SUNDAY

THE THIRTIETH

*3*AM

RAINING

SLIGHTLY

DRUNK

By Chandler Hubbard

Characters:

Adam, late thirties-forties
John, late thirties-forties
Stephen, early twenties
The Paragon
played by the actor playing Stephen

Literally,
Sunday, the thirtieth, 3AM
Raining (slightly)
(Slightly) drunk

/ indicates where the next line of dialogue interrupts the line being spoken.
⁅…⁆ indicates a thought self-interrupted, left hanging, wanting, needing.

Lights up on Adam and John's apartment. It's not big. It's not even "quaint." Hell, as the night progresses, the walls start encroaching on center stage, making the playable area smaller and smaller, trapping its inhabitants like - well, trapping them like people who are trapped in a tiny apartment together.

Two rooms: the bedroom stage right (with a partially off-stage bathroom) and the living-dining-kitchen-hall, with the front door stage left. It's all poorly lit, few windows, exposed wiring here and there. A window AC unit. Rain taps against the outer glass, steadily increasing over the night. Probably a few rats in the walls. Adam and John pay out the ass for it anyway and, as such, it is home.

In the living-dining-kitchen-hall, a pullout couch (currently pulled out) with a raggedy sheet on top. A backpack lying like a wrinkled thumb beside it. A cross on the wall. A tacky "Live Laugh Love" sign (ironically? unironically?) under the cross; a cheap Halloween skeleton hangs off one of the L's. Furniture that doesn't match but somehow, in the contrast, still matches. Maybe as an absurd art piece, but it works.

Adam and John have added as much as they can to make it seem less like a dump and more like a place they can feel at ease.

At rise, however, ADAM is not at ease. He sits in the bedroom on the queen (heh) bed. The bedroom door is shut. He has his laptop open, playing some generic shitty pop song that he publicly condemns but, seeing as he's alone in the apartment, he's playing it now.

Adam wears unflattering boxers and a button-up shirt and, as usual, a scowl. Or whatever expression is emotionally a scowl but physically the least amount of effort to maintain. His cell phone is stowed in his shirt pocket. Two empty beer bottles on the nightstand, a third balanced between his thighs. He's contemplating a cigarette carton.

He vacillates indiscriminately between manically anxious and lethargically removed, the result of a decades-long headache. You wouldn't be able to tell from his face, which barely moves an inch in its dissociative stasis; only his hands betray the craving, the numbness.

He gives in, opens the creaky window above the bed, flips open a lighter, lights a cigarette. Smoke exhales are sent through the open window. His nerves take a few moments to catch up. Inhale, exhale.

As he breathes, the lights in the apartment seem to dim and brighten, ever-so-slightly, until his breathing becomes more even-keeled.

The lights come on fully. He reaches for the beer.

His cell phone buzzes from his shirt pocket. Adam, one hand on the beer and one hand on the cigarette, shoves the beer under his armpit, checks the phone. Maneuvers the cigarette between his fingers so that he can hold the phone with one hand and type with the pointer finger from the opposite hand. He texts a quick response, puts the phone back in his pocket, returns the beer to his hand without spilling a drop. He's a multitasker.

A siren, far off. Adam stands on the bed to look out the window, transfixed. Hint of red-and-blue lights speeding in the distance. Getting ever closer.

In the unlit door to the bathroom, THE PARAGON appears. He's wearing nothing but a stylish brand of designer briefs (you know exactly which one). He's (got) a body to die for. Or kill for. Or both.

Adam doesn't pay attention to him, yet. He's noticed an ant on the glass. He quickly smushes it with a free finger, then wipes it on the windowsill.

Somewhere, maybe across the hall from this apartment, a trumpet player is beginning to practice. Certainly not a professional. Adam rubs his forehead with the free fingers of his cigarette-holding hand.

The Paragon lets his presence be known, ever-so-slightly. Adam turns to look at him. He puts the cigarette, still smoking, on an impromptu ashtray.

He places a cautious, trembling hand on The Paragon's chest. Moves his fingers down towards the stomach. Fingers curling through the happy trail. The carved Adonis belt.

He slides his hand onto The Paragon's crotch. The Paragon smiles a faraway smile. Adam reaches into The Paragon's underwear and holds his hand there. The Paragon's eyes are locked in his. But does he really see Adam?

Adam so wishes this made him feel some kind of way. Decades ago, in some department store while his mother tried on heels, seeing a picture of a man like this wearing nearly-nothing like this was the only thing that would make Adam feel any kind of way. But today, it's just his hand around someone's cock. Not even stroking. Just holding it there.

Adam removes his hand.

The Paragon is staring down at an unopened package, recently delivered, which sits on a seemingly out-of-place boudoir vanity. Adam rips it open. Still in the bag, a pair of sexy underwear - the same one The Paragon is wearing. Maybe a picture of The Paragon modeling it on the front - how's that for fantasy?

Adam glances at the receipt. Unforgiving. He glances down at his own boxers. Straight Boy Underwear. He glances in the direction of the front door. Expecting. He glances in the direction of The Paragon's waistband. Bulging.

Adam rips open the bag, removes his own underpants, tries on this new pair. Looks at himself in the vanity mirror.

The Paragon, as if learning by repetition, reaches his hand into Adam's underwear. Holds it there. Warmth. Touch. Not sexual, not yet. Maybe not ever.

Adam, staring at his reflection in the vanity mirror, looks like he is going to cry.

A rustling of keys. Adam quickly turns off the music, douses the cigarette, shoos the smoke out the window. When he turns back, The Paragon has vanished.

The front door opens and in slink the remnants of BEGONIA SATINE. Earlier in the evening, Begonia was a professional drag queen, but exertion, the hours since she beat her

face, the rain, the trip home with several costume bags (and a few too many drinks throughout) have left her a bit ragged. She's carrying her shoes, her lace front is askew, her make-up is holding on for dear life, but dammit, she's a Woman.

Adam listens intently as Begonia drops her keys in the key bowl, slides her rain jacket onto a chair, and slips off the wig. This is JOHN, Adam's partner. A bit inscrutable (purposefully so); a bit defensive (though the makeup and the wig are not a pretext or a mask, it is an extension, a celebration, a declaration); a bit in love with the idea of being in love. And those wrists, girl, they are unhinged!

John patters towards the bedroom door, tired. Adam begins collecting the beer bottles, chugging the one in his hand. John notices the noise and the light under the door and opens it without knocking, catching Adam in the act. Adam puts on a smile.

JOHN My One And Only Honey Sweetie Dumpling Darling Loverboy Boo Bear Light of My Life.
ADAM Mad or sad or horny?
JOHN I can be all at once, I'm a complex woman.
ADAM Not a woman.
JOHN For the next ten minutes I am.
ADAM I'm always worried you're gonna get hatecrimed coming home looking like that.
JOHN It should be a crime for me to look this good.
ADAM You're drunk.
JOHN So are you.
ADAM Prove it.

John glides over and kisses Adam on the mouth. Smacking his lips, he contemplates.

JOHN Tastes like - Corona. Corona Lime? Corona. And also cigarettes.
ADAM Shit.
JOHN Oh, sweet, innocent, simple Adam. It's cute how you think you're discreet.
ADAM Have you seen yourself?

JOHN I'm purposefully the opposite of discreet and this lack of discretion basically made my third of the rent this weekend, so [...]
ADAM Well, it's the last weekend of the month, so [...]
JOHN And I made it before the month ended, you're welcome.
ADAM Can't wait to hand the landlord cash that's dripping with fake boob sweat.
JOHN You sound jealous.
ADAM How much money did you spend on that costume?
JOHN You mean on this "gown"? I don't recall.
ADAM Was it more than the amount of money you made tonight?

The trumpet player across the hall strikes up again.

JOHN Are you kidding me with that?! GO TO BED IT'S 3AM.

From the ceiling, their upstairs neighbor banging on the floor.

JOHN WE AREN'T THE ONES BEING LOUD.
ADAM I mean [...] Technically, you are.

John's wrists have gone limper than usual. Adam taps them with his hands. John straightens them with a wry look.

JOHN Stephen back yet?
ADAM Does he ever stumble back before dawn?
JOHN What did we say about passive aggressive / comments like
ADAM Sorry. No, he is not. It's just me. I'm alone. Woe is me.

John heads towards the vanity. Adam picks up his discarded underwear from the floor. As Adam bends over, John catches him by the shirt and stares down at his new underwear.

JOHN Hello. This looks good / on you
ADAM It was just a, uh, stupid, like, impulse buy, it's too tight, I'm just gonna return it.

JOHN Amazon is not gonna let you return ball sweat underwear. And you shouldn't be contributing to Jeff Bezos' / inhumane amount of
ADAM It showed up in my ads on the side of the browser and it reminded me of, I, I don't know!, it felt like providence or whatever.
JOHN Those ads are tailored based on your web behavior. You been looking at instagram models and hate-masturbating?
ADAM Mastur-hating.
JOHN Either that or Siri heard you talking to someone about underwear.
ADAM I turned off that feature.
JOHN Even if you turn off that feature and put tape over your laptop camera and disable all the location services, Daddy Bezos is still listening. Or Daddy Zuckerberg. Or / Daddy
ADAM It's the whole - Things are too accessible. Click of a button and then it's here. You can ship anything in the world to the front door. I would've been too ashamed to buy this if I had to go out to, like, a department store or something.
JOHN Well, department stores don't exist anymore. As much as you might wish, it's not the 1950's, Adam.
ADAM Okay.

John has not noticed that Adam, as he is wont to do, has departed from a light conversation into murky depths, like a light switch dousing a room in darkness all at once.

JOHN Hey. How's the brain? Is she doing the thing again?
ADAM No. I don't know. No.
JOHN No meaning no or no meaning yes? Cuz when your brain does the thing, she knows you're gonna want to stop it doing the thing, and she does everything in in its power to make you not stop doing the thing.
ADAM It's doing the thing.
JOHN Is it a no-touch kind of brain thing?

John offers a hug. Adam blankly accepts it, for a moment.

ADAM Okay.

The sound of muffled arguing from an apartment below them. They try not to notice.

JOHN You got out of bed this morning, yeah?
ADAM You saw me.
JOHN Yeah, but then did you stay out of bed?
ADAM Define "stay."
JOHN When's the last time you left the apartment?

Adam stares at the laptop on his side table.

ADAM Not since my boss said I could work from home.
JOHN You said you were thinking of going for a walk.
ADAM Indeed, I have thought about going for a walk.
JOHN Okay. What can I do?
ADAM You can stop making fun of me.
JOHN I wasn't - You're right. Sorry. I love you and that means I gotta love your stupid broken brain, too. Because she's a strong stupid broken brain. You're my rock. Thee Rock Upon Which I Shall Buildeth My Churcheth.
ADAM I feel more like a pebble. Woe is me.
JOHN You're the only thing keeping me grounded. Otherwise I'd just float away into the ether or skip town and become a circus clown.
ADAM Well, Begonia might / as well
JOHN Don't start.

