELIAS enters.

HUSBAND BILL

Hi Mr. Mansour
 is this a new shirt?

looks good my man
slimming
I like it

ELIAS

Where's Rosie?
I thought she'd be

HUSBAND BILL

No she went off somewhere
left me here to man the fort

ELIAS

She does that sometimes
doesn't she

HUSBAND BILL

I've gotten used to it
I don't mind being a bit of a Rosie-detective
"if I were a Rosie, where would I be?"
hah

ELIAS

Right

HUSBAND BILL

Why don't you text her though

ELIAS

What

HUSBAND BILL

You know
boop boop boop with the old thumbs

ELIAS

—
right
yeah

ELIAS texts.

HUSBAND BILL

What do you need though
maybe I could
help

ELIAS

No no it's fine, you don't need to

HUSBAND BILL

I want to
let me help you, my man
I await instructions

ELIAS

She didn't say where she went?

HUSBAND BILL

I don't know
she has a secret spot I guess

ELIAS

Oh
where?

HUSBAND BILL

If I knew I would tell you
you'd be the first person I would tell

ELIAS

Oh
kay
yeah

*They look at each other.
They're stuck.*

HUSBAND BILL

So yeah
what can I
do for ya

ELIAS

I just wanted to talk to her about
well I guess Naomi wanted to talk to her
she wants her to dance at the wedding
perform
she thinks it'll be nice

HUSBAND BILL

That's really
yeah that's super nice
love that

ELIAS

Maybe you could ask her and have her talk to me
she's hard to track down
I'll call her, she doesn't return the call, stuff like that

HUSBAND BILL

It'll be nice to see her dance

ELIAS

You haven't?

HUSBAND BILL

Yeah no
she says that's a part of her life she wants to leave behind so

ELIAS

Oh

HUSBAND BILL

I guess
we don't really
she doesn't like to talk about it
she gets upset so I don't
I don't bring it up
touchy touchy, so yeah I don't touchy

ELIAS

I didn't know that

HUSBAND BILL

But yeah you should ask her
that would be

ELIAS

She's a really good dancer

HUSBAND BILL

Yeah

ELIAS

She's um
she's happy?
though?
like she seems happy to you?

HUSBAND BILL

Sure I mean
she's Rosie-happy
she seems Rosie-happy

ELIAS

You two got married fast
I used to tell her
I used to say "don't get married until you're 30"

HUSBAND BILL

We go over to my parents' house
they're a bit older
we bring them groceries
the stuff they can't get as easily
toilet paper
coffee
fruit
the store by them clears out really quickly
people stealing now even
can't afford —
anyway so we go over there once a week
have dinner
it used to be like pulling teeth getting her to come with me

she sulks like a fucking
a fucking lioness
it's terrifying
but I wore her down
and now she comes with
still a bit begrudgingly
but by the end of the night she's usually laughing
they're nice nights

ELIAS

Well
yeah talk to her
about the wedding
dancing
and

HUSBAND BILL

I got you, sir
the Rosie-whisperer is on the case

ELIAS

Thanks Billy

HUSBAND BILL

Bill
it's Bill

ELIAS

Oh did I say
what did I say
did I say Billy

HUSBAND BILL

Yeah

ELIAS

Sorry I got
I was thinking of

HUSBAND BILL

Her ex
yeah I know
it's Bill

ELIAS

Yep, sorry Bill
thanks

ELIAS exits.

HUSBAND BILL reaches back into the cooler.

He pulls out the melting ice cream.

He eats it.

Shift.

Two

*NAOMI and GRANDMA THERESA at the food counter.
NAOMI is watching GRANDMA THERESA work.*

GRANDMA THERESA

So
why are you here?

NAOMI

Uh oh
here comes the big line of questioning
what are your intentions
and all
right?
hah
I'm just kidding
I love him, Theresa

GRANDMA THERESA

I meant Buffalo
what brought you to Buffalo
I don't think we've ever talked about it

NAOMI

No yeah
we haven't
you know a lot of my friends laughed at me
when I told them
as if I'd announced I was launching myself to the moon
but
I don't know
the fires weren't stopping
they weren't
I'm sure you
the sky was yellow for two
three months
bright yellow
pale
like
like the inside of a lemon peel
and the water
we couldn't use water because of the shortages
so everyone was buying bottles
fighting each other in the aisles of grocery stores
for these bottles
but all I could think of was all that plastic waste floating
off somewhere in the Pacific
so the choice was
I don't know
dehydrating myself or killing sea creatures
and when I heard about Buffalo
it seemed like a chance at a future
the right place to be for whatever is coming next

GRANDMA THERESA

You made the same choice my father did
when he came here

NAOMI

I'd never seen snow fall before
I've seen snow on the ground
skiing trips
but weirdly I've never seen it
actively snow
I wanted to see that

GRANDMA THERESA

I wish I could go see Lebanon
I've never been

NAOMI

I didn't know that

GRANDMA THERESA

Ah well
getting old for it now

NAOMI

— So I wanted to talk to you about
Elias and I were talking about the wedding
and yeah I wanted to see what you think
if
you know we're thinking about maybe
doing it outside the church

GRANDMA THERESA

Oh

NAOMI

I know it's important to you
but we are thinking about it
so I wanted to see what you think and
yeah what do you think

GRANDMA THERESA

It's not that important to me

NAOMI

— what?

