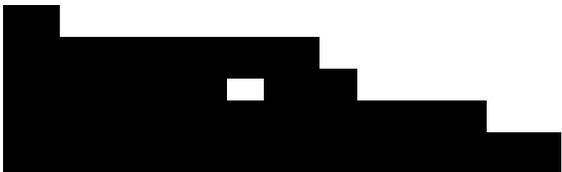


THE HUMANS

Written by

Stephen Karam

From a play by Stephen Karam



Dialogue in brackets [] is expressed non-verbally.

A slash (/) means the character with the next line of dialogue begins their speech.

AIMEE
Seriously?...oh, Dad...

BRIGID
Dad...I told you not to
bring anything...

4 INT. UPSTAIRS - VESTIBULE - 1 MINUTE LATER - DAY 4

Brigid hangs a long white coat on a vestigial hook painting into the window, unloads bags of goodies. Aimee is on her phone. SOFT THUDS from above. Brigid notices ERIK LOOKING UP.

BRIGID
That's our neighbor, we think she drops
stuff? Or stomps around?--we don't know.

Sound of toilet flush.

DEIRDRE (PRE-LAP)
Mission accomplished...

5 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - THIRTY SECONDS LATER - DAY 5

The corridor is deep and narrow, slathered in OFF-WHITE PAINT. DEIRDRE (61, Erik's wife) and MOMO (81, Erik's mother) exit the bathroom.

ERIK
I gotcha, Mom...

Erik helps Momo into her wheelchair.

6 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - SECONDS LATER - DAY 6

Erik wheels Momo past cracked walls, a missing floorboard.

BRIGID (O.S.)
It's pretty big, right?

AIMEE (O.S.)
Definitely bigger than your last place.

...arriving in the--**MAIN ROOM**, where the monochromatic space is now full of life, the whole family together.

ERIK
Have you complained about the noise?

BRIGID
No, Dad, she's a 70-year-old Chinese woman, /I'm not gonna--

DEIRDRE

Well, Brigid, I'm 61--older people can still process information, we're/still--

BRIGID

I'm saying she means well, she's older so I don't wanna disturb her if I don't have to--here, gimme your coats...

7

INT. UPSTAIRS - VESTIBULE - 1 MINUTE LATER - DAY

7

Brigid holding all of the family's coats. She doesn't know where to put them. Her coat--hanging on the window hook--falls. Brigid sets down family's coats--

BRIGID POV: Deirdre fixing Momo's hair in the bedroom--there's a SMALL BRUISE on Deirdre's hand--*from lifting Momo?*

MOMO

(quietly mumbled)
...can every you come back...

BRIGID

Is she [okay?]---what's she [saying]?--

DEIRDRE

She's--[who the hell knows]-
-even when she *is* sayin'
real stuff...what's been
comin' out is still all...
[muddled]..

MOMO (CONT'D)

...fernall here
sullerin...werstrus um
black...sezz it
bigger...fernal down/
black...sorn it all...

Momo gazes at the floor, blank. Brigid arranges the PHILADELPHIA EAGLES BLANKET on Momo's lap.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

...the doctor says it's
normal, the repeating...

MOMO (CONT'D)

(mumbled)
...you can never come
back...you can never come
back...

BRIGID

Momo, you can absolutely come back, any time you want.

8

INT. AIR SHAFT WINDOW, MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

8

ERIK POV: ERIK PEERS THROUGH THE CLOUDY WINDOW AND DIAMOND GRILLE. The layers of aged dirt have a numinous quality.

DEIRDRE (PRE-LAP)

Having her at home's been, until it becomes too much...it's a blessing, you know...right Erik? Erik...

BACK TO SCENE--AIMEE'S HAND ON ERIK'S SHOULDER jolts him out of his window-trance.

AIMEE Dad--whoa, come back to earth...
ERIK Sorry, sorry...long drive.

BRIGID
Are you okay?

ERIK
Yeah, once I get some caffeine in me, I'll be good.

9

INT. UPSTAIRS - BEDROOM - 1 MINUTE LATER - DAY

9

The family touring the apartment. Erik visible through the archway. An AIR MATTRESS leans against a wall. Deirdre notices an urban recliner.

DEIRDRE
This is a fancy chair. Erik, check out this fancy chair...

Erik's looking out the window. He didn't hear her.

BRIGID
Rich's parents gave us that, a couch too. Not sure if the living area will be in here or--this might become the bedroom--

Brigid clocks Erik on his phone. Deirdre sits in the recliner.

BRIGID (CONT'D)
--Dad, you won't get reception up here unless--is it a Verizon phone?

ERIK
Uh, Sprint.

BRIGID
Then you have to lean up against the window.

Erik gets closer to the window. Aimee heads to the bathroom.

BRIGID (CONT'D)
Yeah...but now, yeah, now lean in...

Erik leans deeper into the window. Deirdre now seated in the recliner, pulls the lever, it reclines quickly, startles her, she YELPS, laughs.

11 INT. AIR SHAFT WINDOW, MAIN ROOM - MOMENTS LATER - DAY 11

A SHADOWY, BLURRY IMAGE OF A WOMAN BEHIND GLASS.
The window's bottom pane has so much condensation it's hard to see outside clearly. Erik by the window, watching.

Erik turns to Brigid--but she's with Deirdre in the VESTIBULE.

ERIK

Hey, who's walking around out there?

BRIGID

Uh...must be the super, he's the only one who has access.

ERIK

No, think it's a woman?

BRIGID

Probably the super's wife.

Brigid isn't the least concerned with this, goes back to chatting with Deirdre. Erik wheels Momo into the

BEDROOM, looks out that room's dirty-but-clearer window:

THE AIR SHAFT IS EMPTY. CIGARETTE BUTTS line its floor. A PIGEON pecks at the butts. Some garbage blowing around.

WIDER--a few steps from Erik, Momo sits in her wheelchair. THE WHEELCHAIR STARTS TO ROLL AWAY FROM HIM (the floor is uneven). Erik catches her in time, applies the brake.

13 INT. BATHROOM - ONE MINUTE LATER - DAY 13

In semi-darkness, Aimee gropes for a light switch. The pre-war tub situation is bleak. She discovers the toilet seat cover is cracked in half, held together with duct tape.

In the bathroom mirror Aimee sees the reflection of:

ERIK--in the main room--LOOKING UP. *What's on his mind?*
She closes the door, wiping out her view of Erik.

14 INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY 14

Brigid also clocks Erik's preoccupation with the ceiling--she and Deirdre are returning to the main room.

BRIGID

Hey, Detective; this is New York,/ people are loud--

DEIRDRE

Hey, he had a rough night, he hasn't been sleeping, / he's been--Erik, you haven't.

ERIK

Deirdre...[please don't talk about this]...
 (to Brigid)
 I'm -- yeah, I'm okay...

BRIGID

Why haven't you been sleeping?
 Are you okay?...

AIMEE (O.S.)

I forgot the toilet paper!

15

INT. UPSTAIRS - VESTIBULE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

15

RIP--Brigid wrestles open an economy pack of toilet paper. Deirdre approaches, ensures Erik's out of earshot--

DEIRDRE

I dunno if he's having nightmares or what. The sheets were covered in sweat last night...