The phone buzzes from Adam's pocket again. He checks it. John begins untucking.

JOHN Let me guess. Jessie. She and Mark are going at it? They should be friends with our downstairs neighbors, they have lots in common.
ADAM At least 4D aren't the ones in the apartment catty corner to ours with the lady who is always screaming.
JOHN Do you mean the one where the little kid is laughing?
ADAM It sounds like screaming.
JOHN Yeah, everything sounds like screaming to your broken little brain.
ADAM It's not little. But yes it is broken.

JOHN She's a primordial brain. Caveman brain. Threat? Gasp! Threat! Threat? Gasp! Threat!
ADAM It kept my caveman ancestors alive and they passed it down to all my ancestors through time eternal and I'm still alive, so, it's doing something right.

The phone buzzes again.

JOHN Tell Jessie your brain is on fire and you have other things to deal with.
ADAM It's not on fire. It's just simultaneously drier and wetter than usual.
JOHN I like you in that underwear. Makes you look like you're actually gay.
ADAM I am actually gay.
JOHN Could've fooled me. Go brush your teeth.
ADAM Yes, Mother.
JOHN Lord. Stephen thinks you have mommy issues and that's why we're together. He says I have, like, a caretaker kink.
ADAM You do always offer to make me soup when I'm not feeling good.
JOHN Who doesn't like soup?!

Adam walks towards the bathroom. John does a quick fondling as he passes.

ADAM Hey now.
JOHN Too many gin and tonics.
ADAM Ugh. You really are my mother.
JOHN Your mom feels you up / when she
ADAM No, the, ew, John, I mean the gin and tonic thing.
JOHN The family resemblance is the only reason you like me.

Adam begins brushing his teeth.

ADAM That's not true.
JOHN Good old fashioned Christian Southern grand dame realness. Maybe next weekend Begonia will drape herself in a Confederate flag sash. Ironically, of course. Heritage not Hate, Heritage of Hate. She does look good in red, after all.

John and Adam switch places as John begins cleaning his face.

ADAM Not all good old fashioned Christian Southern grand dames are racist. Just most of them.

An ambulance siren not-so-distantly sings.

ADAM I hate this place.
JOHN You hate everything.
ADAM I don't like when you say that.
JOHN There's no place in the city where you won't hear a siren or something.
ADAM Yeah, but it always seems louder here.
JOHN You're just sensitive. "The walls / are thin"
ADAM The walls are - Okay.
JOHN Not as thin as me, hunty!

Adam shoots him a wry look.

JOHN My apologies, sir. I'll only use respectable vernacular in this house. No common potty mouth like a street vagrant.
ADAM I mean [...] Whatever. I'll stop being, uh [...]
JOHN Anal retentive?
ADAM Okay.
JOHN I know you can't help it.

Adam notices the heels on the floor.

ADAM Do you need me to give you a foot massage?
JOHN Yes, Daddy.
ADAM Don't call me that.
JOHN Okay, Father.

John climbs onto the bed and Adam proceeds to rub his mauled feet.

ADAM I promise I'll come see a show soon.
JOHN You don't have to. I know it's hard for you to get out sometimes. And I know you get weirded out.
ADAM I don't.
JOHN So the deer-in-the-headlights look, is, what, your happy face?
ADAM Not weirded out. It's just - do drag queens have to be so loud?
JOHN Yes.
ADAM Why can't there be, like, a theme night for, I don't know, mimes?
JOHN Mime Night.
ADAM Yeah?
JOHN (*a beat)* Actually, that would be fierce.
ADAM Not, like, kinky mime.
JOHN Oh, it's definitely gonna be kinky mime. Trapped in a box.
ADAM Or, like, a night for Deaf people.
JOHN Deaf people.
ADAM Yeah. Deaf people can enjoy drag.
JOHN Deaf people can enjoy drag, but you refuse to.
ADAM I don't not enjoy drag.
JOHN Name one drag queen.
ADAM Begonia Satine.
JOHN Name one drag queen who isn't me.
ADAM Lindsey Graham.
JOHN Maybe you are straight.
ADAM You wish.
JOHN No, you wish. People think you're homophobic, you know.
ADAM Who thinks I'm homophobic?
JOHN Erick.
ADAM Erick, your ex-boyfriend Erick?
JOHN Renee. Catherine Robertson. JESSIE. Quentin. / Emily Lewis.
ADAM They didn't come up to you and be, like, hey, your partner has a problem let's do an intervention, right?
JOHN No. Only because no one talks like that. Just, like, reacting to some things you've said.
ADAM Like what?

JOHN Being scared of drag queens.
ADAM They're like nine feet tall. Half of them are super butch anyway, so what business do they have pretending to be women?
JOHN What, women aren't allowed to be butch?
ADAM Don't make it a whole thing.
JOHN Women come in all shapes and sizes, so men dressing up as women can aspire to any ideal of femininity they want.
ADAM You're telling me none of those queens are being scary on purpose?
JOHN Well [...]
ADAM People just can't be normal.
JOHN Drag is sacred, Adam. It's been going on since humankind first put on clothes.
ADAM "Sacred" my ass.
JOHN It's nighttime church. Communion. Community plus union. As our lord and twink savior Jesus Christ once said, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, Begonia is there." Plus there's wine. And people handing over dollar bills.
ADAM Jesus wasn't a twink.
JOHN And you don't think priests dressing up in purple gowns and giant hats isn't drag?
ADAM Jesus is looking down on you and scowling.
JOHN "The Lord taketh and the Lord giveth." Jesus is canonically vers.
ADAM You're lucky I haven't absorbed all the brimstone talk from my childhood, because I would have to cast the demon out of you.
JOHN Cast me out, Daddy. I've been bad.
ADAM You ever think about giving this all up? Your feet are mangled.
JOHN Maybe if it stops being fun.
ADAM You really want to be the only queen up there who's getting social security benefits?
JOHN You saying I'm getting older?
ADAM We've moved beyond getting older. Now we're just getting old.
JOHN My Philosopher King.

They lapse back into the comfortable silence of people who've been together for long enough that silence isn't a burden. Adam stops massaging John's feet.

ADAM It's not just me. Everyone's a little homophobic, you know. That's society.
JOHN Let's be real, you have more than normal societal standards for self-hate.
ADAM I just have a lot of hate and some of it may or may not be directed at myself and everything about who I am and gay just happens to be part of that.
JOHN That's what therapy is for.
ADAM Yeah, and Deidre says I'm doing great at it. "Excelling," was the word she used. Excel-lent. She seemed really proud, too. I think I must be progressing faster than most of her patients.
JOHN I think you need to go to therapy to discuss the way you go to therapy.
ADAM Did all those people say I needed therapy?
JOHN Porter Williams actually / suggested
ADAM Porter Williams? He's, like, an active homophobe.
JOHN Yeah, and he thought you were kindred spirits.
ADAM I'm just. Conservative.
JOHN See? It's when you say things / like that
ADAM Not politically, just / emotionally and
JOHN Just tell people you're repressed and / they'll understand
ADAM I am not repressed!
JOHN It took you months to look me in the eye during sex.
ADAM Well, you like it doggy style.
JOHN That's not what I mean.
ADAM (*half-joking)* Sex is sinful and God is always watching.
JOHN See?
ADAM I'm joking!
JOHN People don't know that because you act so serious and "conservative".
ADAM Emotionally conservative.
JOHN Repressed.
ADAM I mean [...]

By this point John is looking less like Begonia and more like John. Adam steps forward and kisses him.

ADAM See? Would someone who's repressed do that?
JOHN What? Kiss me? On the lips? The scandal! / Lord on High!
ADAM Growing up, thinking about kissing was third base.
JOHN I've corrupted you. I need to release you back into the wild. You can stroll around Eden unknowing of the ways of sin.

Adam taps John's limp wrists again and he "corrects" himself.

ADAM I don't think Catherine Robertson actually thinks I'm homophobic. I made that he/hymn/his pun to her.
JOHN The what?
ADAM He/hymn/his.
JOHN What's the punchline?
ADAM "Hymn" like what we sing in church. He/"hymn"/his.
JOHN See, this is why she thinks you're homophobic.
ADAM What? That's funny! I thought you'd like it.
JOHN Listen, I love you, but pronouns ain't a joke.
ADAM Sorry [...] Just [...] I [...] Sorry. I'm trying.
JOHN I know.

Another phone buzz. Adam gets it this time.

JOHN Tell Jessie I say hi.
ADAM It's not Jessie. It's work.
JOHN At 3AM on a Sunday?
ADAM One of my bosses is in Tokyo. Hold on.

Adam leans over and grabs his laptop, fingers sprinting over the keyboard. His phone buzzes. He consults the text while also entrenched in his laptop.

JOHN I don't know how you can multitask like that.

ADAM Technically, humans can't multitask. Efficiency goes down as soon as we add something else, we're just too distracted by the something else to realize our efficiency is going down. Caveman brain.
JOHN What if we add another something else?

John tiptoes his fingers around the band of Adam's underwear. Adam tries not to smile as he continues working.

ADAM Dangerous.
JOHN If work is going to demand your attention 24/7, when do I get my share?
ADAM At some point the human body can't take it anymore. I don't think human beings were designed to be like this.
JOHN What, to get a handjob from someone who loves you?

Another text.

ADAM This. The constant - it's too much.

Adam consults his phone.

ADAM Oh. Okay, this time it is Jessie.
JOHN Any texts from Stephen?
ADAM No.
JOHN Weird. He was at the show at some point.
ADAM Really?
JOHN Yeah, shockingly, people show up.
ADAM He's probably drunk somewhere.
JOHN You're drunk somewhere.
ADAM Here.
JOHN Here is somewhere.
ADAM And I'm not drunk. Just tipsy. He probably lost his phone / again.
JOHN Don't start up on that.
ADAM He's a Goddamn adult and he should act like it.
JOHN The Lord's Name in Vain. He's watching, you know.

ADAM Okay.
JOHN He shall smite ye as ye stand! And to see ye, living in sin with two / men
ADAM John.
JOHN I'm surprised He's allowed ye to live this long.
ADAM I'm forcing ye to go to church with me in the morning.
JOHN Is it technically church if it's a streaming service?
ADAM Church isn't a place, it's a, well, yeah, it's a place, but it's not, too.
JOHN Can Begonia come?
ADAM If she behaves.
JOHN Begonia never behaves. That's kind of her thing.

John looks like he's about to make Adam's night, and then pushes Adam on the bed and starts tickling him.

ADAM No, stop, / stop it! Stop it, you're gonna make me vomit
JOHN What? I can't can't hear ye, did ye say ye / wanted more of this?
ADAM My laptop!

John carefully, delicately puts the laptop on the side table, then goes back to what he was doing. He winds up on top of Adam, kissing him gently. Adam sighs and stares at John. For a long time.