GRANDMA THERESA

You can do what you want
do what makes you happy, honey
what difference does it make

NAOMI

But you're at mass every week
I thought —

GRANDMA THERESA

It's where I see my cousins
they don't answer their phones
I know I'll see them in church
get married where you want

NAOMI

You're not upset?
you won't be upset?

*GRANDMA THERESA looks at NAOMI.
Really looks at her.*

GRANDMA THERESA

He's the youngest of my children
all he needs is someone to look at him
you look at him
that's all that matters

NAOMI

— Thank you, Theresa

GRANDMA THERESA

Do you know how to make kibbeh?

NAOMI

No

GRANDMA THERESA

That's his favorite

NAOMI

Do you have a recipe?
maybe I could learn yours

GRANDMA THERESA

Oh, honey
you don't want mine
you can make your own

NAOMI

My own?

GRANDMA THERESA

Of course
that's how it works

Shift.

Three

*ROSIE and HUSBAND BILL are sitting together.
They're quiet, watching the festival around them.
HUSBAND BILL extends his hand for ROSIE to hold.
ROSIE doesn't notice.*

HUSBAND BILL
Are you going to

ROSIE
What?

HUSBAND BILL
Hold my
hold my hand

ROSIE
Oh
I don't know

HUSBAND BILL
Why not?

ROSIE
There are like
people
around

HUSBAND BILL
So?

ROSIE
It's just weird
Husband Bill
sometimes it's just weird
sometimes I don't want to
can you be okay with me not wanting to

HUSBAND BILL
It's weird that you call me that

ROSIE
What

HUSBAND BILL
Husband Bill

ROSIE
What else would I call you?
Bill

HUSBAND BILL
Yeah

ROSIE

Bill's boring

HUSBAND BILL

Bill's normal

ROSIE

Well that's what I love about you

HUSBAND BILL

Can you just hold my hand

ROSIE

I don't get why you're so upset about this

HUSBAND BILL

I'm not upset I just want

ROSIE

What

HUSBAND BILL

To feel like you love me

ROSIE

Don't be an idiot

HUSBAND BILL

Okay so I know it's a little early
but I got something for you
for our one year anniversary

ROSIE

Don't tell me yet

HUSBAND BILL

I want to
I know you've wanted to visit Beirut since you were a kid
so I got us tickets
we're going

ROSIE

Wait
— really?

HUSBAND BILL

Yeah
what do you think

ROSIE

I'm
excited!
—

but what am I going to eat like have you looked to see if there are vegan restaurants

and the beaches have been disappearing do they still have beaches there
 and is it going to be safe
 like I've heard it might be
 like they lose electricity regularly
 and the Lebanese pound is basically worthless
 and

HUSBAND BILL

You're excited though?

ROSIE

Of course
 yeah
 I just
 its also stressful

HUSBAND BILL

Yeah
 I just thought

ROSIE

Sorry
 I'm getting
 worked up
 it's just
 like
 why didn't you ask me about this first

HUSBAND BILL

I wanted it to be a surprise

ROSIE

But you could've asked me
 like did you even fucking think about this

HUSBAND BILL

Okay
 I'm going to
 go for a walk
 maybe get some food or something

HUSBAND BILL stands and exits.

The festival tent continues to droop.

Melting.

MARCUS enters with a tarp to try to patch spots.

MARCUS

Hey
 you okay?

ROSIE

Yeah I'm
 yeah

MARCUS

Because you look —

ROSIE

I know what I look like Marcus
I'm fine

MARCUS

Okay

ROSIE

Just Husband Bill
we had a little —
you know, I don't know what I did to deserve him
like our fights are barely even fights
if he does something to upset me
like forgetting to unload the dishwasher
or walk the dog
or something
he knows I have my moment where I'm snippy or whatever
or I get mean
and then we don't talk for a day or so
and then after that it passes and we're fine
and we don't have to **have** the fight
we just wait it out
and it's great
you know?
I don't have to worry about getting into a whole big **thing** about it

MARCUS

Right
definitely
um

ROSIE

It's so nice to be in a relationship where you feel
understood
you know?

MARCUS

It kind of sounds like
you're avoiding talking through your problems

ROSIE

Avoiding?
we're not avoiding anything
I'm telling you I'm happy
can't you be happy I'm happy

MARCUS

I didn't mean
I was just saying

ROSIE

You're one to talk anyway
avoiding
hah

MARCUS

What do you mean
what am I avoiding

ROSIE

Everything, Marcus
everything

ROSIE exits.

MARCUS calls after her.

MARCUS

That's a cop out!
what am I avoiding?

The festival droops even more.

Four

*ELIAS and COUSIN KENNY play backgammon.
Each turn, they roll two of the tiniest die you've ever seen.
They move the pieces around the board.
There's a sort of rhythm to it — like a dance.*

COUSIN KENNY

You hear about the hurricane
in Florida

ELIAS

Yeah
bad huh

COUSIN KENNY

Bad
my old house is just
gone
in the Gulf
fish-house now

ELIAS

Is it really

COUSIN KENNY

Yeah
good thing I got out
otherwise I'd need gills
hah

ELIAS

We'll be in for another influx

COUSIN KENNY

I lived there for years
thinking
"it's not happening
this Old Testament shit
no way it's here, now
coming for me
coming directly for me"
what a goddamn fool

ELIAS

I wonder
you know
I never thought that Buffalo would be
this
seeing the refugee camps on the sides of the road
the trust fund kids from the big cities in their new overpriced condos
has barely snowed in two, three years?
this isn't our parents' city anymore
I wonder what have we wrought

COUSIN KENNY
Your turn

ELIAS hasn't taken his turn.