BRIGID

Rich sometimes takes a sleeping pill, / I can ask what kind--

DEIRDRE

Oh right like your Dad'd ever try any sorta--no, no...

Brigid leaves to deliver the toilet paper, revealing TWO CHEAP OIL PORTRAITS leaning against the wall behind her--one of a 19TH CENTURY STERN WOMAN, one a SAD 17TH CENTURY GIRL.

BRIGID (O.S.)

Rich's been having weird dreams about--he thinks they're related to the stress of the move?...

Deirdre eyes the 'stern woman' who is 'looking' at her.

BRIGID (O.S.) (CONT'D)

...and he's been keeping *me* up while he tries to unravel their meaning...

...Brigid is back with Deirdre.

BRIGID (CONT'D)

...he took one psychology course and suddenly he's an armchair psychiatrist.

RICHARD (O.S.)
(emanating from stairwell)
I took two psychology courses!

BRIGID
[One.] I found those on the curb,
can you believe someone was
gonna throw them out?

DEIRDRE
Hey there, Rich!//

Deirdre can believe that someone would throw them out.

RICHARD (O.S.)
Hey, be up in a minute! Babe--bring down
the napkins, okay? Bridge?...

BRIGID
Richard, what are you yelling at me?!

16 INT. DOWNSTAIRS - STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS - DAY

16

RICHARD, 35, at the base of the stairs.

RICHARD
I said bring down the napkins please!

BRIGID (O.S.)
Yeah, Richard, or you could get them
yourself.

Richard walks out of the frame. Richard walks back into it--

RICHARD
Wait do you actually want me to/
come up and--

BRIGID (O.S.)
No, no I got them, sorry...

17 INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

17

Aimee on the toilet looking at her phone. Her iphone reflected in her glasses. Something upsets her. She looks away. Looks back, *is she about to cry?* She turns her phone off. FLUSHES. She flicks on the lights above the sink; A BUG FLUTTERS inside the bulb. She tries to ignore it. She can't, unscrews the bulb. She goes to leave, stops. Peeks in the toilet; flushes again.

18 INT. UPSTAIRS - STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS - DAY 18

Brigid carefully positions two packs of napkins through the gap in the spiral staircase; she drops them--

19 INT. DOWNSTAIRS - STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS - DAY 19

--Richard misjudges the drop, the bags hit him in the face.

20 INT. UPSTAIRS - STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS - DAY 20

Brigid smiles, turns back to the room and sees--DEIRDRE HAVING AN AUDIBLE-BUT-INDECIPHERABLE PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH ERIK. THEY MOVE TO THE VESTIBULE...

20A INT. VESTIBULE - SECONDS LATER 20A

Brigid peers around the hallway doorway into the vestibule, glimpses DEIRDRE RESIST THEN RELENT TO LET ERIK MASSAGE HER KNEE FOR PAIN RELIEF. There is tension and care between them.

THE SHADOWS CAST FROM ERIK AND DEIRDRE IN THE ALCOVE DANCE ON BRIGID'S FACE, LIKE A HOME MOVIE PLAYING ON HER SKIN.

BRIGID

No complaining until the tour's finished...

21 INT. UPSTAIRS - BEDROOM - 2 MINUTES LATER - DAY 21

4 PATCHES OF OFF-WHITE PAINT on a section of the wall.

AIMEE

These are different colors?

Erik, Deirdre and Aimee stare at the patches. Momo gazes down.

BRIGID

Woodmont Cream, Fresh Air, Athena, Dove Wing, Hint of Mint.

Deirdre refers to old wallpaper behind the fancy chair.

DEIRDRE

What happened here...

BRIGID

Mom...

ERIK

You know, if you moved to Scranton your quality of life would shoot up.

BRIGID (CONT'D)

Uh, if I moved to Scranton, your quality of life would shoot up/ tremendously--

ERIK

Oh yeah? What makes you think we like you so much?

DEIRDRE

Don't flatter yourself, lady--

AIMEE

These look exactly the same to me.

BRIGID

They're literally different. Mom...

DEIRDRE

I wish you had more of a view...

Deirdre tries to see what's out the dirty window.

BRIGID (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)

It's an interior courtyard.

Deirdre stifles laughter, Erik does too. Brigid is hurt.

DEIRDRE

Perhaps we can all take a stroll in the interior courtyard after dinner.

24

INT. KITCHEN - 5 MINUTES LATER - DAY

24

Richard watches Brigid search for something.

BRIGID

[Where did I put the fucking gifts?!]

DEIRDRE (O.S.)

Bridge, you didn't even open our care package?

BRIGID

I'm not opening anything until the moving truck gets here!

Richard hands her a bag of gifts that was in plain view.

DEIRDRE (O.S.)

Is the moving truck on its way or--

BRIGID

No, no it's still stuck in Queens!--
I said--
[I'm gonna kill her.]
It's still stuck in Queens!

DEIRDRE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Wait what?
I can't hear you!
What did you say?

DEIRDRE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Is it still stuck in Queens?!

Richard whispers something in Brigid's ear, she smiles.

25

INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - 2 MINUTES LATER - DAY

25

The family each unwraps A FRAMED PHOTO. They start to smile.

AIMEE
What did you get us?

DEIRDRE
Thank you...Erik don't [rip
your wrapping]--I wanna
save the wrapping.

BRIGID
Open, open...

ERIK
Oh man...

BRIGID (CONT'D)
Found it when I was packing.

DEIRDRE
...oh man...were we ever this
young?...look how young you are, Aimee...

AIMEE
I'm an elephant in this photo...

DEIRDRE
You're beautiful.

BRIGID
No...

AIMEE
...and I'm holding a funnel cake...I
can't even blame genetics.

ERIK
This is gold, Brigid,/ thanks. Check it
out, Mom...

DEIRDRE
It really is, honey...thank you.

AIMEE
I am a planet in this photo.

DEIRDRE
Stop it, I'm bigger than
you...I miss Wildwood.

ERIK
You look beautiful.

BRIGID
Go back, take a vacation...

DEIRDRE
Talk to this one, he hates traveling--

Deirdre starts collecting the wrapping paper.

ERIK
I do not/ hate traveling--

BRIGID
You hate traveling to New York--

ERIK
I do not hate traveling to New York,/ no,
no, I don't...

BRIGID
Yes you do!

AIMEE
Okay, that's a lie.

ERIK
...I hate that you moved a few blocks
from where two towers got blown-up and in
a major flood zone...I hate that...

BRIGID
This area is safe--

ERIK (CONT'D)
Chinatown flooded during
the last hurricane-- /it
flooded--

BRIGID (CONT'D)
Yeah, that's why I can afford to live
here--it's not like you gave me any money
to help me out.

ERIK
[Wow.]

BRIGID (CONT'D)
...hey...

Erik walks away. Deirdre looks to Brigid, disappointed.

27

INT. HALLWAY NEAR CLOSET - 1 MINUTE LATER - DAY

27

A softly distorted image of Erik's face. He turns to us...

ERIK
You need a door sweep--/there's gaps
everywhere--

A hand clasps the image, pushes it--we were looking through
a crystal doorknob onto Erik crouched in the hall. Brigid's
hand is on the doorknob.