JOHN Dramatic. What's that for?
ADAM I just love you, I guess.
JOHN I love you too, I guess.
ADAM You smell like sweaty fake boobs.
JOHN It's probably the sweaty fake boobs.
ADAM I gotta pee.

Adam goes into the bathroom. John returns to the vanity. The sound of offstage urinating.

JOHN You remember the water bill?
ADAM (*offstage*) Duh.

JOHN Just checking.
ADAM (*offstage*) I always remember.
JOHN April.
ADAM (*offstage*) April was an oversight and mostly Stephen's fault and I refuse to take anything but partial blame for that. Are you getting glitter on the bed?
JOHN Please, what respectable drag queen wears glitter on purpose?

When Adam returns from the bathroom, he is measuring the walls with his hands. Have the outer walls moved closer to center stage since the evening started? Adam stares.

JOHN You okay?
ADAM Yeah, just, like. Zonked out for a second. You ever feel like the world is getting bigger and it's getting smaller at the same time?
JOHN You want some water?

John goes into the kitchen and runs a glass under the sink. Adam follows him.

ADAM Ugh, don't do that. You know the city's water is brimming / with germs
JOHN It's fine. The Brita broke, remember? Drink up.
ADAM I'll put in an order for a new one on Amazon.

John hands him the water. Mid-sip, Adam notices an ant on the kitchen counter. Smushes it. Then notices a trail of ants. He begins smushing them all.

ADAM There was this married guy who went to the doctor. / He
JOHN Some married guy?
ADAM It's a joke.
JOHN Oh. Continue.
ADAM So this married guy goes to the doctor. He says, "Doc, you gotta do a chest x-ray on me. Stat." And the doctor says, "What seems to be the problem?" And the guy goes, "My wife said she was unsatisfied sexually. She said she wanted to try some things in the bedroom. I went along with it because I thought she might let me do some of the stuff I've always wanted to do. She really enjoyed it, but I didn't get any pleasure out of it and I think she could tell." The doctor

stares at him, like, “Okay, well, why do we need to do a chest x-ray?” And the guy says, “My wife told me my heart wasn’t in the right place!”
JOHN Did you come up with that joke?
ADAM We need to break up with Stephen.

An extended, perturbed silence. John clocks the silence. Adam clocks John clocking the silence.

JOHN Is this because of the homophobe thing?
ADAM No, no, it’s not that.
JOHN Nobody is looking down on you or judging you because of Stephen. Well, maybe Renee but she’s a bitch / anyway
ADAM That’s not what this is about. I love you. And that’s why we need to break up with Stephen.
JOHN Is this because the Adam-and-Steve thing? Because he spells it with a “ph”.
ADAM This isn’t about the Adam-and-Steve thing.
JOHN Did Deidre suggest this?
ADAM Deidre was the one who helped me say yes when you asked me to open the relationship. It sucked but I said yes because I wanted you to be happy.
JOHN My relationships before you were all open.
ADAM I can’t do it anymore, John.
JOHN I know it’s hard to share a place, space, with someone, and to not have a comfort - I know you need space and grace. I’m sorry. I should have been more attentive to that.
ADAM It’s not a brain thing.
JOHN How long has the brain thing been going on?
ADAM I mean [...] Forever?
JOHN This particular brain thing.
ADAM A few weeks. I don’t know, it sort of creeps in on the periphery and lingers there quietly and then creeps in some more until my entire line of sight is all periphery.
JOHN Have you talked to Deidre?

ADAM I'm on the highest dosage, so. I would need to start over with some new medication and then it's, like, another two months before anything kicks in, if it ever kicks in.
JOHN You not sleeping great probably / isn't helping
ADAM I can't control whether or not I sleep great!
JOHN Okay. Have you done your grounding / exercises?
ADAM Of course I have.
JOHN We're in our apartment. Um. It's the last day of the month. There are people arguing / downstairs
ADAM It only works if I do it. And this is not a brain thing [...] Stephen and I are not [...] We are water and oil. Except the oil doesn't know that it doesn't mix well with water, so it keeps trying to mix with the water, and the water just wants to be water all by itself / instead of
JOHN Wouldn't Stephen be the water in this metaphor?
ADAM Why would Stephen get to be the water?
JOHN "You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar."
ADAM So he's honey and I'm vinegar?
JOHN Except honey and vinegar don't not-mix, so the metaphor / kind of falls
ADAM Well maybe the vinegar wants to be honey but never gets the chance to because he keeps getting called vinegar!
JOHN You liked him when he first moved in.
ADAM Because he was, like, a street urchin that you / brought
JOHN He was not a street urchin. He'd just lost his job at the restaurant and his apartment in the same week, so he needed / someone to look
ADAM Your Mother Hen instinct kicked in and I love that about you, so I [...]
JOHN Just say it. You loved him, too.
ADAM I did. I do.
JOHN Stephen only annoys you so much because you find him funny and you're scared if you crack a smile then you're not allowed to be mentally ill, that everyone will think you're faking it.
ADAM I mean [...] He's a nice kid, he's lovely, he's funny, yes, he's a little, he's a lot dumb, he's sweet. A sweet parasite.
JOHN That's not funny.
ADAM Fine, then he's a, what are they called, the little guys attached to sharks?

JOHN Remora?
ADAM He's a remora.
JOHN Sharks and remora have a symbiotic relationship.
ADAM Well, then, he is a parasite. He lives here, rent-free, and / doesn't
JOHN So it's about money.
ADAM No. I don't know. No.
JOHN It's not like we can't pay the rent. You've been keeping up with your student loans, / right?
ADAM It's not about the money!
JOHN Because he eats your food? That's technically about money.
ADAM (*caring muchly)* I don't care that he eats my food!
JOHN You need to use your words. Don't tell me what isn't bothering you. Tell me what is.
ADAM Can't you feel the walls moving in on us? Our life is getting smaller and smaller.
JOHN The walls?
ADAM I can't exhale in this apartment without being reminded that he's here. Every stupid carbon dioxide molecule crashes against all the Stephen in this apartment and bounces back at me with his name on it.
JOHN Okay, what if we helped him find his own apartment so the walls aren't coming in on you and we continue / with the
ADAM Monogamy.
JOHN Here we go again.
ADAM What's wrong with / monogamy?
JOHN You and your heteronormative / bullshit.
ADAM "Heteronormative" is just a buzzword created by social media corporations to make people more pissed off so they'll use social media more and continue to get more pissed off.
JOHN Okay, let's not have this fight. We're both a little drunk.
ADAM I'm just tipsy.
JOHN I'm going to take a shower and you can calm down / while I'm
ADAM I am so calm.
JOHN Is this about the time Stephen got drunk and wanted to fuck you?
ADAM I'm a top.

JOHN So is Stephen. He still let you fuck him.
ADAM Okay.
JOHN The best tops have bottomed and the best bottoms have topped.
ADAM Okay.
JOHN I've topped before, Adam. Pretty regularly, before you. In case / you didn't
ADAM I don't really want to talk about the guys you were with before me.
JOHN It's a compliment. Stephen really likes you.
ADAM Okay.
JOHN I think you have intimacy issues.
ADAM What?
JOHN I'm literally the only guy you've been with.
ADAM If anyone has intimacy issues, it's you. You're scared of monogamy.
JOHN My dislike for - not fear of - monogamy predates you, Adam. I don't believe in that sort of thing.
ADAM It's not like God or something to believe or not believe in. It's a thing that exists.
JOHN And it doesn't work for everyone.
ADAM Okay. It works for me.
JOHN And I know how obsessed you are with the "natural" order but the idea that humans are naturally monogamous is another societal construction.
ADAM "Societal construction" is another buzzword invented / by
JOHN King Solomon had, like, seven hundred fucking wives.
ADAM Yeah, and he also threatened to cut a baby in half.
JOHN We're not our parents. We don't have to hold ourselves to their standards.
ADAM Maybe I like my parents' standards. You make a promise to one person and you keep that promise through thick and thin.
JOHN And think of all the thin they went through. You knew who I was when you signed up for this.
ADAM Stephen will get it. He and I understand each other. We just will have to let him / down gently
JOHN "We"?
ADAM I mean [...] I can be the one to / tell him.
JOHN I did not agree to this.
ADAM Me breaking up with Stephen is us breaking up with Stephen.

JOHN Oh, because you're the man in the relationship?
ADAM I didn't say / that
JOHN And here we have the Patriarchy at work / again
ADAM Don't say "Patriarchy".

John reaches over to the carton of cigarettes and pulls one out.

JOHN Lighter.
ADAM You gave it up.
JOHN Fuck you, I want one.
ADAM Why?
JOHN Because you made me mad and now I'm mad so I'm mad and I want one so give me the lighter or you're gonna make me madder.

Adam hands it over, grabs a cigarette for himself. They both take a drag.

JOHN Stephen's always preferred you.
ADAM What?
JOHN You know it's true. I'm not jealous. Seriously. That's part of the deal with this. Joint custody of dick. And it's a good dick. Goldilocks dick.
ADAM "Goldilocks dick"?
JOHN Not too big, not too small. Just right.
ADAM I hate that I love you so much.
JOHN Stephen loves you, too. You're his type. Even if you're a huge asshole. Probably because you're a huge asshole.
ADAM You're my type. Not even that. My type is just you.
JOHN Your type is Stephen. That's why I chose him. That's why you love him.
ADAM I love Stephen because you do and this is what you want. But I love you more. I love us more.
JOHN He's a good kid.
ADAM That's the thing. He's a kid.
JOHN So? We were kids. We practically are still kids.
ADAM We pay taxes. We vote.
JOHN So do Republicans, that doesn't make them responsible adults.

ADAM We're not kids. I understand you enjoy the alternative lifestyle / but we
JOHN "Alternative lifestyle" my ass, Adam. You've sucked my dick too many times to talk like that.
ADAM Fine. "Non-heteronormative."
JOHN Something being the norm doesn't make it any better than anything else.
ADAM Or any worse. I don't see what's so wrong about being normal.
JOHN There's nothing wrong with it. That doesn't make it the only option.
ADAM "Lifestyle" just means "option."
JOHN Not the way you mean it.
ADAM Look in the dictionary. That's where the meaning is.
JOHN Maybe try saying the word without your lip curling.
ADAM Lip / curling?
JOHN It's that thing you do (*he demonstrates)*, that disdainful / thing
ADAM (*doing that)* I don't do that.
JOHN That look you give me every time you catch me with my wrists all limp.
ADAM I like our life. Emphasis on "our". Yours and mine.

As John goes to get another cigarette, a knock on the front door. Then another.