ELIAS
Thanks

ELIAS continues playing.
COUSIN KENNY looks around for a moment.

COUSIN KENNY
Lots of people here
new faces
look at that line for the bounce house

ELIAS
Yeah

COUSIN KENNY
A bounce house over there
hah
while in other spots the place is falling apart
what is Marcus doing to this place

ELIAS
He's probably doing what he can

COUSIN KENNY
You proud of him?

ELIAS
Yeah
yeah
— I don't know what he's trying to get out of all this

COUSIN KENNY
Have you talked to him about it?

ELIAS
I mean
he's figuring it out
if he wanted to talk he'd come to me
he knows he can come to me
I think he takes some time though
I'm giving him time

COUSIN KENNY
Yeah
COUSIN KENNY is looking at his phone.
fucking hell
four hundred thousand people displaced
four hundred thousand fish-houses

KATIE enters.

KATIE

I need to get out of this place

COUSIN KENNY

Hey Katie Khoury
you can go home if you want

KATIE

No
like
here
all of it
Buffalo
I'm fucking pissed off

COUSIN KENNY

Hey
hey
okay
sit down
what's going on

KATIE

I just got off the phone with my boss
and apparently they're letting me go
they're "going in a different direction"
they want "someone with higher level admissions experience"
since "the university is growing" and blah blah blah
apparently the fucking years I put into that place aren't enough
so I'm freaking out because how am I going to afford to live
they're raising my rent next month
and I have student loans to pay
and I have no savings
and god fucking damn it
I don't know what to do

COUSIN KENNY

Okay
okay
take a deep breath
what an asshole
deep breaths
fuck him
but hey
there are other jobs, right?
I can give you some money if you need money
I don't have a lot but
we'll figure this out

KATIE

There aren't other jobs right now
too many people looking

COUSIN KENNY

Well we can look
I'll help you look

KATIE

I think I need to get out of here, dad
I don't think I can stay

COUSIN KENNY

In Buffalo?

KATIE

In this country
you know what I really want to do
I want to help people
I want to go somewhere where people need help and help them
like helping the hurricane survivors in Florida
or the wildfire survivors up in Alberta
they have healthcare in Canada
and I don't know how
because I don't have any money
but I think I would feel a lot better if I was there
I would feel better if I was helping people
instead of just
sitting here

COUSIN KENNY

Okay
I hear you
okay
come here
deep breaths

COUSIN KENNY hugs KATIE.

we'll figure it out
okay?

KATIE

I'm sorry

COUSIN KENNY

Don't apologize
it'll be okay
we'll get you on your feet

KATIE

Thank you
I'm sorry

COUSIN KENNY

I said don't apologize
and don't mention it
hey
does this mean I might be moving to Canada too

KATIE

I think I need to do this on my own, dad
I feel my life coming untethered
and I think I need to
let it
there are people out there who are unmoored
and if I can help them
I should
I should be
doing something

COUSIN KENNY

You could help here
people need help here

KATIE

Dad

COUSIN KENNY

Katie

KATIE

I just
this is something I need to do

COUSIN KENNY

— Okay
yeah
okay
I love you
you'll still root for the Bills
right?

KATIE

Of course
go Bills

COUSIN KENNY

go Bills
go Katie

KATIE hugs COUSIN KENNY.

KATIE

Thank you

KATIE exits.

COUSIN KENNY looks at ELIAS, who is staring.

COUSIN KENNY

What?

ELIAS

Nothing
nothing

COUSIN KENNY

It's your turn

They continue playing.

Shift.

Five

*ROSIE is alone.
 In her secret spot.
 She dances.
 She's a good dancer.
 She dances like the atmosphere of the entire earth has condensed to a bubble around
 her body and she's trying to pop it.
 Eventually, she pops it.
 She dances like an explosion, a combustion.
 NAOMI enters.
 ROSIE doesn't notice.
 NAOMI watches.
 ROSIE finishes her dance and lies down on the floor.*

NAOMI

You have good form

ROSIE

What are you doing here
 you shouldn't be here

NAOMI

I used to dance when I was younger
 I miss it
 it felt like
 lovely anger

ROSIE

I come here to be alone
 so please
 you know
 leave me alone

NAOMI

Okay

ROSIE

Don't just
 come into rooms

NAOMI

Right

NAOMI starts to leave.

ROSIE

—
 why do you want to marry my dad

NAOMI *stopping*

Did you want me to leave or

ROSIE

He's fucked up
you know he's fucked up
like not good like bad stay away

NAOMI

Okay

ROSIE

Did you know that?
did you know he would get into screaming matches with our mom?
that he cheated on her?
that he threw things and stomped and yelled and pouted
and had the nerve to bumble around with puppy dog eyes

NAOMI

Yeah I knew that

ROSIE

Then why
tell me why
a person like that should not be a person to be with
I'm like that because of him
I get loud and I lose myself and I fucking bite and don't let go
I'm a fucking vice
why do you want to be with that
why would anyone want to be with that

NAOMI

Look at you

ROSIE

What

NAOMI

Have you been going to therapy or something
that's a lot of self awareness
you want to change that about yourself

ROSIE

I'm not
I'm asking you questions
I want to know why

NAOMI

I'm proud of you, Rosie

ROSIE

No
no

NAOMI

I am

ROSIE

You don't get to come in here with your enlightened attitude
barge in here and interrupt me and

NAOMI has taken ROSIE's hands in her own.

um

NAOMI starts slow dancing with ROSIE.