BRIGID
Okay thanks, Repairman, hey, this area is
safe. No one's gonna steer a plane into
a, a fish market on Grand Street--

ERIK

I liked you living in Queens, alright? I worry enough with Aimee on the top floor of the Cira Centre--

AIMEE

(from the main room)

Well stop, Philly's more stable than New York--

BRIGID

Aimee, don't make him more--

AIMEE (CONT'D)

I'm just saying--it's safer!

BRIGID (CONT'D)

Yeah, 'cause not even terrorists wanna spend time in Philly, /Philly is awful--

AIMEE

Oh, ha ha...

ERIK

You think everything's awful, you think *Scranton* is awful, / but it's where--

BRIGID

We think it's awful?!

AIMEE (CONT'D)

Dad, it is!

28

INT. DOWNSTAIRS - STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS - DAY

28

RICHARD--plastic cups and champagne in hand--makes his way to THE STAIRCASE, overhearing:

ERIK (O.S.)

--yeah, well what I think's funny is how you guys, you move to big cities and trash Scranton, when Momo almost killed herself gettin outta New York--

Richard takes a few awkward steps up, it's hard to balance the cups while navigating the narrow stairs--THE CUPS TOPPLE.

ERIK (O.S.) (CONT'D)

--she didn't have a real toilet, and now her granddaughter moves right back to the place /she struggled to escape...

Richard tries again; step by step he not-so-gracefully ASCENDS THE SPIRAL STAIRS...

BRIGID (O.S.)

We know, yes..."return to the slums"...

DEIRDRE (O.S.)

It's not the slums anymore...

ERIK (O.S.)

Oh man, that store--on the corner of Eldridge?--

--the family comes into Richard's view as he arrives--

29 INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

29

--and heads to Brigid.

AIMEE

Hey Rich...

ERIK

--we went in to get you a candle...

DEIRDRE

Don't tell her that, we didn't end up buying it--

ERIK

The most expensive candles I've ever seen in my life.

AIMEE

They were 25 dollars.

ERIK

That's a lot of money!

DEIRDRE

For a candle?! That's insane, you should get five candles for that...

RICHARD

Thought we could have a champagne toast up here? Brigid claims we need to bless the upstairs *and* downstairs--

RICHARD (CONT'D)

--is that true?
...oh...

DEIRDRE

Yeah, we do--gimme a hug, Rich...

RICHARD (CONT'D)

We only have paper cups but the good news is the bar is set very low if we ever host again...

30 INT. UPSTAIRS - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

30

ERIK wanders away from the family (still audible in the background) to grab a private moment for himself.

He rubs his aching lower back. He sets his FRAMED PHOTO down on a windowsill, walks to the bathroom.

Richard's eyebrows raise at the sound of the women singing "Jesus". Aimee shoots him a look--*I know, I know!*

MOMENTS LATER--Erik watches with a smile.

<p>AIMEE <i>Holy Mary, Mother of God</i> <i>Pray for our sinners now--</i> (spoken) I'm a lawyer, Rich--</p>	<p>BRIGID (shushing Deirdre) Aimee solo--shhhh...</p>
--	---

MOMENTS LATER--MOMO'S MUMBLING has a disquieting effect.

<p>BRIGID, AIMEE, DEIRDRE & <i>Teach us wisdom, / teach us love--</i></p>	
<p>MOMO (tapering to quiet) ...nairywheres do we blag werstrus, doll sezzer big sussten back whairidoll...</p>	<p>ERIK (staying positive) Shhhh, alright...you're alright, Mom... ...shhhh...</p>

MOMO'S HANDS TREMOR AGAINST HER GREEN FOOTBALL BLANKET.

BRIGID (O.S.)
 She normally joins in. This is new,
 /this is--

ERIK (O.S.)
 Well it's--yeah, it's not one of her
 good days.

THE CEILING FAN'S BLADE WHIPS AROUND SLOWLY. THE FAMILY'S SHADOWS ON THE CEILING.

ERIK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 You got any music gigs coming up, / can we
 come embarrass you?

<p>BRIGID (O.S.) Ugh, guys, no--I'm bartending most nights, you have no clue how much student debt I'm stuck with.</p>	<p>DEIRDRE (O.S.) Yeah, I miss hearing you sing...</p>
---	--

ERIK
 Yeah, well, I do know who refused to go
 to a state school.

<p>DEIRDRE Oo, score one for Dad.</p>	<p>BRIGID Not funny.</p>
--	---

RICHARD

--I hear you might build this summer?

ERIK

Uh, not until the sewers get put in...
doesn't make sense to build with a septic
system if they're putting in sewers soon.

BRIGID

Sooner the better, I can't wait for a
lake house Christmas...

Richard back to the kitchen, Brigid follows him. Erik moves
down the hall along the path of the fuse box wires...

ERIK

You're gonna miss the old house.

BRIGID (O.S.)

I will. I won't miss the wall-to-wall
carpeting...or the bunk beds.

Erik lifts a piece of cardboard taped on the main basement
door revealing a small square window with two dense layers
of metal in the glass.

ERIK POV: CLOUDY VIEW OF BASEMENT UPSTAIRS HALLWAY THROUGH
THE SHIFTING PATTERNS OF THE TWISTED METAL IN THE GLASS.

RICHARD (O.S.)

Work's good, Erik?--you're still at--
it's a Catholic high school, right?

BRIGID (O.S.)

St. Mark's, for 28 years...

RICHARD (O.S.)

Wow, that's impressive...

ERIK

Don't make it sound--I headed up
maintenance and coupla years ago they
needed a, an Equipment Manager, so--

BRIGID (O.S.)

It's a big job, triple-A school, he
handles all the phys-ed classes,/ manages
the weight room, the kids love him--

ERIK

All right, okay...hey enough...

RICHARD (O.S.)

That's impressive.

Erik joins them in the **KITCHEN--**

ERIK

It's practical. Got the girls free tuition. You don't pick up after other people's kids for 28 years unless you really love your own, you know?

RICHARD

Well, hey, to 28 years...

BRIGID

28 years...

ERIK

Cheers.

A bit awkward just the three of them. Silence.

BRIGID (CONT'D)

We'll be more comfortable on the couch.

1 MINUTE LATER ON THE COUCH--

Still awkward but on the couch.

RICHARD

Yeah, no it's crazy, our generation, we're lucky if we stay in a job for one year, right Bridge?

ERIK

Are you guys even in the same generation?

BRIGID

Dad...[not funny]...

Brigid heads for the stairs, a distant TOILET FLUSH--

38

INT. UPSTAIRS - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

38

--as Deirdre puts down the toilet seat cover. HALF OF IT BENDS. She screws in the light bulb Aimee untwisted--it lights up, the gnat now dead inside, a black spec.

She looks in the mirror. She blocks the LED bulb with her hand; that's better. She looks closer, closer, closer...

39

INT. DOWNSTAIRS - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - DAY

39

CLANK, CLANK of Richard's potato-masher as it bangs against the metal mixing bowl. ROASTED SWEET POTATOES sit on top of the oven. STUFFING in progress. GREENS and chopped VEGGIES. THE STOVE LIGHT SPUTTERS, Richard hits it, it steadies.