ADAM If Stephen lost his keys I'm going to / lose it.
STEPHEN (*offstage*) Hey, I lost my keys.
JOHN (*heading to the door)* Table it.
ADAM No table. There's literally not enough room in this apartment for a table.
JOHN You don't have more voting power than I do! It's a stalemate.
ADAM I can't wait any longer, John. My brain is doing the thing and if I have to toss and turn one more night with him on the other side of the door / then I
JOHN It's 3AM, Adam, we're not throwing him out in the pouring rain. We are good people, you are a good person, and that is not what good people do. You don't get to do that just because you're having a bad brain night.
ADAM You're right. I'm sorry.
JOHN We aren't having this discussion. Do not bring it up. Look at me. Look at your Mother when she's speaking. Be nice to Stephen. Promise me.
ADAM Okay. I promise.

JOHN We are taking a breath. We are taking a breath. Adam, take a breath. We are being supportive partners and then we will sleep on it and have a sober, rational discussion / in the morning
STEPHEN (*offstage*) Wake up, bitches!

John leaves the bedroom and opens the front door, Adam slowly following behind. The sound of trumpet-playing is even louder with the door open.

The door swings open and in comes STEPHEN, twenties, a former high school jock who never really left that glory behind. Sometime post-frat he grew a giant heart so now he's utterly fucking adorable. If he wasn't, he would probably be intolerable. Being drunk makes him somehow that much more Bambi-like. He's wearing a raincoat, sopping wet.

He's The Paragon of Adam's daydream.

Somehow, the entire universe shifts as he enters; Adam and John, even when talking to each other, are mostly just talking to Stephen. Who even knows who Stephen is talking to.

STEPHEN Lost my keys.

Stephen kisses John on the lips.

STEPHEN Mmm. You smell like fake boob sweat.

Stephen moves to Adam. He lingers for just a few moments longer on Adam's kiss.

STEPHEN Hey.
ADAM Hi.

Stephen takes off his jacket and shakes rainwater out of his hair.

JOHN You're like a dog.
STEPHEN Woof, wanna be my master?
JOHN Oh, you're into puppy play now?

STEPHEN I'm evolving, who knows what I'll be into next.
JOHN Better not be piss, I hate piss.
STEPHEN I'm soaking. Maybe's the flood. Let's hope someone's gathered all the animals, two by two. (*to Adam)* New underwear, huh?
JOHN He's returning them, apparently.
STEPHEN Nah, s'a good look. I might steal 'em.

Stephen bends down to the floor and starts doing pushups. Adam touches the wall next to the front door and looks back towards the bedroom - has this wall been closing in, too?

ADAM So, uh. It's pretty late. Have any trouble getting back?

Stephen stands up.

STEPHEN My phone's dead.
JOHN See? Just dead. Didn't lose it.
STEPHEN Uh [...]

He checks his pants pockets. Shit. Nothing. Adam looks at John.

STEPHEN S'probably why I lost it. Wasn't using it. Cuz it was dead. You tasted like Corona. And you both tasted like cigarettes. What's stressing you out this time? You know I got the magic hands.
ADAM We are okay, but / thank you

Stephen massages Adam's shoulders, hands almost dwarfing Adam's entire frame. He melts into Stephen's arms.

Stephen realizes he didn't lock the front door; it's swung open. When he slams it shut, the Live Laugh Love sign falls, breaking in two. The skeleton bounces on the floor.

STEPHEN Shit.
JOHN C'est la vie.
ADAM Not la vie! That's from my mom!

JOHN It's from China.
ADAM But that one is symbolic. When I was a kid, she was big into eschatology, like, end of the world and everybody's gotta get baptized before the flame shows up, so, like, laughing and loving is big a step up for her.
JOHN Evangelicals.
ADAM She was mortified when she saw you'd hung the skeleton on it.
JOHN Did you tell her it's an homage to that skeleton mosaic they found in Greece or Turkey or wherever where it's, the skeleton's like (*pulling a "Draw me like one of your French girls" pose)* and it says "Be cheerful. Enjoy your life."
ADAM I told her. She thought it was morbid.
STEPHEN So should I order another one or [...]?
ADAM It's fine. Thank you for offering.
STEPHEN Okay! I'm gonna make some noodles.
JOHN Please don't lose the abs, it's, like, your only redeeming quality.
STEPHEN I only eat carbs when I'm drunk because drunk carbs doesn't count.
JOHN Who wants wine?
STEPHEN Yaaaas queen.
JOHN Still not great. Yaaaaaaaaaaa/aaaaas kween.
STEPHEN Yaaaaaas queen.
JOHN You have to elongate the yaaaaaaa/aaaaas
STEPHEN Yaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaas /queen.
JOHN Kween. Yaaaaaaaaas kween.
STEPHEN Yaaaaaaas queen.
ADAM This is a nightmare.

Stephen skirts towards the oven, pouring water into a pot, gathering supplies. Adam heads into the bedroom and sits on the bed, lighting up a cigarette.

Though John and Stephen do not move, their presence seems to circle around Adam on the bed, their happiness loud and omnipresent, coming at Adam from every angle. Combined with the walls shrinking towards him, Adam's safe space is dwindling.

JOHN How'd you like the show?

STEPHEN Bro. So good. Except for that one. The fat elbows. Always gets the lead in the group numbers. What's her name? Dixon Cox?
JOHN She's the / worst.
STEPHEN The worst. What kinda name's that, anyway? Dixon Cox isn't a drag name, s'a porn name.
JOHN Okay, let me school you for a minute.
STEPHEN Yes, Daddy.
JOHN One. All Cops Are Bastards includes people thinking they are the Drag Police. You don't get to decide what people choose to call themselves.
STEPHEN Pop awf, sis.
JOHN Two, making sex workers the butt of your joke isn't comedy.
STEPHEN Read me for filth, mawmaw.
JOHN Dixon has an OnlyFans, so, technically, she is a sex worker and should be respected as such.
STEPHEN Sex work is sex werq.
JOHN Anyway. But, yes, she's still the / worst
STEPHEN She's the worst. Her earrings fell off! Like, simultaneously. Pop, pop.
JOHN I'm so glad I'm not the only one who saw that.
STEPHEN I was screaming, like, "Queen, please, you melting."
JOHN Were you?
STEPHEN No, but I was thinking it. I never know what to say at those things. S'like, who'm I shading? Am I being shaded? What the hell is shade anyways?
JOHN God, you're worse than Adam.
STEPHEN How very dare you. Is something going on? Adam / seems all

At the sound of his name, Adam suddenly returns to the apartment; John and Stephen are in the kitchen, as if they haven't moved at all.

JOHN You know how he gets. "Blergh."
STEPHEN He's very Blergh tonight.
ADAM (*very Blergh)* I'm not Blergh!
JOHN Stop listening in!
ADAM I'm not listening in! It's a small apartment. Sound carries.
STEPHEN What?

ADAM I said "Sound carries."
STEPHEN WHAT?
ADAM Har har.
STEPHEN Come out here and join us.
JOHN He's jacking off.
ADAM I am not!
JOHN (*to Stephen)* The underwear model package sent him into a tizzy.
STEPHEN I used to, like, whenever my mom took me clothes shopping, she'd turn her head and I'd, like, LINGER, like, ever-so-slightly, in the men's underwear / department
JOHN Like, oh, which one of these identical pairs of underwear should I get?, I need to really concentrate hard to decide.
STEPHEN Yeah, like, and I always chose the one with the hottest guy on it cuz, like, I thought that'd be me, right? Like, I'd suddenly get the confidence and the, I don't know, the whatever, just by wearing it. Like Hercules, or, no, he wasn't a full god, yeah? Like, actual gods. You ever lurk in the underwear department, Adam? (*to John)* I bet little baby Adam wouldn't even, like, I bet he'd cut out his eyes so he wouldn't look.
ADAM I looked.

As they speak, Adam picks up the underwear picture and stares down at it.

JOHN When you found Him, the store music would start to fade and there'd be, like, a spotlight, you staring down at these, these [...]
STEPHEN BULGES.
JOHN BULGES. Honestly, that's hotter, even hotter than dicks, no offense to dicks.
STEPHEN None taken.
JOHN Dicks do the job. The bulge, it's [...]
STEPHEN Romantic. Romanticized.
JOHN It could be the Perfect Dick.
STEPHEN It probably isn't. But / it could
JOHN But it could be. The want, the ache of it, knowing it's there but it's two steps away, it's just out of reach.

For a moment, Stephen and John have vanished. Adam is all alone with his perfect underwear model.

ADAM After my mom would throw them out, I would always dig the packagings out of the garbage. Keep him under my mattress. Keep him for myself - not for any of the other boys who might be staring at the store, but making him mine, mine alone, and I his, his alone. For a long time, he was all I had. Slicked down with baby oil, the sheen reflecting off each individual ab like some higher being who'd stepped out from the clouds of heaven. He would never hurt you. He's physically incapable of not smiling. He's physically incapable of changing. Sometimes, to this day, I wake up in a cold sweat and reach under my mattress, to make sure she hasn't found him. That he's still mine. Of course, he isn't there anymore. But I still am.

And suddenly Stephen and John are back. And now so is Adam's frown.

ADAM It's just a picture.
JOHN We are reminiscing, Adam. Don't be a spoilsport.
ADAM It was an impulse buy.
STEPHEN Can't hear you. Come in here.

Adam makes a move as to obey, then continues not obeying.

STEPHEN Is this cuz I killed his Live Laugh Love?
JOHN No he's just [...] He's a mean drunk.
STEPHEN What kinda drunk am I?
JOHN A cute drunk.
STEPHEN "Cute"? But 'm so manly.
JOHN Butch queen drunk realness.
STEPHEN FUCK YES BUTCH KWEEN.
JOHN Oh my God, you finally did it. Yaaaaaa/aaaaaas
STEPHEN Yaaaaaaaaaas.

Stephen does more pushups. John pours wine. The downstairs neighbors are arguing again.

STEPHEN Reward pushups with wine.
JOHN Fitness.
STEPHEN Fitness!
JOHN Ten more, maggot!
STEPHEN Sir, yes, sir!
JOHN I can't / hear you!

Adam moves through the door.

ADAM What did you just call him?
JOHN "Maggot"?
STEPHEN What did you think he called me?
ADAM The other word that rhymes with - I hate when people use that word.
JOHN Some people find it / empowering
ADAM What are you two even doing?
STEPHEN FITNESS.
JOHN FITNESS.
STEPHEN FITNESS AND WINE.
JOHN FITNESS AND / WINE

A noise from the ceiling - banging. Stephen is slowing. John sits on his back.

JOHN WEAK! NO ROOM FOR WEAKNESS!
STEPHEN SIR YES SIR.
ADAM Is this a new sex thing you're trying out?
JOHN No, but it should be.

Stephen collapses and smiles up at them, flexing.

STEPHEN Oh yeah. Look at these tiddies. Tig ole biddies. You could put your dick between these things and fuck 'em.