NAOMI

I've never been married before
and I know you have to take all of a person
all that they have been and all that they will be
and he seems like someone
I can hold
who can hold me
I can sit in that and feel
okay
he knows himself
and who he has been
and we've had our bad moments
but he's never done anything that would make me
he's done work
people can reshape themselves
and you have to learn how to make room to hold all of them again
to hold everything

ROSIE

You can't know what marriage is until
well
I guess I don't know if I really know what it is
it's
I'm living with someone
and I love them
and it's like having a roommate who is also the ghost of someone you used to know
a ghost roommate who infuriates you
because they keep everything so **neat** and untouched somehow
like the life has been sucked out of the house
a ghost roommate who covers your whole body
and you feel smothered and cold all at once
and you remember the shape of them but you can't see them anymore
and it's nice you know it's nice
it's familiar
but you also mourn
I feel
I feel myself slipping away
I'm not who I used to be
empty
like a grape leaf with no stuffing
and I think
I was supposed to soar
yet here I am run aground

They are still slow dancing.

NAOMI

What are you going to do?

ROSIE

What are you going to do?

NAOMI laughs.

NAOMI

I like your secret spot
sorry that I interrupted you

NAOMI exits.

ROSIE thinks.

ROSIE leaves, and after a moment comes back in, leading HUSBAND BILL by the hand.

ROSIE looks at HUSBAND BILL.

ROSIE

Are you a mirage

HUSBAND BILL

If you want me to be
I can be made of nothingness

ROSIE

I thought I saw water in the desert

HUSBAND BILL

Remember when we danced at our wedding
it was the first and last time I saw you dance
and I couldn't really see because I was part of it
I couldn't see

ROSIE

Maybe I imagined it

HUSBAND BILL

You should dance again
I want to see you dance
I want to see you

ROSIE

When

HUSBAND BILL

Your dad's wedding
or now

HUSBAND BILL sits, ready to watch.

ROSIE

Why do you love me

HUSBAND BILL

You fill me up with the urge to care

ROSIE

Because I'm fucked up
you know I'm fucked up
like not good like bad stay away

HUSBAND BILL

Come here

ROSIE sits with HUSBAND BILL.

They hold each other.

ROSIE

You're a mirage

HUSBAND BILL

You're a thousand explosions

ROSIE

I made you up
I made this up
you're too
I thought if I could be a part of something good
it would make me good

HUSBAND BILL

You are good

ROSIE

I'm broken
I feel broken
I need to fix myself
I need to stop pretending
I need to get out of the mirage

HUSBAND BILL

I don't understand

ROSIE

You're lovely
you're so lovely
I want to be lovely too
I thought we could be lovely together
I thought I could conjure loveliness
but I need to be lovely by myself
I need to be lovely by myself before I can be lovely with someone else
do you understand?

HUSBAND BILL

I love you, Rosie

ROSIE

I love you too
I wish that was enough

HUSBAND BILL

Dance for me

*ROSIE stands.
She dances.
She is a thousand explosions.
She feels lovely, almost.
She finishes her dance.
She lies on the floor.*

ROSIE

What do you think

HUSBAND BILL

You have beautiful arms

ROSIE

Goodbye, Bill

HUSBAND BILL

Goodbye, Rosie

*HUSBAND BILL is gone.
ROSIE weeps.
Shift.*

Six

*MARCUS approaches FATHER DAOUD.
FATHER DAOUD is looking at his phone.*

MARCUS
Hey Father

FATHER DAOUD *still looking at the phone*
Did you see this news about the Bills trade?

MARCUS
What?
no

FATHER DAOUD
What are they thinking

MARCUS
I don't know
I stopped paying attention a couple years ago
it made me too sad

FATHER DAOUD
Is this what being a Buffalo fan is
continually confused and frustrated
like you're banging your head against a wall

MARCUS
I guess

FATHER DAOUD
Anyway though
good festival this year
it really came together at the last minute

MARCUS
Yeah
mostly

FATHER DAOUD
You did what you could
things are getting more difficult
shortages and
permitting and
the cost of everything
we have enough water
inshallah
there was some worry
you know
about all of it
I'm not complaining though
god bless us we're here
we made it

MARCUS

Yes

FATHER DAOUD

I wish I could figure out how to give as much to this community
as your family does
you're lucky, Marcus

MARCUS

Can I ask you a question?

FATHER DAOUD

Of course

MARCUS

Okay

um

it might be a stupid question

but

what are your thoughts on being Lebanese?

FATHER DAOUD

Thoughts?

I'm supposed to have thoughts about it?

MARCUS

Um

FATHER DAOUD

Hah

I'm just kidding

or well

I don't know if I think about **being** Lebanese

I just

am

MARCUS

Right

but

FATHER DAOUD

But here's the interesting thing in my mind
when I think about it
you know the Maronite church predates the state of Lebanon
by centuries
and so a lot of our traditions come from —

MARCUS

Yeah

but I'm not asking about the church

FATHER DAOUD

Then what are you asking about?