40 INT. UPSTAIRS - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - DAY 40

DEIRDRE exiting the bathroom as Brigid passes her--

DEIRDRE
Your toilet seat is broken--

BRIGID DEIRDRE (CONT'D)
I know, go downstairs... I love you I'm just saying.

Brigid enters the bathroom, shuts the door.

41 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - DAY 41

A CHUNK OF SPRAY INSULATION BY A PIPE IS HALF-COATED IN WHITE PAINT. WIDER--Erik staring at it.

RICHARD
You decide on an architect for the lake house?

ERIK
Uh, no, that's a ways away.

Erik drinks.

RICHARD
I actually like having the design process to look forward to, I like the planning stages.

ERIK
Yeah, well our budget's--we're gonna use one of those places where, they've got pre-designed homes you can choose from?/...but...

RICHARD
Sure, good idea...

ERIK
...yeah, and the place we're looking at has good designs, you know?...

RICHARD
Yeah, no that's great.

42 INT. UPSTAIRS - VESTIBULE - CONTINUOUS - DAY 42

Deirdre moisturizes her hands; she takes a STRESS BALL from her purse, squeezes it; we hear Erik and Richard talking...

MOMO
(mumbled)
...do we where do we go...

45 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - DAY

45

Erik notices a BUBBLED WATER STAIN on the wall.
PLOP, FIZZ--Richard drops ice cubes into Erik's soda.

RICHARD
So you've been having some weird dreams
too?

ERIK
Huh?

RICHARD
...just...you can hear a lot through the
[hole where the spiral staircase is],
just caught that you haven't been
sleeping, thought maybe--I've been having
weird dreams all week, think it's because
of the move...
...last night I was polishing a silver
refrigerator and...my dog was caught
inside it?...and I don't have a
dog?/...just weird stuff...

ERIK
Oh man...sounds like it...no, I don't
remember my [dreams]...even when I have
one of those ones where, uh...

RICHARD
What?

ERIK
...[no, nothing important]...you know the
ones where you need a minute just to
figure out it isn't actually [real]...

RICHARD
Oh, sure...

KNOCKING AT THE DOOR jolts Erik--he SPILLS HIS COKE.

ERIK Sorry about that, Rich... RICHARD (CONT'D) Don't worry about it--

46 EXT. BASEMENT DOOR TO APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

46

Aimee and Momo in front of the door as it swings open.

RICHARD
Welcome.../come on in...

AIMEE
Hello, hello...

FOLLOW AIMEE AND MOMO down the hall into the LIVING AREA.

AIMEE (CONT'D)
...so this is what lies beneath...

Aimee clocks ERIK CLEANING UP the last of his spill.

RICHARD
What are you drinking, Aimee?

AIMEE
Whatever's open...red wine? This is
really a lot of space...

MOMO
Where do we go? Where do we go where do
we go where do we go...

<p>RICHARD Yeah, well if you sacrifice sunlight you can get some extra square feet.</p>	<p>MOMO (CONT'D) ...where do we go where do we go where...</p>
---	--

AIMEE
Where do we--Momo we're going into
this room is where we're going...

47

INT. VESTIBULE - CONTINUOUS

47

Deirdre walking out of the vestibule to the stairs...

MOMO (O.S.)
...where do we go do we where...

...she notices a patch of soft light on the floor in the **BEDROOM**. She follows it, sees it comes from light ricocheting off an OLD MIRRORED DOOR in the hall. She walks to it, curious, her warped reflection getting closer--

Brigid exits the bathroom.

BRIGID
Are you snooping? What are you holding?

DEIRDRE
It helps with my arthritis. Snooper.

THEY START TOWARDS THE STAIRCASE--Brigid notices a present sticking out of Deirdre's bag.

BRIGID
Is that present for me?

DEIRDRE
Yeah, open it downstairs.

BRIGID
Is it...a fancy candle?

DEIRDRE
Yeah, smart-ass, I'll give you a fancy candle...keep walking...

48

INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - DAY

48

Aimee's phone. Aimee is in the doorway between the anteroom and living area struggling for reception as Deirdre and Brigid descend the stairs. Refresh. Refresh. Richard passes her delivering some snacks to the table.

RICHARD
It won't work down here, sorry.

AIMEE
Ah...well M&A transactions are not a source of joy in my life...

ERIK
She's an all-star there...
AIMEE (CONT'D)
...my phone could use the rest--

AIMEE (CONT'D)
Dad, ugh, no--I was informed last month I'm no longer on the partner track,/which just means--

DEIRDRE
What? When did this--
ERIK
Does that mean it just takes more time? Or--

AIMEE
No, it's the nice way of saying: start looking for another job.

DEIRDRE
Why would they/ do that?
ERIK
Really?

AIMEE
It's complicated,/ who knows...

BRIGID

I'm sorry.

SLOW PUSH IN on Aimee during the following:

AIMEE

...yeah, I missed a lot of time last year when I was sick.../and then...

DEIRDRE

She's got Ulcerative Colitis, Rich --

AIMEE

...Mom, okay--

DEIRDRE

--it affects the colon--

AIMEE

...okay, Mom, so...and I missed even *more* time right before they made their decision, I had another flare up this month, so--

DEIRDRE

Why didn't you tell us?

ERIK

Oh babe, I'm sorry...

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

...they can't fire you because of a medical condition--

AIMEE

Well they gave other reasons, obviously, but...yeah, you get the sense they support your chronic illness as long as it doesn't affect your billable hours.

CONTINUE SLOW PUSH IN ON AIMEE--

BRIGID

I'm really sorry.

DEIRDRE

Well, they don't deserve you.

ERIK

How about...financially, are you okay or--

AIMEE

Yeah, I'm set for a while.

--until AIMEE'S FACE FILLS MOST OF THE FRAME...

ERIK
For a few months, or--

AIMEE (CONT'D)
Dad I'm, I'll let you know
if I need money, I don't
want to talk about my job
or my--/let's talk about--

DEIRDRE
But just--how are you feeling?

AIMEE
Just minor cramping, I'm good, I am...

RICHARD
How about food-wise, can we get you/
something special--

AIMEE
No, I'm fine, at ease, everyone,/really,
let's--

BRIGID
Hey we should--why don't we do a
downstairs toast,/ before we forget,
yeah?...

AIMEE
Yes, please...

DEIRDRE
I'm okay with that...

49

INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - 2 MINUTES LATER - DAY

49

The SHADOWS OF THE FAMILY ON THE FLOOR.

ERIK
To the Blake family Thanksgiving--

DEIRDRE (O.S.)
...to the very special Chinatown
edition/of the Blake family
Thanksgiving...

BRIGID
Yes, yes, yes...

AIMEE
Hear hear...

Plastic cups in hand--everyone is around Brigid's "living
room", complete with cardboard box coffee table.

ERIK
Neither rain nor hail--

MOMO
Sorn it all...

DEIRDRE
Nor sleet nor snow...
nor...what else?

MOMO (CONT'D)
...can neverbody black
werstrus--

AIMEE

Nor ulcerative colitis...

MOMO

...can neverbody black werstrus...

BRIGID

Nor dementia...