ADAM You are obsessed.
STEPHEN With what?
ADAM Yourself.
JOHN You're one to talk.
ADAM I hate myself.
JOHN Yeah, you're obsessed with hating yourself. Go get one of your Coronas.
STEPHEN They're not in the fridge?
JOHN He's hiding them in the closet.
STEPHEN A closet case. Literally. Case of beer. In the closet.
ADAM Yeah.
STEPHEN And also Adam, because, closeted.
ADAM I am not.
STEPHEN S'a joke. Go get beer. Make you funnier. Was that shade?
JOHN That wasn't shade.
STEPHEN Call me a tree because I am giving out shade, HUNTY.
ADAM You two are just [...] So [...] The funniest.
STEPHEN I know. Go! Miss you already.

He smacks Adam's rear end and sends him scuttling towards the bedroom.

STEPHEN Everyone's in their underwear. Should I be in my underwear?
ADAM I'm putting clothes on.
JOHN Much like his namesake, Adam is ashamed of his nakedness.
STEPHEN I can be the man of the house! I'll get one of Adam's suits and wear it and boss people around and scowl a lot.
JOHN I don't think Adam would like / that
ADAM Adam wouldn't like that at all!
STEPHEN He's has impeccable hearing.
JOHN Selectively. When it's about him.
ADAM I heard that.
JOHN I know, that's why I said it.

The sound of someone stamping their foot in the apartment above them.

STEPHEN 6D is mad. But they always mad. Maybe Adam should move up there. We doing underwear or clothes? Adam! Adam!
ADAM WHAT.

The thumping from 6D. Adam's phone buzzes from his shirt pocket. He ignores it.

STEPHEN (*faux-quiet)* Underwear or clothes?
ADAM I don't care.
STEPHEN Underwear it is then.
JOHN Give me a show.

John lays down a beat. Not a sick beat, but a beat. As Stephen begins stripping down, he flings his shirt, which hits Adam walking back in with beer.

STEPHEN Sorry. Hold on. Lemme finish.

With a dramatic flourish, Stephen finishes the tease. John claps and then grabs his wine.

JOHN Cheers?

He raises his wine glass. Stephen searches for his. Adam raises a beer.

STEPHEN What're we cheersing to?
ADAM How about to not having a hangover for church tomorrow?
STEPHEN Y'ever get turned on by ripped Jesus on the cross?
ADAM Only Catholics have the body of Christ on their crosses.
STEPHEN Catholics're so thirsty for those Jesus abs. After I hit puberty, every time I walked up to communion I had to, like, mash my boner out of the way. Every time. Like clockwork. Like cock/work
JOHN Cockwork! Great minds / think alike!
STEPHEN Say similar things.
JOHN (*slightly disappointed)* Yeah. Anyway. (*raising his glass)* To Adam. And ripped Jesus. And Church.

STEPHEN Church. Where they drink wine. (*tapping his raised wine glass)* Full circle. Oh my God. We need bread! Blood'a Christ, Cup'a Salvation, right? We can't cheers until we got the bread. We can go to the 7-11 on 14th. Also, why do they still call it 7-11 when it's open 24 hours? Too many hours to be open.
JOHN My arm is getting tired.
STEPHEN S'what she said!
ADAM Let's just clink glasses.
JOHN Here, here.

They clink, they drink. Adam walks over to Stephen's cooking setup.

ADAM Where'd you get these noodles?
STEPHEN From the shelf?
ADAM This box? It says "Adam" on it. On the side. (*showing)* "Adam." That's me.
STEPHEN Me Tarzan. You Adam. Oh, I need a loin cloth.

Stephen grabs his shirt to fashion a makeshift loincloth around himself.

ADAM This box is the one I ordered.
STEPHEN Yes. Hence "Adam". On the side.
ADAM And this box? The one with "Stephen" on it? The unopened one?
STEPHEN Yeah. Why'd we want two opened boxes?
JOHN We already have ants as is.
STEPHEN What's the big deal? What's mine's yours, what's yours's mine.
ADAM (*this hits home)* No. No. No. No. NO.

The banging from above again.

JOHN Adam. You're gonna upset 6D.
ADAM Sorry. I don't know what's wrong with me.
STEPHEN So d'you want me to make you some noodles?
ADAM NO.
STEPHEN M'very confused.
ADAM I'm a mean drunk, remember? Then again I'm also mean when I'm sober.

STEPHEN Nah, just a little grouchy.
JOHN Do you want water?
ADAM I thought we were drinking more.
JOHN Yeah, because I thought it'd settle you down / but apparently
ADAM I'm cool, I'm calm. I'm FUCKING collected.
STEPHEN Collection plate. Church. Full circle. I love a good full circle. Y'know. (*He demonstrates a circle.)* Full circle.
ADAM Jesus.
STEPHEN Jesus. Collection plate. Church. Wine. Another full circle. Circle Inception. (*He demonstrates again.)* Inception Circle.
ADAM You are [...]

Adam puts his head in his hands.

STEPHEN I can't tell if it's the drunk or the not sleeping or what, but are you actually mad or am I just misunderstanding things?
ADAM I'm not. I'm not mad. I'm just [...]
STEPHEN D'you try going for a walk? John said, what, walks give you, like, endorphins or serotonin / or something
ADAM If only it was that easy. If only anything was ever that easy.
STEPHEN S'dramatic.

One of the windows blows open. A gust of wind. Rain pours into the living room in a heavy stream.

JOHN Fuck!

Adam rushes over to close the window again. Stephen begins moving things out of the splash zone. John hurries into the bathroom.

ADAM Landlord's gonna be pissed if this gets / through the flooring.
JOHN (*off)* Landlords are leeches and parasites and he didn't fix our toilet that one time for, like, / six months, so he can deal.
ADAM Stephen, did you lock the window? / Latch, too?

STEPHEN Yeah. Of course.
ADAM Because you forget to lock it a lot.

Adam and Stephen work together to dry the floor.

STEPHEN When God closes a door, he opens a window.
ADAM Are you blaming God for you not locking the window?
STEPHEN It's from *Sound of* - I locked it!
ADAM Okay.
STEPHEN We make a good team. Well-oiled machine.
ADAM Okay.
STEPHEN Hey. S'okay. Everything's gonna be okay.
ADAM Would people stop saying that!

Stephen kisses Adam, an attempt at reassurance without knowing what will work.

STEPHEN In high school, whenever I thought about killing myself, I'd always think, "Won't They be sorry?" Uppercase T They. I dunno who. The world? But I know if I offed myself the world would just keep on going. But there're people, lower case they people, who would have a hard time if you died.
ADAM I don't want to die.
STEPHEN Wanting to die and wanting to be dead are very different animals.
ADAM I mean [….]

For a moment, Stephen has gone again.

THE PARAGON In order to be reborn anew, first the you that is has to die.
ADAM Where are those fucking towels?
STEPHEN (*back to normal)* Right here. John just brought them.

Adam looks at Stephen, who is now holding a bathroom towel. Has he always been holding that?

STEPHEN He just went back to the bathroom to get more, like, two seconds ago.

ADAM Sorry, yeah, I must have, uh. Yeah, I know.

John returns with more towels and they continue drying the floor. After a moment, Stephen stops, staring intently but gently at Adam.

STEPHEN Did you do your grounding exercise? You're here in the apartment. S'raining. You're talking to me.
JOHN It doesn't work if someone else does it for you, I already tried.
STEPHEN D'you take your happy pills?
ADAM I wish you wouldn't call them that.
STEPHEN The slightly-less-sad pills. There was this kid in high school we useda bully cuz he took mood stabilizer pills at lunch every day.
ADAM You were a bully in high school?
STEPHEN I guess. Technically. We weren't bullies, we just bullied, if that makes sense. Verb not noun.
ADAM I probably would've hated you.
STEPHEN Nah, we weren't super into it. We just did, like, casual bullying, as a hobby. We only picked on the obviously weird kids.
JOHN Ah, so you would've come for me.
STEPHEN I'd rather cum in you.
JOHN You're a child. But it's nice to know you were a self-hating homo. You and Adam have so much in common.
STEPHEN I've evolved. I'm evolving. Like a monkey!
JOHN Adam says our little monkey brains weren't made for all of this.
STEPHEN Oh, yeah, I definitely feel that. I probably woulda done real good back in prehistoric times. Everything's too fast nowadays.

John goes into the bathroom. As soon as the door closes behind him, Adam exhales, dissolving. An immediate ease between him and Stephen that Adam does not care for.

ADAM I took my slightly-less-sad pills, thank you very much. Don't bully me.
STEPHEN Just looking out for you.
ADAM (*making the effort)* I, uh, I appreciate it.

Stephen takes him in his arms and, nestled there, Adam somehow fits perfectly.

STEPHEN Didn't mean to keep you up. You can go to bed. We can be quiet!
ADAM 6D disagrees. As does 4D.
STEPHEN So much quiet. So much. Shhhh.
ADAM You think it's cute, when you intentionally act dumb.
STEPHEN I'm not acting dumb. I just am dumb.
ADAM You're not as dumb as you act.
STEPHEN Sometimes I try to be funny. Dumb makes people laugh.
ADAM I'm not laughing.
STEPHEN Well, you're the reason I try to make people laugh. Because you always make things so hashtag dramatic. Except when John's away.
ADAM Excuse me?
STEPHEN Yeah, you're always more yourself around me because y'don't have to try to pretend to be happy.
ADAM I don't do that.
STEPHEN Yeah, cuz it takes up so much energy for you to even pretend to be okay and John is Mother Hen and wants to take care of you and the last thing y'want's to feel weak. I see you. I get you.
ADAM Why are you saying this?
STEPHEN Y'keep people at arm's length because if they slip away then it's easier to say your hand slipped and not blame yourself for pushing them away.
ADAM I [...] You don't know me.
STEPHEN Would y'be all cuddly with me like this if John wasn't in the bathroom?
ADAM YOU were the one who sidled up to me!
STEPHEN I'm just drunk and being dumb. Why don't y'chill?
ADAM I am chill.
STEPHEN You wouldn't know chill if it fucked you in the ass.
ADAM Well, it wouldn't fuck me in the ass, so.
STEPHEN Right, right. Total top Adam.
ADAM I am.
STEPHEN God put the male g-spot in the ass for a reason. Trillions of years ago, God had His hands full creating the universe and the stars and Big Banging

His splooge all over the place but He still carved time out of His busy schedule to make it so sticking something up a guy's bussy will make him yeep.
ADAM Ugh, I hate that word.
STEPHEN Bussy?

Stephen licks his finger and starts wiggling it towards Adam's behind. Adam yeeps and jumps away, just as John returns from the bathroom.