MARCUS

The culture
I guess
the identity

FATHER DAOUD

The identity
hmm
well it's an interesting question
Lebanon is a very ancient place
and also a very incredibly new place
independence in 1945
and all that
so that's one part of it
and the diversity of people
S Sunni
Shi'a
Maronite
Druze
Jewish
everyone thinks of it differently
it's at the intersection of the East and the West
and there's this push and pull between the two
the Christians have always felt connected to the West
with the mandate and all
the Muslims feel it to be more closely connected with the Arab world
so it's both and neither at the same time
a national identity by double negative
it's its defining characteristic
straddling these two worlds
it's a crossroads
a vacancy
do you understand?
it is a fiction
that we have each individually conjured
putting our thoughts and ideas and dreams onto it
it is a natural wonder of mountains and sea
it is a safe haven for persecuted religions and refugees
it is a tourist destination for the wealthy
it is an incompetent government
it is economic collapse
it is a crisis zone
it is the Paris of the East
it is a cedar tree

MARCUS

I think I know all that
to some extent
but
how am I supposed to feel about it?

FATHER DAOUD

Do you have to feel something about it?

MARCUS

I'd like to

FATHER DAOUD

Okay

tell me how to feel about being in Buffalo

MARCUS

What?

FATHER DAOUD

Tell me

how am I supposed to feel about being here?

MARCUS

I don't know

the people are nice

generous

it has community

people know each other

it has good art and music and theatre and museums

it has great pizza and beef on weck and loganberry and sponge candy and Wegmans

it has the best wings in the world

you should feel comfortable here

like you could stay and marry your high school sweetheart and get happy fat

and dig your neighbor's car out of a snowbank

FATHER DAOUD

Maybe it's everything changing

but

I don't know if I've felt that yet

MARCUS

Do you feel like

a fake?

FATHER DAOUD

I think, Marcus

I think what you're looking for

is less about your relationship with being Lebanese

and more about your relationship with being you

MARCUS

So what do I do?

FATHER DAOUD

I wish I could answer that for you

I really do

Shift.

Seven

*MARCUS is cleaning the bar.
And hauling trash.
And setting up chairs.
And he's selling Maronite cross necklaces.
He's been selling tickets for the festival, too, from a roll of tickets around his arm.
He's doing all of this at once — he needs to do everything.
ROSIE enters and sits at the bar.*

ROSIE

Hey

MARCUS

Hey
want anything to drink?

ROSIE

No
thanks

MARCUS

Sure
— wedding tomorrow

ROSIE

Yeah
if the weather holds up
what did it say?
severe weather event
chance of precipitation

MARCUS

It's probably a heat wave
we haven't been getting much rain
I hear you're going to dance

ROSIE

Yeah

MARCUS

Are you — bringing anyone?

ROSIE

No

MARCUS

Okay

ROSIE

Don't like
fucking
pity me or
I'm fine

MARCUS

I know
if anyone's going to be fine you're going to be fine
you're made of iron

ROSIE

I'm going to therapy
I started going to therapy

MARCUS

— that's really good

ROSIE

Yeah

MARCUS

It's weird, isn't it
thinking of
he's getting married tomorrow
we're going to his wedding

ROSIE

Yeah
it's really
weird

MARCUS

I like her
mostly
I mostly like her

ROSIE

Me too

MARCUS

Everything changes

Music.

ELIAS, NAOMI, COUSIN KENNY, KATIE, and FATHER DAOUD dance in.

They're doing the Dabke.

They've been drinking.

GRANDMA THERESA trails behind, clapping.

COUSIN KENNY

Come on kids
dance with us!
big day tomorrow

ELIAS

It's fine, it's fine
I'm all danced out
let's get another round
on me

MARCUS serves some drinks.

FATHER DAOUD

I have to say
I'm sad you two won't be marrying in the church
but I hope your marriage is filled with prosperity, joy, and love

COUSIN KENNY

Cheers to that!

ELIAS

Don't get me drinking with this guy
I might miss the ceremony tomorrow

NAOMI

Hah
don't even joke about that

COUSIN KENNY

Ah, we're just having fun
besides this is nothing
just a few drinks

GRANDMA THERESA

Just a few drinks
that's what you said the night you crashed your car into my garage
what was that
Eli's junior year

KATIE

Wait I never knew that

ELIAS

I'm sure there's a lot you don't know about your dad

GRANDMA THERESA

I don't know how Eli's father didn't kill you for that, Ken

COUSIN KENNY

He had a soft spot for me

FATHER DAOUD

If I can just say though
this family is such a huge part of this community
and you've made me feel so welcomed here
it's been an honor getting to know you all
and thank you for all that you do to help with the church
and the festival
especially Marcus
helping me make this a reality every year
I'm so glad to see you all celebrate a happy occasion
so cheers

GRANDMA THERESA

That was lovely, Daoud

COUSIN KENNY

Yes, cheers!

what would this festival be without all these strangers every year

what would it be without souvenir t-shirts

and feeling like a sideshow attraction

KATIE

Dad

MARCUS

We're sharing the culture with people

COUSIN KENNY

Hah

right

the people who film themselves taking a bite of a grape leaf

to post god knows where

then spit it out!

ELIAS

At least we get their money

COUSIN KENNY

Oh yes yes

they fork over for the traditional experience

authentic Lebanese cheeseburgers and bounce houses

the homeland!