DEIRDRE

Now you're pushing it.

AIMEE

Brigid...

BRIGID

What--too soon?/ Too soon?

AIMEE

Yes, too soon...

DEIRDRE

Not funny...

ERIK

Yeah, you better give her a hug...

BRIGID

We love you, Momes...

ERIK

To knowing this is what matters, right here, 'cause lemme tell you, coming down these streets, thinking about how far the Blakes've come...even seeing that candle store/was--

BRIGID

It's not a candle store, it's a boutique that sells, like, one candle--

ERIK

--hey I'm just appreciating how...you see all these rich people walking around New York, God knows where their money comes from, but...end of the day, everything that anyone's got...I don't care how many candles you have...one day it goes... whatever gifts God's given us, in the end, no matter who you are...everything you have goes.

No one quite knows what to make of this.

DEIRDRE

Well that's the positive way of looking at things.

Everyone laughs at this, ad libs their way out of the strange moment via cheers, toasting; Erik speaks over the din.

ERIK

Sorry--I love my family...that's the short version, I'm glad we're together.

50 INT. DOWNSTAIRS - ANTEROOM - 2 MINUTES LATER

50

A CRACKLING FIRE projected onto the fireplace. Richard adjusts a mini short-throw projector nearby. Sounds of the family talking/bustling in the next room. Brigid walks by. Richard 'warms his hands' by the fire to amuse her.

BRIGID

Richard...[this is lame]...

Richard turns it off.

AIMEE (PRE-LAP)

So how are you, mom?

51 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - 2 MINUTES LATER - DAY

51

A crudité platter in front of Deirdre at the table.

DEIRDRE

I'm good, I'm good...I was, uh...

Deirdre studies the DIP. VEGETABLES. CHEESE. CRACKERS. A difficult choice. She decides, takes her first bite, notices: ERIK DISAPPEAR AROUND THE CORNER INTO THE BEDROOM CORRIDOR WHEELING MOMO. STAY WITH DEIRDRE in front of the crudité platter--her daughters bustle around her.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

...did you get the text I sent about-- Bridge, this girl who played basketball for Dunmore, she was bullied for being gay...her mom found her dead in her room on Tuesday--

BRIGID

Whoa...

AIMEE

Oh man...

DEIRDRE

--yeah, suicide with some kinda pills... it's all over the news...I texted you, / I wasn't sure if you got it?

AIMEE

This week was crazy...no, yeah I got it, I'm just behind with my messages...

Small beat.

BRIGID

You don't have to text her every time a lesbian kills herself.

I don't.

DEIRDRE

AIMEE

She doesn't do that--I appreciate what /you mean.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

I get enough annoying forwards myself--I don't wanna clog up your guys's inbox--

AIMEE

You're not, Mom. You're good though?

DEIRDRE

I am, yeah...my bosses are--I'm an office manager, Rich, I've been with the same company since right outta high school...

ERIK

Whole place'd fall apart without her--

ERIK wanders back into the main room with Momo.

DEIRDRE

...yeah, well my salary doesn't reflect that, and these new kids they hired, I'm working for two more guys in their 20s--I don't wanna talk about it...

MOMENTS LATER--

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

...and just 'cause they have a special degree they're making five times what I make, over 40 years /I've been there...

RICHARD
Wow, 40 years...?

BRIGID

Well...hey...focus on the lake house, you'll be able to unwind soon...you gotta take care of yourself.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

It's smart to wait for the sewers, the value of your property will skyrocket.

AIMEE
When are they gonna be installed?

BRIGID

Thanks, Professor.

ERIK

That's up to the department of Public Works.

AIMEE

And how's Aunt Mary?

DEIRDRE

She's hanging in there, God love her-- this is their Aunt, Rich, who had both knees replaced--

ERIK

Pass the...

DEIRDRE

--I drive her to her physical therapy... they got this contraption now to help load her into the pool--oh and did I e-mail you that Pam Hoban has ovarian cancer?

AIMEE

Oh man, how's she doing?

BRIGID

She does? Yikes...

DEIRDRE

Yeah, I've been taking her to her treatments 'cause her and her brother, they don't speak anymore, so...that's a whole mess, but she's being tough, so...

Deirdre takes another bite of food.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

...what else...oh, Tuesdays I'm--

BRIGID

Mom, you're talking with your mouth full.

DEIRDRE

I, uh, I'm volunteering for--Father Paul told me about, and don't roll your eyes, Erik...

ERIK

I'm not saying a word.

DEIRDRE

...right in Scranton there's a whole community of refugees from Bhutan...

Brigid and Aimee stifle laughter.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

What?/ It's not funny...

BRIGID

Let me guess, Saint Deirdre is coming to their rescue?--

ERIK

You have /no idea...

DEIRDRE

Be quiet--you have no idea--these people have nothing... they're all just looking to learn English, to find work--we think we've got nothing, but man...

RICHARD

That's great you're volunteering...

DEIRDRE

Thanks, Rich.

BRIGID

And how are you, mom. Aimee didn't ask how the Republic of Bhutan was doing--

ERIK

Hey, hey...

DEIRDRE

I'm good, smart-ass, I said that already... Now why don't you open your gift...

BRIGID

Mom, I was just teasing...

Aimee registers a minor cramp, heads to the staircase--

AIMEE

Hey guys--no one be alarmed if I'm up and down these stairs a million times to use the...facilities...so...

DEIRDRE

You want me to go with you?

AIMEE

[Uh, no.]

52

MOMENTS LATER--

52

RIP, RIP--Brigid tears open her wrapped gift: A CANDY PIG.

BRIGID

...ah, check it out, Rich...

Brigid hands Rich the pig. Rich has no idea what to do with it.

BRIGID (CONT'D) RICHARD
 And what is this other... This is awesome, thanks...

RIP, RIP--Brigid tears open her second gift, revealing--

BRIGID (CONT'D)
 ...ah, a Virgin Mary statue...

BRIGID (CONT'D) DEIRDRE
 ...oooo with a serpent Okay, before you tease me I
 under her foot... know you guys don't
 believe, but she's
 appearing everywhere now...

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)
 ...not just in Fatima but in West
 Virginia and--just keep it for my sake,
 in the kitchen or even if you just put it
 in a drawer somewhere, okay?

BRIGID
 Mom, I will absolutely put this in a
 drawer somewhere, thank you.

Brigid hands the Mary statue to Richard; he has no idea what to do with it. CLOSE ON MARY STATUE being carried into the

DEIRDRE (O.S.)
 Yeah, well...I feel better knowing you
 have it.

KITCHEN. Richard searches for a place to put it...

MOMO (O.S.) DEIRDRE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 ...why'm I hereson. Go Okay, okay, you wanna go
 warson horror...do the for a ride, Mom? Let's go
 glassor sezzor black... for a ride...

The Virgin Mary is left facing the steaming sweet potatoes.

53

INT. UPSTAIRS - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

53

Aimee sits on the toilet, phone in hand.

ON THE SCREEN:

Instagram account: CAROL4011:

[image of two 37-year-old women laughing,
their arms around each other]

Aimee's EYES WIDEN--the picture provokes feelings of profound jealousy and sadness. Aimee thinks. She starts a text message:

To: CAROL
 Happy [turkey emoticon] !
 good times in NYC w [emoticon of 2 girls and 2 parents]
 where R U?