ADAM Can we not?
STEPHEN Anal retentive. S'when you're a baby and you don't wanna let poop out so you hold it in. I learned about it in a psych class. It's, like, a control thing.
JOHN Explains a lot.
ADAM No, it doesn't. It's Psych 101 nonsense. And it's very normal to not want someone to give you a wet willy in your ass.
JOHN Don't knock it til you've tried it.
STEPHEN Wait. You've never [...]
JOHN He's never even fingered himself.
ADAM JOHN! That's private.
JOHN It's not a big deal. Lots of people haven't fingered themselves.
STEPHEN Well. Not lots of people.
JOHN Some people. A few people.
STEPHEN Person. Just Adam. I'll help you, bro. I'm very gentle.
ADAM I don't feel comfortable talking about it.
STEPHEN S'just a little bit of pressure. Slow and easy, that's how you get used to it. Opening bit by bit. Like a flower bud blooming or some metaphorical shit.
ADAM I don't like that metaphor.
STEPHEN Oh, c'mon. I bottomed for you.
ADAM I mean [...] You offered.
STEPHEN S'a whole different kind of power. Knowing your body, every inch of your body, is granting pleasure like an unspoken wish. Getting hard just thinking about it.
JOHN Fuck, me too.

Stephen slowly walks towards Adam, taking his time. Adam sees only The Paragon approaching.

THE PARAGON When you were inside me, I knew the exact moment you were fully in, not because your cock felt different, but because I could see in your eyes you could get lost inside me forever. Some part of you - the best and worst parts - had been gifted to me. The transfer of power, horrifying, the wordless innocence of being known and understood, the weakness that has a name, that I was yours and you were mine alone.
ADAM Okay.
STEPHEN (*back to normal)* Also just feels like fucking.
JOHN It also just feels like fucking.
STEPHEN Try being vers sometime. S'more fun.
ADAM I thought you said you were just a top?
STEPHEN Some days I'm different. Don't you feel different on different days?
ADAM No. I'm the same. I'm constant.
STEPHEN Mhm. Well. Don't worry. I'll wear you down. Down to Pleasure Town. (*singsong)* I'm gonna be inside you, I'm gonna be / inside
ADAM In your dreams.
STEPHEN Kinda, actually. Being someone's first? HELLO. (*to John)* More wine.
JOHN You sure? You're not out yet.

Stephen downs his glass and offers it to John.

JOHN (*pouring)* Last call. Then bed.
STEPHEN And maybe one of Adam's beers.
ADAM Don't touch my shit.
STEPHEN I don't see what's the big deal is.
ADAM It's the principle of the thing.
STEPHEN I'll just buy my own noodles next time.
ADAM Maybe that's a good idea. That'll get you off the couch.
JOHN Adam. Seriously.
STEPHEN Oh, please. When's the last time you even left the apartment?
ADAM I step into the hallway when the drivers deliver the groceries.

JOHN Doesn't count.
ADAM I, just because I'm here doesn't mean I - I have a mobile work configuration.
STEPHEN I do things, too. I'm proactive.
ADAM Drinking and misplacing your phone isn't "proactive".
STEPHEN I've been looking for a job.
ADAM Okay.

Stephen marches over to the backpack beside the couch. He rifles through it and produces several pieces of paper: his resumés.

STEPHEN See?
ADAM Most places only accept emails. Online applications.
STEPHEN My mom said I should send them out, like, old school. Lotsa the old guys in hiring positions like that sort of classical shit. "Hit the pavements."
ADAM I'm glad your mom is helping you.
STEPHEN I had an interview with the gym on Stockton a few days ago.
JOHN That's great!
STEPHEN I didn't want to say anything in case, like, not to jinx it.
ADAM Don't you need, like, professional training? Certification?
STEPHEN Sure, yeah, but, like, I got practical experience, y'get in on the ground floor and then they pay for your further, like, upper training.
ADAM Okay.
STEPHEN I got it.
JOHN Yeah, you're gonna kill the interview.
STEPHEN No, I mean, like, I got the job.
JOHN You got the - Oh my God!
STEPHEN Yeah.
JOHN Oh my God!

John wraps Stephen in a hug and dances around a little.

STEPHEN I know, right?
JOHN Why didn't you tell us?

STEPHEN I just found out. Like, a couple hours ago.
JOHN That's amazing, Stephen. Adam, isn't that amazing?
STEPHEN Kyle and Derek took me out on the town to celebrate. May've been too much celebration.

John pours more wine.

JOHN The celebration is just getting started. You should've said something.
STEPHEN You w'getting ready for the show and Adam hadn't gotten out of bed all week, I didn't wanna, like, make it about me.
JOHN That's - Shit, Stephen. I'm proud of you.
ADAM Congrats, dude.
JOHN Yeah. "Congrats, dude", fuck yeah.
STEPHEN I dunno why Adam is being all. Attacky. Like. "Blergh."
ADAM I'm not "Blergh."
STEPHEN Like, he keeps doing that lip curl thing he / always does.
ADAM Seriously?
JOHN It's a thing you do.
STEPHEN I'm gonna pee.

He goes to the bathroom.

A siren goes by, close this time. Adam stares out the window at red and blue lights passing. John finds himself staring out the window, too.

ADAM City never sleeps.
JOHN Cuz the sirens?
ADAM The lights. Somebody's always awake.
JOHN Leaving a light on doesn't mean awake. It just a way of saying that something's there in the darkness. Person-to-person, a reminder. You know, as much as this place sucks, I can't get over this view.
ADAM It's just a bunch of buildings.

JOHN Yeah, but, like, that haphazard pattern of lights spilling everywhere, you know? Perfectly picked out for us. And it almost feels like there's a new light being lit every night. The whole world is getting wider.
ADAM You ever feel like the city is slowly digesting this apartment?
JOHN What does that even mean.

Another ping on Adam's phone.

JOHN Who's that this time?
ADAM It's an automated email from Amazon. Asking if I was satisfied with my recent purchase and delivery.
JOHN Tell them you liked the product until you got the email asking if you liked the product, and then you were reminded that you're trapped in a labyrinth of digital overreach and a capitalistic / nightmare state
ADAM Okay.

Stephen stumbles out of the bathroom. John refills his and Stephen's wine again.

STEPHEN Y'guys fight too much.
ADAM No / we don't.
JOHN We really do.
STEPHEN How'd y'even meet without throttling each other?
JOHN So, long, long ago in ancient days, there was this support group for queers who had / grown up
ADAM You shouldn't say "queers," some people are offended / by it.
JOHN Not me, QUEERS who had grown up religious, and everyone was Very Serious about it but I was a lapsed-lapsed Christian so I only went / to the meetings from time to
ADAM You were a Protestant, that's already a lapsed Christian.
JOHN You don't have a monopoly on being a little queer kid who got kicked in the ass by the gospel, Adam, The Original Man. So anyway, this one night, everyone was doing their typical blah blah Jesus Made Me Hate Myself spiel and some very nervous virgin showed up / out of nowhere
ADAM You didn't know I was a virgin!

JOHN Absolutely REEKING of virginity, just moved to the city for grad school, a refugee from some dismal Bible college, still believing that there was a giant entity looking down at us from above with lightning in His hands, ready to smite us for the first faint whiff of sin. Baby Adam didn't know a single soul in the city, wandered into this meeting looking like a little lost puppy.
STEPHEN Aw, Baby Adam?
JOHN Very Aw Baby Adam. And he looked so sad and lonely and my mothering instincts kicked / in and
ADAM Smothering instincts.
JOHN I am more than just Mother Hen, Adam.
ADAM It was a joke.
JOHN Anyways. (*to Stephen)* I just knew I had to take him under my wing. Take care of him. Show him the city. Show him himself.
STEPHEN "Show'm himself"?
JOHN His dad had him taken out of sex ed in middle school, he'd never looked at porn, never masturbated until / I showed
ADAM Can we not?
STEPHEN Baby Gay Adam. I bet he just latched onto you and never let go.
ADAM John was the only one who was kind to me. Kindness when I needed it. And he's been taking care of me ever since.
JOHN I do love a fixer-upper.
ADAM I've got good bones, though, right?
JOHN You've got one, at least.
STEPHEN I wish I had a cute story. Before you two, every other guy I dated's been from Grindr.
JOHN Thank God that didn't exist when we were young. Adam would've had a panic attack navigating singledom on that godforsaken app.
STEPHEN Did I tell you guys about that dude at the bar tonight? He was kinda like Adam, I guess. He was smart and quiet and dorky but still cute.
ADAM You flatter me.
STEPHEN He was hitting on me hard and he was, all, "Stephen. That's a nice name. Great portmanteau." And I was, like, "Port man what?" And, apparently, it's like, when you smash the names together and he was saying how he doesn't believe in astrology or destiny but he does think portmanteaus can predict if

you're a good match. And he said his name was Wheeler, and together, we'd be Steeler. Like, Steelers, the team, the football team?
ADAM Sure.
JOHN I'm not familiar.
STEPHEN So it got me thinking, because, like, he said all of his relationships, like, the better the portmanteau, the better the relationship. And some don't make words but it's still like a cool sound. Like, me and Adam. Sadam.
ADAM How is that cool?
STEPHEN Cuz, like, sometimes you're sad and I try to cheer y'up because I like making you happy.
ADAM Okay.
STEPHEN Or, like Sodom and Gomorrah. Because, you know, heathens. And, I don't know, like, it makes me happy that we're all, like, happy together. Heh. Gay. When did I get so gay? John, you're rubbing off on me.

Stephen goes to the check on the noodles.

STEPHEN Heh. Whoops. Forgot to turn the stove on.

He turns it on.

ADAM What about me and John?
STEPHEN What?
ADAM What are we? Our portmanteau.
STEPHEN Jadam?
ADAM That doesn't make any sense.
STEPHEN It's not a perfect system. This's just what that guy said.
JOHN What kind of name is Wheeler anyway? He was probably making it up to try to get in your pants.
STEPHEN No, legit, it was. Already looked him up on Facebook. Lots of QiC.
ADAM What in the hell is that.
STEPHEN Queers in Common. Keep up. Plus he gave me a business card with his name on it. Fucking nerd. Who's has business cards?
JOHN Adam has business cards.

STEPHEN Yeah, you're a nerd, my point exactly.

Stephen grabs his raincoat from where he dropped it and rummages in the pockets.

STEPHEN Oh, shit, I didn't lose my phone! S'right here!
JOHN Well, well, well, he didn't lose his phone.

Stephen hands Adam the business card.

STEPHEN I should get a business card, too!
JOHN You're a business, now.
STEPHEN But, like, s'just a picture of my abs!
ADAM An architect. He seem interested in you?
STEPHEN If I wasn't with you guys, I woulda jumped his bones.

Adam glances at John. John very does not glance at Adam.

STEPHEN That's my type, anyway. Nerdy sexy. (*to Adam)* Like you.
ADAM I'm not nerdy.
STEPHEN It's just a, uh, I don't know. Type.
ADAM I'm not nerdy.
STEPHEN But you're nerdy sexy.
ADAM Whatever.
STEPHEN That's wasn't meant as a, it's a compliment. Like. Strong, silent type. But, like, will talk and smile if you get them to open up. A tough nut to crack. But I'll crack you open.

He kisses Adam. He lingers there. Adam lingers there, too. John watches.