KATIE

Dad, really —

GRANDMA THERESA

The cheeseburgers aren't that bad

they're easy to make

FATHER DAOUD

Alright, this was fun

but I

COUSIN KENNY

I'm just having some fun, Father

Imitating an attendee.

"how do you do that dance?

I could never

it looks too hard"

ELIAS

"How do you pronounce that word?"

COUSIN KENNY

"I don't even know where it is on a map"

ELIAS

"I would've guessed you were white!"

NAOMI

Hah

if I had a dollar for every time I heard someone say that to you

ROSIE

You're one to talk

I bet you've said that to him

you're an outsider too

ELIAS

Don't talk to her like that

NAOMI

I love your father

I would never

ROSIE

You're going to stand up for her
before me?

ELIAS

We're getting married tomorrow
can we not be at each other's throats?
please?

COUSIN KENNY

At least, Rosie

at least Naomi's actually trying to be a part of this family

ROSIE

What's that supposed to mean

ELIAS

I can talk to my daughter Kenny
can I talk to my daughter?

COUSIN KENNY

I could count on one hand

the amount of times you've spoken a sentence to me

it's like you're trying to amputate yourself from us

why is that?

ROSIE

You're drunk

GRANDMA THERESA

Alright Kenny, that's enough

KATIE

He's drunk, don't listen to him
 dad can you shut up
 don't piss everyone off right before we move

ROSIE

Move?

COUSIN KENNY

Canada, baby!
 the Great White North!
 almost as white as this Lebanese Festival!

FATHER DAOUD

Well this was fun
 but it's late
 Marcus, you're good to close up?

MARCUS nods.

COUSIN KENNY

No offense, Father
 I'm just having fun

FATHER DAOUD

All forgiven
 what kind of person would I be
 if I couldn't think critically about how my actions affect others
 and self reflect?

FATHER DAOUD exits.

ROSIE *to KATIE*

I didn't know you were moving

KATIE

I was going to tell you

ROSIE

When?

KATIE

I was going to
 I'm sorry

GRANDMA THERESA

Everything's changing

ELIAS

Listen, Rosie
 I love you
 I want you to know I love you, okay?
 have I told you that?

ROSIE

No, dad
you haven't
you actually haven't

BILL(Y) enters.

BILL(Y)

Hey everyone

ROSIE

What are you doing here

BILL(Y)

I wanted to talk
I think you made a mistake
I want to be with you

ROSIE

No
we talked about this
we can't

BILL(Y)

Please
please
I want to dance with you
I want to know how to dance with you
I want to know how to lift you into the sky

ROSIE

I'm sorry
in a past life I would've said yes
but I hurt you
I shut you out and I hurt you
I can't do that anymore
I have to learn how to not do that

BILL(Y)

I really did want to be a part of this family

MARCUS

Why?
you want to be a part of this?
really?

It starts to snow, lightly at first, then heavier.

you want a family that doesn't know how to talk about things?
you want to feel lost and alone, like you have to figure everything out yourself?
you want to feel disconnected from your community? your past?
you want to feel like a fuckup?
you want to feel like no matter how hard you try, you'll never do it right?
you want to feel like you can't be yourself?
like you don't even know what that means?

you want to feel like you're pushing everyone away?
 you want to bottle everything up?
 you want to silo yourself off?
 you want to disappear?
 you want to not know the family recipes?

The snow has made the entire stage white.

It's a blizzard.

MARCUS is the only person visible now.

Everyone else has disappeared.

— hello?
 dad?
 Rosie?
 grandma?

MARCUS hears voices from through the blizzard.

ELIAS

Is that really what you think of us, kid?
 you can be smarter than that

GRANDMA THERESA

You don't need to impress anyone, honey

ROSIE

Who cares

COUSIN KENNY

I could barely believe you were Lebanese

BILL(Y)

Do you like make an effort to suck

KATIE

I was supposed to have done something by now

ELIAS

Be smarter than the garbage, kid

GRANDMA THERESA

I bet he'd be surprised you're Lebanese

ROSIE

Who cares about the Lebanese Festival
 in fucking Buffalo?

KATIE

You just
 like
 let things happen to you
 don't you?

BILL(Y)

You're a fake

KATIE

I'm surprised you're Lebanese
you don't look Lebanese

COUSIN KENNY

You are a fake
you're not Lebanese
you're a fake

NAOMI

You're a fake, Marcus
we can tell
we can all tell

GRANDMA THERESA

Why would I want to share my recipes
with someone who doesn't even speak Arabic
my father sacrificed everything to leave Lebanon
and come here
for you
and look what you do with it
nothing

ROSIE

You're barely a brother

ELIAS

You're barely a son
you're barely anything
stop trying to pretend you're something
you're barely anything at all

MARCUS sinks to his knees in the snow.

MARCUS

I should just disappear
I have nothing to offer
I don't have to be anything
I don't have to be Lebanese
I don't have to be a person
I don't have to be me
I can be nothing
I can disappear

The wind is whipping around him.

He is surrounded by snow.

He closes his eyes.

He takes a deep breath.

He shivers.

A long moment.

Then, MAROUN is there.

MAROUN has his cart with flowers, bread, candy, newspapers, etc.

MAROUN
Marcus

MARCUS
I can't
I can't do anything good
I can't do anything right
I don't fit
they don't want me

MAROUN
That's only true if you believe it to be true

MARCUS
— You can speak English?