A GASSY FART catches her by surprise. She TURNS ON THE FAUCET to mask the noise. She stares at her phone. No response.

We follow the WOOSH of the running sink water DOWN,
 DOWN the sink pipe, DOWN past the floorboards until we

WIPE TO BLACK, THEN--

54 INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - DAY 54

--a small water stain with bubbling streaking beneath layers of thick paint.

ERIK (PRE-LAP)
 She had a good day yesterday, you know?...

55 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - DAY 55

Deirdre tries to open a door a foot off the ground in the hall. Erik nurses his beer, observes Momo being wheeled by Deirdre.

ERIK
 (to Brigid)
 ...It's hard to predict now how she's...
 this is definitely her last big trip...

BRIGID
 How are you doing? Is that why you aren't sleeping?--

ERIK
 I'll sleep tonight--

RICHARD
 Oh yeah, sorry Erik, we got sidetracked--you were talking about your dream?

DEIRDRE
 Oh, so you'll tell him details/ about your dream but you won't tell me?

RICHARD
 He didn't tell me details...

ERIK
 No--guys, I don't even remember it, there's nothing to tell...

BRIGID
Well, now I don't believe
you....

DEIRDRE
I saw the way you woke up,
don't tell me you can't
remember somethin'--

RICHARD
Hey, no I forget mine if I
don't write them down in
the morning...

ERIK
(smiling, to Brigid)
[Man, you're a piece of
work.]

ERIK (CONT'D)
See?...there you go...

DEIRDRE
Well whatever it was, couldn't a been
scarier than the--
(laughing)
--I made him watch this--what was it
called, Erik?--/the movie...?

Deirdre's laughing so hard she's having trouble speaking.

ERIK
What?

DEIRDRE
...the Lifetime movie about the housewife
who got AIDS,/ guys--it was so cheezy but
really terrifying...

BRIGID
Mom, you're steamrolling
the--

ERIK
She made me watch that...
worst two hours of my life.

DEIRDRE
You loved it.

RICHARD
What was scary about it?

DEIRDRE
This housewife cheats on her husband,
right?--and he comes home from work and
asks her how her day was and--I mean what
can she say? 'Today I cheated on you and
contracted the HIV virus, honey, how was
your day?'...can you imagine?

BRIGID
You're trying to be a comedian, no more
wine for you--

RICHARD

Did you see the one where--think it's called "My Stepson, My Lover"--

DEIRDRE

That's a classic, Rich--

BRIGID

Rich don't--ewww, mom, don't be gross--

RICHARD

She's fine--be nicer to your Mom, babe.

DEIRDRE

Thanks, Rich.

Brigid goes to the kitchen. Beat; Richard follows.

DEIRDRE POV: Brigid and Richard arguing in the kitchen.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

Anything I say makes her [annoyed]...

ERIK

Yeah? Who does she remind you of?

DEIRDRE

You.

ERIK

Me? She's all you, my friend...

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

You, yeah you, my friend...

They smile. DEIRDRE STARES AT A STRAND OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS, SQUINTS; THE LIGHT SHIFTS TO BLURRY GLOW-BALLS. She squints more, looks weird. She nudges Erik.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

Do it...[do it...]

ERIK

[No. You're nuts.]

He does it, they smile. The moment passes. Beat.

DEIRDRE

Don't wait until after dinner.

Erik drinks his beer, thinks.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

[Your call, Big Guy...]

Deirdre leaves Erik alone.

56 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - 2 MINUTES LATER - DAY 56

BRIGID knocks on the BATHROOM DOOR.

BRIGID
You need anything?

AIMEE (O.S.)
An air freshener? Matches?

BRIGID
Just stink the place up. We'll deal.

Brigid walks back down the corridor, the sound of Momo's mumbling wafting up through the stairwell--

RICHARD (O.S.)
Brigid said you guys went
on a cruise last summer?

MOMO (O.S.)
I'm I here'm I why'm I
heresuh blag sezzor why'm I
sezzor...I'm I here'm I....

BRIGID
[God don't talk about cruise ships.]

57 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - DAY 57

DEIRDRE
Yeah, we've gone on four of 'em now, to
Halifax and Mexico...ever been on one?

RICHARD
Uh, not on one of those big ships, but--
I sailed with my family growing up.

ERIK
We try to get the girls to come but they
think it's pretty lame, you know?

58 INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY 58

Brigid supine on the floor, in quiet dread...

DEIRDRE (PRE-LAP)
...yeah, we know it's cheesy...

59 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - DAY 59

DEIRDRE
...but we like it 'cause they take care
of everything, you feel taken care of...

DEIRDRE
Gamble. You gamble.

Erik gets up, walks to the stairs.

ERIK
Or whatever else I feel like doing.

DEIRDRE
Well c'mon, don't act like you play
shuffleboard on the lido deck.

Erik heads up the stairs...

62 INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON 62

...CLANK, CLANK...Brigid hears Erik's footsteps, gets up--

ERIK
Gonna check the score of the game...

FOLLOW ERIK to the window, which now serves as a half-mirror; behind him Brigid disappears down the stairs. Deirdre's voice echoes faintly from below.

DEIRDRE (O.S.)
Mom, you're not hungry? Just finish
drinking your shake...there you go...

Deirdre's voice fades as Erik--consumed by other thoughts--stares out the window...THE SOFT ELECTRICAL HUM of the air shaft takes over...something weighs on his mind.

OUTSIDE A WINDOW--LIGHT FLURRIES begin to fall. Wispy flakes float. It's mundane and magical. Erik's captivated until--A PIGEON LANDS ON THE LEDGE, violently flapping its wings, startled by the bird spikes.

Erik steps back, scared. The VOICES FROM DOWNSTAIRS return as Erik's breath steadies...

BRIGID (O.S.)	DEIRDRE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Ah, it's everywhere...	Oh God, I got it...Erik!...

64 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON 64

Momo's Ensure shake is splattered all over the floor.

BRIGID	DEIRDRE
Mom, I got it--we have loads of paper towels...	Oh man...you're alright, Mom...

65 **INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON** 65

ERIK POV--the commotion of the spill as seen THROUGH THE STAIRCASE HOLE. The sound of CLANKING up the stairs--Erik retreats, takes a calming breath. Richard appears--

RICHARD
We had a minor spill...

--and we FOLLOW RICHARD as he walks past Erik into the **ANTEROOM**, looks for paper towels.

AIMEE (O.S.)
I'm in here!

Richard is perplexed by this declaration, walks back to the **MAIN ROOM** where he finds Erik glued to the window, motionless.

RICHARD
You okay?

ERIK
Uh, just worried about the roads. It's snowing out there...

Richard squeezes beside him, looks out.

66 **INT. AIR SHAFT WINDOW - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON** 66

The flakes swirl in the breeze.

67 **INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON** 67

RICHARD
I think someone from a higher floor just emptied their ashtray.

Rich leaves. Erik stares out the window, his back to us.

68 **INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON** 68

Rich passes DEIRDRE ATTENDING TO MOMO--

DEIRDRE
...You feeling good, Mom?...now you can rest...there you go...