JOHN Luckily, you're Adam's type, too.
STEPHEN Oh yeah?
JOHN Yeah, he's not into femme boys. He likes big burly manly men.
STEPHEN (*flexing)* I got your manly man right here.
JOHN Exactly. When I met you, I knew you'd be right up Adam's alley.

STEPHEN I'd like to be up his alley. Hey-oh!
JOHN Adam's totally masc4masc. He's so masc4masc he's masc5masc. Even though he's a little femme himself. The parts of himself he hates. And the parts he hates in other guys. He basically said so on our first date.
ADAM All I said was that I wasn't expecting to enjoy myself the way I did.
JOHN Oh, whoops, would you look at these wrists? (*straightening them)* Almost forgot myself. You were looking for, like, what was it, the Ultimate man? The Ideal. Paragon. Man with an uppercase M. He wanted like, carved by a sculptor Man. Italian Renaissance ceiling fresco Angel of The Lord Man.
STEPHEN Aren't actual Biblical angels supposed to be, like, covered in a million eyeballs and always screaming and on fire and, like, y'get burnt into ash if y'look at them?
JOHN Yeah I think that's what Adam wanted all along. Someone who will burn him up completely.
STEPHEN Cuz the first thing angels always says is, "Do Not Be Afraid." Cuz, like, there must be something to be afraid of. Or, like, the wrestling kind. Didn't one of the angels wrestle some guy?
JOHN The world's first smut fiction.
STEPHEN Sweaty dude-on-dude.
JOHN Adam's type isn't a dude, some brute. But a Man. Sensitive Man. Sensitive Man with a rockin' bod. Strong enough to lift him over his head but still whisper sweet nothings against the back of his neck. Hold him with such gentleness as to make him weep. Strong enough to crack him open and allow every caged, clawing fear to run loose without shame.
STEPHEN So. He wants a masc power bottom.
JOHN Précisément.
STEPHEN A man who complements and supplements his own masculinity but won't threaten it because, in the end, top always tops bottom. And masculinity's a fleeting whisper of personality, always under attack, always one Jenga block away from toppling.
ADAM What, did you read one tweet about toxic masculinity and suddenly you're a queer theorist?
STEPHEN It wasn't a tweet. It's was on a podcast.

Adam steps away, holding his tongue.

JOHN You need thicker skin.
STEPHEN We just need to be sensitive.

Stephen sneaks up behind Adam, touching him delicately. First with his hands, then with his crotch, which of course elicits a "Yeep" from Adam.

ADAM Jesus, Stephen, stop.
STEPHEN I needta piss again. Watch my noodles!

He stumbles for the bathroom. Adam closes the bedroom door behind him.

ADAM You're being a little pissant.
JOHN What the hell is a pissant?
ADAM I don't know, it's a portmanteau between piss and ant. I'm telling him. Tonight.
JOHN What did I tell you? We are being nice to / him and
ADAM I was nice! But now you're, like, purposefully trying to piss me off.
JOHN Yeah, Stephen doesn't seem so bad anymore, does he? Maybe you should break up with me and stay with Stephen.
ADAM Excuse me?
JOHN He has a point. I'm probably too feminine for your fragile sense of machismo.
ADAM Are you - is that a joke?
JOHN Who knows, this whole night has been a joke. He's so nice to you. He's like a little puppy, he wants to make you proud and happy. Literally all he does is try to impress you.

Adam's phone buzzes. He checks it angrily, then begins texting.

JOHN Is that Jessie or work?
ADAM It doesn't matter.
JOHN Well, it does matter. You know you can turn that thing off.

ADAM Except I can't. People rely on me.
JOHN My phone's off.
ADAM Exactly.

John reaches over to turn Adam's phone off.

ADAM I'm telling him.
JOHN No, you are not.
ADAM He will understand.
JOHN He will be crushed.
ADAM You're a good buffer.
JOHN I can't play mediator when I fundamentally disagree / with what you
STEPHEN (*offstage)* What're y'all schoolgirls whispering about?
JOHN (*loudly)* Which boy in class is the cutest.
STEPHEN (*coming out)* Is it me? Is it me?
ADAM Did you wash your hands?
STEPHEN (*re-exiting)* S'about to, Jesus. Whoops, sorry, Lord's name in vain.
ADAM That's actually not about, the Lord's name in vain is in reference to when people are, like, "God means this and not this." Not people saying "Oh my God."
STEPHEN (*re-entering)* Oh. Didn't know that. Learn something new everyday.
ADAM There's something you need to / know
JOHN Shut up, Adam.
ADAM No, I / won't
STEPHEN Okay. Just, whatever it is, y'can tell me. D'we have herpes?
ADAM What the fuck.
STEPHEN I dunno you're acting all serious, / like
ADAM THERE IS NO WE. We have to [...] We [...] We have [...]
STEPHEN S'going on?
ADAM John. I need you. I need you to be on my side. I need someone to have my back. I need someone [...]
STEPHEN Seriously, what / are you
ADAM We can't do this anymore. We have to end this.

Silence. Adam reaches for John's hand, but John moves just out of his reach.

JOHN Not “we”.
ADAM I have decided. To end this.
STEPHEN So, where is, what’re y’planning on doing, Adam?
ADAM What do you mean?
STEPHEN Like, are y'moving out?
ADAM No.
STEPHEN I’m confused then.
ADAM “End this” meaning the three-way relationship thing.
STEPHEN No, I get that, but / the
ADAM As in, go back to just being Adam and John. Just Adam and John.
STEPHEN Oh. Oh.

Silence. A faraway siren, getting closer.

JOHN You don’t have to say anything.
STEPHEN Sometimes you just want to remember the moment before something happened, you know? So you can remember things like they were before things went, uh, in a different direction.

Stephen begins doing push ups.

They watch in silence until Stephen finally tapers out. When he sits up, he’s crying. John goes to him, sitting on the floor, too.

STEPHEN John Adams.
JOHN What?
STEPHEN John and Adam. Your portmanteau would be John Adams. Like the president. He wore wigs, too.

Stephen cries more. John holds him.

JOHN Hey, it’s okay.

STEPHEN Sorry. I just really like y'guys. I mean, more than, I love y'guys. Uppercase L Love. Like, I never felt at home anywhere until I got here.
ADAM I love you, Stephen.
JOHN You aren't helping.
ADAM I love you and that's why I think you should move on. We're holding you back. It's time to, uh, spread your wings.
STEPHEN That doesn't make any sense.
ADAM Aren't you tired of living on our pull-out?
STEPHEN It's a surprisingly comfortable couch.
ADAM Or, like, not having your own privacy and having to be casually naked out in the open?
STEPHEN I like being casually naked.
JOHN Adam only approves of being business professionally naked.
ADAM You will grow from this. Guys like Wheeler, he sounds like a perfect guy for you, and you could be with him right now if it weren't for us.
JOHN Stop trying to rationalize his emotions, Adam.
ADAM I mean [...]
JOHN "You mean"? Just say what you fucking mean for once, Adam, instead of mumbling around what you actually wanna say and not really saying anything at all. Fucking say something true.
ADAM Okay. I deserve that.
STEPHEN I'm so nice to you. I dunno why y'don't like me.
JOHN He doesn't like anyone.
ADAM Would you not say shit like that?
JOHN What?
ADAM I like people. I like things. Just because I'm not announcing to the world that I like or enjoy things doesn't mean I'm just this ball of hatred.

Adam's phone buzzes and he nearly snaps it in half.

ADAM Didn't you turn that off?
JOHN You turned it back on, like, twenty minutes ago?
ADAM Twenty [...] I think I'm losing it. I'm [...]

John looks at him and goes to get him another glass of water.

STEPHEN D'you not want to be with me or d'you not want to be with anyone?
JOHN Adam isn't used to being poly. It's a learning experience. It's not you.
STEPHEN I didn't think I was into the whole thing, either. This's the first time I done this sort of thing. I just liked y'guys so much. I feel like my balls got punched in the heart.
ADAM That doesn't / make any sense.
JOHN That makes perfect sense.
STEPHEN I'd do the whole rally and fight it thing but I'm getting the sense that that'd just make things worse. So, I will, uh. I'll eat my noodles and then pack up my shit and I will / head
JOHN You're not going, Stephen, / this is not a
ADAM Yes, uh, I do think it would appropriate if, once you find a, some sure footing - Especially since you got the job. But I can help you find a place! My friend Jessie is a leasing agent, she knows all the best deals in the city.

Stephen notices that rain is leaking in from the window again. He grabs one of the towels on the floor and begins soaking it up.

JOHN Why don't we sleep on it and we can talk tomorrow?
STEPHEN I don't wanna sleep on it because then I'd still be here while you two're on the other side of the wall being together. It's not fair to ask me to stay. D'rather go and not have to think about it. Anyone seen my shirt? Or my pants?
JOHN You threw them over, uh, somewhere.
STEPHEN I just want to go.
JOHN Just stay, okay? Please. Just stay.
STEPHEN (*to Adam)* Did I say something?
ADAM It's not, you didn't do anything wrong.
STEPHEN What can I do to make up for it?
ADAM I don't know. Nothing. I don't know.
JOHN We're all drunk. We should / just let

A knock from upstairs.

ADAM WE'RE NOT EVEN MAKING ANY NOISE WHAT THE FUCK IS YOUR PROBLEM.

Nothing from upstairs. Then one more knock.

JOHN Why are you doing this?
ADAM I'm not doing anything.
JOHN It was a good night. Why did you have to ruin it?
ADAM I didn't.
JOHN And you just assume I'd go along with this. Why do I always have to go along with / everything you want
ADAM Because I asked. I asked nicely.
JOHN That doesn't mean I can't have thoughts and opinions outside of you. Here I am going into panic mode and trying to find something to hold onto while everything's falling apart, trying to rectify shit when you were the one who fucked things up, even though you could have just not fucked things up!
STEPHEN I think Adam's a good person but I don't think he wants anyone to know. Cuz then he has to be a good person all the time and that's too much pressure to put on him. Easier just to be an asshole.
ADAM (*to John)* Do you even remember that it's our anniversary? Not our Stephen-Adam-John anniversary. Our John-Adam anniversary.
JOHN I remember. I thought we decided that we weren't going by that anymore.
ADAM Well, I want to go back to that.
JOHN Why don't we have anniversaries of the first time we met and the first time we held hands and the first time we had strawberry ice cream together? It's just a thing that everyone told us to make important, even if it doesn't change anything. It doesn't change anything. Today is just a day, just a normal Sunday.
ADAM I want to be normal. This isn't normal.
JOHN Fuck you, Adam. Of the three of us here, you're the least normal.
ADAM Are you joking?
JOHN You're so [...] Your obsession with normality is borderline psychotic. You're barely even Adam, you're just this Adam-shaped thing trying to be

something else. You're literally a square. And there's nothing normal about a square anymore.
ADAM I'm old fashioned.
JOHN If you wanted things Normal so bad, why did you fall in love with a drag queen? That's on you, boo boo.
ADAM I fell in love with a man who happens to do drag.
JOHN I'm a drag queen.
ADAM You're a normal person / who does
STEPHEN Homophobe.
ADAM What?
JOHN He's not wrong.
ADAM Okay, that was a silly throwaway joke but it's not funny / anymore
JOHN It's not a joke.
ADAM Stephen openly admitted he used to bully kids in high school.
STEPHEN Yeah, I was a stupid jock who was scared shitless and didn't know what the fuck I was doing and angry all the time and I took it out on people who didn't deserve it and, for your information, I've apologized to all of those kids. And it was really awkward. One of them spit on me. Though one of them I had sex with.
ADAM You are so stupid.
STEPHEN And you're really smart. And that doesn't make you a good person.
ADAM Okay.
STEPHEN You have some soul-searching to do.
ADAM What the hell would you know about soul-searching?
STEPHEN S'not nice, Adam. Sometimes you can be really not nice.
JOHN (*to Adam)* You know what? Maybe you should be the one to go.
ADAM What?
JOHN I lived here first. You moved in with me. And I like that Stephen's here. I like Stephen. I love Stephen. And I don't want to give him up. So, if you wanna break up with Stephen, then you gotta break up with me.
ADAM Funny.
JOHN Not a joke.
ADAM Okay.
JOHN Literally. Dead serious.