MAROUN
I learned when I came here
I had to remake myself
it is possible to remake yourself

MARCUS
How?

MAROUN
You can do what I did
you can give

*MAROUN pushes his cart toward MARCUS.
MARCUS takes it, looks at it.*

MARCUS
Am I what you imagined?
Am I what you wanted me to be?

*MAROUN takes MARCUS' face in his hands.
Really looks at MARCUS.*

MAROUN
You're more.

Shift.

Eight

The blizzard.
MARCUS trudges through it.
He carries supplies.
He shivers.
He approaches a door.
He knocks.
FATHER DAOUD enters.

FATHER DAOUD
Marcus

MARCUS
Hi Father

FATHER DAOUD
You shouldn't be out in the cold like this

MARCUS
I'm delivering food and supplies and things
do you need anything

FATHER DAOUD
Oh
okay
um
— I actually do yeah
if you have any canned veggies or
maybe chickpeas

MARCUS
Yeah
here you go

MARCUS hands FATHER DAOUD a couple cans.

FATHER DAOUD
Thank you
you don't happen to have any gloves
I never got myself any gloves
you'd think I would have
moving to Buffalo
hah

MARCUS
Of course

MARCUS gives FATHER DAOUD gloves.

FATHER DAOUD
Thank you so much
do you need any help with this?

MARCUS

No
I appreciate it though

FATHER DAOUD

What made you — ?

MARCUS

I figured it was the right thing to do
it felt right

FATHER DAOUD

This is the sort of thing they told me to expect about Buffalo
city of good neighbors

MARCUS

Yeah
hey
I wanted to thank you for everything
over the years
you know
I really appreciate it
but I don't think I'm going to help with the festival anymore
I don't think I can

FATHER DAOUD

Okay
that's okay

MARCUS

— You can be upset with me if you want

FATHER DAOUD

Upset?
I'm grateful for you
you helped me so much
you'll have to teach me some things

MARCUS

Okay
yeah
thank you, Father

FATHER DAOUD

See you around, Marcus
stay safe

FATHER DAOUD closes the door and is gone.

MARCUS trudges some more, then approaches another door.

He knocks.

KATIE answers.

KATIE

Oh hey Marcus

MARCUS

Hi

I'm delivering supplies
if you need anything

KATIE

Yeah

that's so nice thank you
I think we need a flashlight and

Calling inside.

dad do we need anything?

Marcus brought some supplies

COUSIN KENNY enters.

COUSIN KENNY

Marcus

look at this

what do you think you're doing

MARCUS

Just helping

COUSIN KENNY

You're a good kid

listen, I'm sorry I said all that stuff about the festival —

MARCUS

Don't worry about it

you were right

do you need anything?

KATIE

We could use a flashlight
and batteries

COUSIN KENNY

Do you have any beer?

KATIE

Dad

essentials

COUSIN KENNY

What

I could use some beer

KATIE

Bottled water

MARCUS

I have all of that

MARCUS gives them a flashlight, batteries, beer, and bottled water.

COUSIN KENNY

Want to come in?

we're playing backgammon

MARCUS

No thanks

I've got more stops to make

KATIE

Sucks about the wedding

what are they going to do?

MARCUS

I don't know

I haven't been over there yet

COUSIN KENNY

If they reschedule I hope we can go

you know

before the move

KATIE

I hope so too

MARCUS

Yeah

I'm sure they'll figure something out

COUSIN KENNY

Well, we'll see you soon

stay warm out there

don't turn into a freeze pop

MARCUS

Thanks Kenny

COUSIN KENNY retreats back into the house.

I'm proud of you

by the way

you'll do well in Canada

KATIE

Here's to not letting things just happen to us

MARCUS

Hah

yeah

we're learning

KATIE hugs MARCUS, then closes the door and is gone.

*MARCUS trudges some more, then approaches another door.
He knocks.
BILL(Y) answers.*

BILL(Y)
Um

MARCUS
Sorry to bother you
I've got food and supplies and
yeah
need anything?

BILL(Y)
You don't have to do this, man

MARCUS
I know
do you need anything

BILL(Y)
How's your sister

MARCUS
I think she's okay
going over to my dad's next
should see her there

BILL(Y)
Is she really
is it done

MARCUS
It's what she wants
I think it's what's best

BILL(Y)
Yeah

MARCUS
Are you okay?

BILL(Y)
Me?
yeah
I've got the dog
he's keeping me company
so
yeah I'm okay

MARCUS
That's good
so anything from the cart here?

BILL(Y)

I realized I don't have a first aid kit
I should probably

MARCUS

Yeah
here

MARCUS gives BILL(Y) a first aid kit.

BILL(Y)

Thanks

MARCUS

Of course

BILL(Y)

Hey
after this is all done
do you want to get a drink sometime
talk
I could use someone to talk to
it's okay if not
but

MARCUS

Sure
yeah
we could talk

BILL(Y)

Cool
well
good to see you
thanks again

MARCUS

Stay safe
see you later

BILL(Y) closes the door and is gone.

MARCUS continues trudging, then approaches another door.

He knocks.

GRANDMA THERESA answers.

GRANDMA THERESA

Well if it isn't my favorite grandson

MARCUS

Hi grandma
I hope you're okay
I have supplies
do you need anything?

GRANDMA THERESA

Do I see Syrian bread in there

MARCUS

Yes you do

MARCUS hands GRANDMA THERESA the bread.