--and continues into the **KITCHEN** where Brigid is ringing out a towel--he hugs her from behind. Brigid sighs, stressed.

69 INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON 69

Deirdre wheels Momo back and forth; through the hall doorway:

RICHARD & BRIGID whispering to each other--*what are they talking about?* Richard makes Brigid laugh, they kiss. It stirs something inside of Deirdre.

Deirdre then notices a consistent creak, creak in the floorboards above her head, over and over--creak, creak--

70 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON 70

Aimee nervously rocks her foot back and forth...CREAK, CREAK...she checks her phone.

ON HER SCREEN--still no response from Carol.

AIMEE

[Don't call her. Don't call her.]

Aimee pushes the call button, paces...

71 INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON 71

Erik bent over trying to touch his toes, stretching his back. Then does a back stretch on his back. THE CEILING ABOVE--WINDING PATTERN OF AN OLD WATER STAIN. Erik hears--

AIMEE (O.S.)

Hey, hi...Happy--I know--

72 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS -- LATE AFTERNOON 72

AIMEE

(on the phone)

--I know, Happy Thanksgiving--I know, but--I know, I just thought the holidays could be an exception...

Aimee's foot rocks back and forth, back and forth....

73 INT. DOWNSTAIRS - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON 73

BRIGID POV: Deirdre assisting Momo from wheelchair to the couch; Deirdre talks to Momo softly as she does this--*what is she saying?* Brigid's about to offer help when--Richard grabs Brigid playfully, kisses her on the cheek.

BRIGID

No no no--ew, not now...

74 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON 74

DEIRDRE POV: Richard kissing Brigid as punishment for her not liking the last kiss. Brigid resists, laughs.

AIMEE (V.O.)

...uh-huh...uh-huh...

76 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON 76

AIMEE

...huh...well sorry if--
...I just wanted to hear your--

(Beat.)

...no I get it, I get it...I'm okay,
you know?...and you're, are you
upstate with the fam, or?--

Carol's response devastates. Vocally, Aimee keeps it together.

AIMEE (CONT'D)

...oh...no, I figured--I saw your pics
online...no I think it's good...I've
been dating too...so...yeah, nothing
serious, but...yeah, yeah...

Aimee feels the wall as if it might provide emotional support.

AIMEE (CONT'D)

...well hey...

77 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON 77

Deirdre sits beside unresponsive Momo, massaging her hand...

AIMEE (V.O.)

...I'll let you go, but glad you're...

(laughing)

...ha, I'll tell them, they'll appreciate
that...so...

78 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON 78

AIMEE

...absolutely, and love to your...
exactly, Happy Thanksgiving and--

Carol says something that cuts very, very deep. Aimee works hard to not show it, keeps it light.

AIMEE (CONT'D)
--well don't wish me a Merry Chr--
we can talk again before Christmas...

79 INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON 79

ERIK POV: Aimee on the phone, her back to us.

AIMEE
...huh, uh-huh...huh...maybe...

80 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON 80

AIMEE
(successfully fighting tears)
...well maybe your therapist is right...
...mm-hm...

Aimee flips the deadbolt to keep door open, exits into--

80A INT. BUILDING HALLWAY UPSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS - LATE AFTERNOON 80A

--seeking maximum privacy.

AIMEE
...just, the holidays feel wrong, without
us at least--[talking].....no, I respect
that... ..yeah...well look, love to all
your-- ...you too... ..I will, I'll tell
them...okay, you too...bye...

Aimee hangs up. Returns to--

80B INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - LATE AFTERNOON 80B

Erik at the end of the hall. Aimee cries, unable to hold it in.
Erik hugs her. LAUGHTER wafts up through the stairwell.

AIMEE
I miss her.

ERIK
You'll find someone new. Hey, I'm
serious, you're gonna find someone--

AIMEE

Not with history--Carol knew me with
acne...she helped me with my law school
application...

ERIK

You're gonna come outta this stronger, /I
promise.

AIMEE

Stop, Dad, stop lying to me.

Aimee wipes her eyes, cleans her glasses. Beat.

AIMEE (CONT'D)

Don't actually stop keep saying things to
me...

Erik, unsure what to say. Aimee heads to the bathroom.
LAUGHTER from downstairs grows...

81 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - EVENING

81

...Richard, Brigid and Deirdre can't stop laughing. Rich
refills their wine glasses.

BRIGID

I wish you knew her before she got sick,
Rich...

DEIRDRE

She refused to quit driving, refused...
...so, six years ago?, Erik couldn't
bring himself to take the keys from her,
so he got her to take a driver's exam so
the decision wouldn't be on him...
and part of the test is--they show her a
picture of a "yield" sign, but without
the word "yield" on it and God love her,
she can't name it...

82 INT. UPSTAIRS - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS - EVENING

82

...Erik rubs his back, paces away from the stairwell,
Deirdre's voice fades but remains present as soundscape.

Erik's eyes wander to a WINDOW ACROSS THE AIR SHAFT WITH TWO
EXHAUST FANS RESEMBLING A PAIR OF EYES. The quality of light
has shifted; the sun's setting. He spies another rear window
propped open, a shape moving around inside.

83

INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - EVENING

83

DEIRDRE

...three wrong answers now, three, but enough of her's still there that she goes to the poor guy giving the test, really pissed off, she goes: 'Trust me, I'd know what to do if I was driving.'

Richard listens, rapt...

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

So the guy's like, 'Then just tell me what you'd do if you were driving and pulled up to this sign.' And she goes: 'I'd see what everyone else was doing, then I'd do that.'

Richard laughs. Brigid has something else on her mind...

BRIGID

Where're you at with the whole...nursing home discussion?

DEIRDRE

Mom's--as long as Uncle John can watch her weekdays, we're fine--

RICHARD

I love--oh...I was just gonna say I love that you both call her "Mom".

BRIGID

I want you guys to [take care of yourselves]--

DEIRDRE

Well, that's what she is to me, that's what's special about marriage, Rich, real marriage...you get two families.

BRIGID

Okay...

RICHARD

I'm very committed to Brigid.

84

INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - EVENING

84

Erik DESCENDS THE STAIRCASE, hearing--

DEIRDRE (O.S.)

...she's calm now, Rich, but man... when she has a fit, it's like watching her turn into someone else, you know?

RICHARD (O.S.)

Can I...?

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

...oh, yeah, just lift her feet there...

85

INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - EVENING

85

RICHARD MOVES MOMO'S FEET as Erik arrives, sees this--

ERIK

Hey, get your hands off of my mother,
you bastard!--

RICHARD

Oh my God I was just--

BRIGID

Dad--stop--

(to Richard)

--he's teasing you...

Richard has turned a shade of white.

ERIK

(smiling)

The Lions are up ten.

BRIGID

Your sense of humor is terrible.

DEIRDRE

Have you guys noticed that everyone's
sense of humor is terrible except for
Brigid's? How interesting...

ERIK

Score one for Mom!

RICHARD

Amen, yes...

BRIGID

[Not funny...]

86

FIVE MINUTES LATER--

86

Richard in the ANTEROOM starting up his "fire" again.