ADAM We've spent the last eight years / together
JOHN Longer relationships have been ruined by less.
ADAM "Ruined"?

Silence. Sort of.

STEPHEN I can hear birds. They're doing the dawn song.
ADAM What the fuck are you talking about?
STEPHEN They wake up before the sun does and they start singing. S'how you can tell s'getting near sunrise.
ADAM All I hear are sirens.
STEPHEN And the birds're singing, even in the pouring rain.
ADAM The sun isn't coming up for hours.
STEPHEN What? S'almost dawn.

Stephen looks like he's going to vomit. He covers his mouth and wobbles to his feet. The bathroom door slams behind him.

Silence.

ADAM I can't stand living here. It's too small for one person, let alone three.
JOHN So you'd rather be here alone?
ADAM No, I'd rather you and I moved somewhere else. Somewhere safer, with, like, a white picket fence and a gate, and flowers and shit. And an office with a desk so that even if I can't turn my phone off, I can leave my laptop in there and not have to worry, or, at least, try not to worry about, go somewhere else and be faraway from the noise, the fucking, there's so much noise [...]
JOHN Square footage isn't going to make it any quieter.
ADAM This was okay when we were in our younger - well, no, it wasn't okay then, but it was tolerable - but we're not stupid kids anymore, waiting for someone tell us we're adults.
JOHN Any other bombshells you want to drop tonight? I'm not pregnant, am I?

ADAM Can't we just be grown ups and - I thought you'd have given up on this drag stuff by now and gotten down to - I thought we would be parents! Or, like, have a dog that we said was our kid.
JOHN Why do I have to be the one that changes?
ADAM Cuz I've lived with me long enough to know I can't change.
JOHN You've been an old man since birth.
ADAM This is what I can do. This is all I can do right now.

They sit in that ugly silence.

JOHN I know, baby. I wish I could [...]
ADAM I don't know. This is who I am.
JOHN I don't want to change that but [...]
ADAM But?
JOHN Maybe you do need a visit from an Angel of the Lord. Reduce you to ash. And then, piece by piece, atom by atom, build yourself into yourself.
ADAM Am I not enough?
JOHN There's not an answer to [...] I know I'm Mother Hen, whatever, that's who I, that's what I do. And a lot of it coping - if I pour myself into helping someone else, I don't have to be responsible for myself as much. But eventually, you look back at your life and you've given away all the parts of you that matter. I spend so much time focused on other people, I don't even know who John is anymore, or what he wants. Or why he matters. At this point, Begonia Satine is more of a person than John is. I wear my heart on my sleeve and then I look up the sleeves and there aren't any tricks. I don't have anything more to give, Adam.
ADAM That sounds like an answer to me.
JOHN I don't know how to convince you that that's not what any of this means. I wouldn't be taking care of you when you're too far gone to even get out of bed for weeks at a time, if you weren't the thing I care about most in the world.

Adam glances at John, then knocks on the door to the bathroom.

ADAM You okay in there?
JOHN Let him vomit. He's had a lot. Needs to get it out.

ADAM I think I would like some water.
JOHN I'll get it for you.
ADAM No, I, I would like to get it myself.
JOHN Okay.

Adam goes into the kitchen and gets a glass, hovering it under the tap. He takes a long, slow drink, finishing it in one gulp.

JOHN I need you to talk to me.
ADAM It's like I'm walking towards a destination but the sun is setting right in my face, so bright it hurts. So I have to squint or turn around and walk backwards. Slowly. Slow and steady wins the race.
JOHN Slow and steady wins the race but you have to at least finish the race.
ADAM I just want some love that's all my own and I want to live in a place where I'm not in anyone's way and I just want to be happy or at least happy adjacent, some sort of shadow or faraway mirror reflection of happy, is that too much to ask? Just to have a moment of quiet and silence and there's no movement and nothing going on and I'm doing the dishes and looking through the window over the sink and there are crickets outside and grass and nature and I'm lost in thought and someone I love walks into the room and doesn't need anything more from me or from the world.
JOHN You can't Live Laugh Love your way into a good life.
ADAM Who says I can't?
JOHN You know those signs aren't hand painted by some perky suburban housewife, right? People forced by slave labor, who probably don't even know English, mass produce those in / squalid
ADAM Okay. Okay. Okay. That's not what this is - I just want to have you.
JOHN You can't "have" me. I don't know who taught you that possession was love but that's not what you should want.
ADAM It's not enough to want.
JOHN I don't know what else to give.
ADAM I guess it's not your responsibility to give me anything.
JOHN I'm happy like this.
ADAM Are you?

JOHN I was. Circumstances changing isn't going to change you not being happy. The Sad is in your brain and it stays there. It's not renting space, it's got a fucking mortgage.
ADAM You have been very patient with me.
JOHN I don't love you despite you, I just fucking love you.
ADAM When it gets bad like this, even smiling is exhausting. Preemptively exhausting. I'm tired.
JOHN I know you are, baby. I think, um. I'm gonna go for a walk. It's a beautiful morning.

Adam turns to look. He never even noticed that the sun has come up. Maybe it doesn't come up until right this instant. John puts on some clothes and his shoes and heads for the door.

JOHN Do you want to go for a walk with me? It might help. It will at least be something to try.
ADAM Why do you put up with me?
JOHN I'm not "putting up" with you. Are you even listening?
ADAM It's hard right now. Sometimes it's like everyone is speaking a language I don't know, like overhearing a stranger two cars down on the subway. Or like that fucking siren that doesn't stop but doesn't ever - you know, it's supposed to sound different, when it's coming towards you versus when it's moving away from you? Doppler Effect? But in this apartment, it only ever sounds like it's approaching.
JOHN Maybe I deserve someone who hears birdsong instead of sirens.

Adam doesn't know what to say. John exits.

Adam doesn't know what to say.

When he turns, he nearly trips over the Live Laugh Love skeleton. Staring at him. Its eyes aren't glowing but they're definitely glowing.

The pot on the stove catches fire.

Adam doesn't know what to say.

Day into night, night into day, but no time has passed at all. Adam sits alone.

The rain grows thunderously loud.

Adam doesn't know what to say. Adam goes into the window. Adam wants so desperately to hear birds. All he hears is sirens.

He puts his fist through the window. He pulls his hand out, almost not recognizing the blood as his own.

Rainwater pours in.

ADAM I'm in my apartment. It's Sunday. It's still raining. I'm alone.

Adam goes back into the bedroom and covers himself in blankets.

Thought it's completely silent, from above, the residents one floor up stomp on the floor, almost at the same time as the occupants below begin arguing again, flowing into a muffled screaming. Trumpets, blaring trumpets. The Kingdom of Heaven on the march.

The light begins to close in around Adam.

He takes a big gulp of air, exhales it back out. The lights seem to inhale and exhale with him, but not ever-so-slightly this time. Ever-so-muchly.

In the darkness, a shadow, one that takes form as the lights burst back on.

Stephen comes out of the bathroom. But it's not really Stephen, is it? Still dressed only in his underwear, but it's The Paragon's underwear this time. With each word comes a slight echo, reverberating back from a time immortal.

THE PARAGON It's a slow process. Opening. It can't be all at once. That's not how the human spirit works.

The Paragon steps forward and leads Adam out of the bed. We see The Paragon is holding wine - in a chalice. He puts it to Adam's lips. Adam drinks. It overflows onto his shirt. The Paragon removes it for him. Stripping him bare.

ADAM What do you want from me?
THE PARAGON I'm here to make you happy.
ADAM I don't like people who think they can make other people happy. Don't you think if I knew a way to make myself happy then I would've done it by now?
THE PARAGON Would you have?

The Paragon strokes Adam's cheek with his hand. Adam's phone goes off with a buzz. It continues going off.

THE PARAGON You're trembling. Do you fear me? What do you fear?
ADAM Everything.

The Paragon licks the blood off Adam's hand. Sensual but, more importantly, consuming.

THE PARAGON Allow yourself a little pleasure. Allow yourself a little perfection. Allow yourself a little kindness.
ADAM I don't know how. I don't want anyone who will try to make me happy.
THE PARAGON I won't try. It just happens. One day, even just for a moment. It's just there, in front of you, not quite manifest, not quite shadow, a wisp of what you are intended to be. It will have to do.

The Paragon holds Adam.

And then, just as the trumpets ring again, Adam and the Angel begin to grapple.

They wrestle each other through the apartment, destroying all semblance of normalcy, smashing through drywall and concrete in the process. Rainwater drenches them. Blood is spilt. Eventually they wind up back where they started, on the bed, holding one another, sweaty and gasping and raw.

ADAM Please don't hurt me.
THE PARAGON I don't know how.
ADAM You'll learn. Everyone learns.
THE PARAGON Let me in.
ADAM Will you call me your own?
THE PARAGON You are mine and mine alone. Do Not Be Afraid.

But when the voice echoes back, all Adam can hear is "Be Afraid."

The Paragon kisses the back of his neck, one hand running through Adam's hair. Adam trembles. Adam doesn't know what to say. Adam allows himself to be taken to the bed, to be laid out and exposed before him. And then The Paragon plunges into him.

A knocking from above, constant, a tattoo without beginning or end, joining the crescendo of trumpets and rain and buzzing and fighting and screaming and fucking.

Perhaps the very foundation of the theatre shakes.

Adam's breathing hard. Inhale. Exhale. Heat rising, pain and pleasure, shame and pride, beyond conscious thought. Ethereal and eternal.

The walls close in.

Far off, but getting closer, sirens. He's getting closer, too. He looks into The Paragon's eyes. All six thousand of them.

An Angel of the Lord, burning him into ash.

end.