GRANDMA THERESA

Here, come in, come in
I have something for you too

MARCUS

What

*GRANDMA THERESA shuffles off, then comes back with a recipe book.
It's a self-bound collection of papers, index cards, etc.
Most of the writing is in Arabic.*

GRANDMA THERESA

This is my mother's recipe book

MARCUS

Oh
grandma

GRANDMA THERESA

I was scared to share it with you
or anyone
I never learned how to speak Arabic
my parents never taught me
they thought, we were in America now
so we should speak only English
we were Americans
but as for the recipes
I've made some notes along the margins
I try to do it from memory
memories of watching my own mother as a child
but mostly I make it up as I go
I felt so long like I was masquerading being Lebanese
I wondered what they would think of me
if they would be disappointed to see how much I'd lost hold of
how much I'd failed to pass on
but then I look at you
and you're so much of them
my cousins pointed out you have my father's nose
and now it's all I can see

MARCUS

Really?

GRANDMA THERESA

Oh honey

yes
they did it all for us, didn't they?
they did it all so we could be whoever we were going to be

MARCUS

This is her handwriting

GRANDMA THERESA

Here
and there's mine
come in, come in
let's make some food

*MARCUS follows GRANDMA THERESA in.
Shift.*

Nine

MARCUS, in the snow, approaches one last door.

He knocks.

NAOMI answers.

MARCUS

Oh
hi Naomi
is my um
is my dad here

NAOMI

He's worried about you
he hasn't heard from you

MARCUS

I know
I —
how are you?
are you okay?

NAOMI

I guess I got what I wished for
I watched the snow fall
like watching the world get erased
it's beautiful and it's terrifying
what will be left when it all melts

MARCUS

I don't know

NAOMI

I'm just glad we're all safe

MARCUS

How do you do it
you make it look so easy
to be a part of this family
how do you do that

NAOMI

I don't do anything
I just — am
you don't have to do anything

MARCUS

That sounds hard

NAOMI

It is at first
but you learn
I spent a long time pretending I was someone I wasn't

MARCUS

Yeah?

NAOMI

Yeah
then I stopped
I'll go find your dad

NAOMI exits.

In a moment, ELIAS enters, holding a snow globe of Buffalo.

ELIAS

Marcus
I found it
look
look at this
I've been looking for
beautiful huh
I don't know how I ever lost it
but here it is
I was just showing your sister
ROSIE is there with them.
that's home that's where we live
that's where I live
I always felt like I could hold Buffalo in my hands
small and
right here
everyone I knew and loved within reach
that feeling is leaving
or it's growing and I can't hold it in my arms anymore
which can be a good thing I think
it is good for other people to fall in love with a thing I am in love with
it is good for it to be known
Marcus
Rosie
how little it all seems
how heavy
you have become such beautiful people
I was so young when you were born
we were all so young together for such a short time
I was so worried that I would ruin it
I was worried I wasn't ready
I wasn't ready
I wanted to make everyone laugh
your mother wanted to make everyone shimmer with the brilliance of sun reflected off waves
and we didn't know what we needed yet
but she needed not me
and I needed
how I wish this wasn't true
I needed not her
and I didn't want to cause so much pain
I didn't mean to cause
we weren't happy

I wanted us both to be happier than we were
 and I'll spend the rest of my life knowing I could have done better
 I should have done better
 but I was young
 I didn't know how
 and so I hope everyone can forgive me
 I hope people I haven't even met can forgive me
 I dream about dancing in a big circle with everyone I know and everyone I love and they all
 collapse in to embrace me and I melt into a puddle and I wash their feet
 I love you kids
 I love you more than I know how to say
 you were once no more than this size in my hands
 you're full of magic
 you deserve better than me

ELIAS shakes the snow globe.
ELIAS puts the snow globe down.
They watch the snow swirl around the city.
They watch the snow swirl around them.
MARCUS takes ELIAS' hand.
Then he takes ROSIE's hand.
They hold on tight.
They look at the snow globe.
They're overwhelmed.
They don't know what to say.
Maybe there isn't anything to say.

MARCUS

Anyone hungry?
 there's a recipe I want to try

Shift.

Coda

*MARCUS is cooking.
 Rolling grape leaves.
 ELIAS and ROSIE are there.
 They're helping.
 MARCUS doesn't really know what he's doing.
 But he's figuring it out.*

MARCUS

So this is the last step

ROSIE

Don't fuck it up

MARCUS

Oh I'm going to fuck it up

ELIAS

Don't worry don't worry
 it'll taste the same anyway

MARCUS

Don't you know dad
 I have to do it just right
 I have to do everything just right

ROSIE

Hah
 shut up
 did you put enough seasoning in

ROSIE tries the stuffing.

ELIAS

How is it

ROSIE

Could use more lemon juice

MARCUS *not serious*

I snuck some meat in here while you weren't looking

ROSIE

That's not funny

ELIAS

Tuck the sides in more

MARCUS

I'm tucking

ELIAS

Here let me

MARCUS

I got it I got it
this is how grandma showed me
I think

ELIAS

Where do you get this stubbornness from
you're just like your grandmother
you don't listen to me

ROSIE

Yeah Marcus
listen to dad

MARCUS

Shut up
fine
how do I

ELIAS

Here
you do it like this
I think you do it like this

*ELIAS demonstrates.
MARCUS and ROSIE watch.*

END OF PLAY.