BRIGID

Richard [please God turn it off...]

Richard stands his ground, but makes it dimmer and turns down
the sound. The quiet dancing light dances in the anteroom.

Momo's eyes, asleep.

DEIRDRE

...before we got her on these new
meds...you coulda put some of her worst
outbursts in a horror flick.

ERIK

Brigid's?/ I agree...

BRIGID

Dad!

Richard laughs at this, Brigid does too.
Deirdre at the table. She takes a carrot, dips it in hummus.
Beat. She takes a chip and dips it in the ranch dip.

DEIRDRE

I'm serious, I keep seeing ads for that
zombie show on TV...it's awful, but it
makes me think of/Mom's worst [tantrums]--

ERIK

Hey, hey [we're doing okay, right?]....

DEIRDRE

...[with the help of God, yeah...I] just
can't believe people wanna watch that
stuff at night/ when there's--

BRIGID

She hates anything with blood or gore --

DEIRDRE

--yeah, well there's enough going on in
the real world to give me the creeps,/ I
don't need any more...

RICHARD

That's like--I bet she'd appreciate--
there's this comic book called *Quasar*...I
was obsessed with it as a kid,/ it's
about this--

BRIGID

You're *still* obsessed with/ *Quasar*...

RICHARD

Yes I am, be quiet--it's about this
species of like half-alien, half-demon-
creatures with teeth on their backs--

BRIGID

Oh my God...just call them
monsters--

RICHARD (CONT'D)

--but on their planet--

RICHARD (CONT'D)

--on their planet, the scary stories they
tell each other...they're all about us.
The horror stories for the monsters are
all about humans./ I love that...

BRIGID

Thank God he's in grad school...

DEIRDRE

Yeah, well people are [terrifying]--you should meet my boss...no teeth on his back, but man...

BRIGID

But monsters aren't scared of us,/ so why would--

RICHARD

Sure they are, it's always a man driving a stake through the heart of the vampire-- or if you're a zombie, you eat people but you're biggest threat is what?--getting killed by some enterprising human,/ right?

DEIRDRE

I get it, Rich...

BRIGID

They'd be more scared by monster-eating-monsters or something, am I right?

ERIK

Monsters aren't real so it's a weird thing to wanna be right about.

RICHARD

That's probably the soundest argument.

DEIRDRE

Yeah well that's not what you thought last night...you thought that was pretty real--there's sweat on the sheets to prove it...

ERIK

Wow, you can't let that go,/ can you?

DEIRDRE

Well tell me what you dreamed/ and I'll drop it...

ERIK

Well you're assuming I saw something specific when she was just/--it wasn't like that, okay?

BRIGID

Wait wait "she"?--so you *do* remember something specific/ about your dream --

ERIK

Oh man, you guys're relentless--
Rich, help me out here...

DEIRDRE

Erik, have you been
dreaming about a supermodel
this whole time?--

RICHARD

(teasing)
Sorry, man, I tell Brigid
my dreams all the time...

BRIGID

Yes you do,/all of them...

RICHARD

--two weeks ago, I dreamt my oldest
sister was a mannequin working in a
grocery store/...what, I'm serious...

BRIGID

...Richard...[not the mannequin dream]...

ERIK

All I remember...

DEIRDRE

Was yours--oh [no go on]...

Deirdre stays quiet to encourage Erik to speak.

ERIK (CONT'D)

...there's not much to...

BRIGID

Tell us...come on...

ERIK

...a coupla nights I've had this
[dream]...there'll be a, a woman...

BRIGID

Uh-huh...and...

SLOW PUSH IN ON ERIK throughout the following:

ERIK

...her back's to me...or maybe...
...something happens where...
...her head turns, I can see that her
face is all...[messed up]

DEIRDRE

What?

BRIGID

Just tell us...

ERIK
...her skin's stretched over her eyes
and her mouth...

BRIGID
Ewww...

DEIRDRE
She's got no face?

ERIK
...just skin where her eyes and mouth
should be,/you know...

BRIGID
Ewwwww--

ERIK (CONT'D)
--yeah, over the holes in
her ears, over the--

A THUD from above the ceiling--everyone jumps--[we should
too]--they look up; a faintly VIBRATING CEILING FIXTURE.

ERIK (CONT'D)
Whoa, /whoa, how's that for timing? What
the hell is going on up there?...

BRIGID
Guys, sorry about that --

RICHARD
Okay, okay...yeah, maybe we
should go up and say
something...

BRIGID (CONT'D)
Welcome to New York...

DEIRDRE
What do you think she's --
is she exercising up there,
do you think?...

ERIK
No, you think she's sweatin' to the
oldies up there?/ No way...

DEIRDRE
Oh wait, you know what it probably is?/
I'm just realizing...

BRIGID
What is it?

RICHARD
What?

DEIRDRE
...it's the faceless lady, telling us to
be quiet--/or maybe she wants some
turkey...

ERIK
Nice...very funny...

BRIGID
Mom...are you drunk?...

DEIRDRE
 (fighting back laughter)
 --but how would she eat the turkey?
 She's got no mouth...

Deirdre mimes a woman without a mouth trying to eat turkey.
 It's so unfunny it's kind of funny.

BRIGID	ERIK
Oh my God...	So glad I shared my
	nightmare, thanks for your
Tell us the rest!	love and support--

87 **INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - EVENING** 87

Aimee answering an email on her phone, calls below:

AIMEE
 Hey! Should I ask the dinosaur upstairs
 to tread a little more softly?

BRIGID (O.S.)
 Not unless you speak Cantonese!--just
 come down...

RICHARD (PRE-LAP)
 Erik--you'll appreciate this...

88 **INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - EVENING** 88

RICHARD
 ...last week I dreamed I fell through an
 ice cream cone made of grass and became a
 baby.

BRIGID
 Okay, no no no, save your dreams for
 Christmas, we're ready to eat here...
 (calling up)
 ...Aimee!...

Sound of footsteps above--from one side of the room to the
 other. A *tantrum-throwing toddler*?

ERIK
 Why don't I go up and ask your neighbor
 to please--/just to keep it down--

BRIGID
 No these floors are so old, Dad--

BRIGID RUNS UP THE STAIRS--

89 INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - 10 SECONDS LATER - EVENING 89

Brigid jumps around. Aimee, baffled, watches.

AIMEE

Brigid, stop. No. Why? No.
No--no, no, no--

BRIGID

...Try it! You have to, I'm showing Dad
 how creaky the floors are--it feels
 amazing!

MOMENTS LATER--

Aimee jumps with Brigid. At a certain point their stomping
 becomes more about releasing stress.

90 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - EVENING 90

THUDS, loud and fast. Erik, Deirdre and Richard look up.

91 INT. UPSTAIRS - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS - EVENING 91

Brigid collapses in the "fancy chair"--Aimee, out of breath,
 returns to her e-mail.

BRIGID

...did you see the Mary statue?...

92 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - EVENING 92

Richard prepares two cokes; he moves the Virgin Mary statue
 out of the way. Behind him we see:

ERIK AND DEIRDRE HAVING A PRIVATE CONVERSATION--

BRIGID (V.O.)

...we've been doing so good, I dunno why
 she's back to...I dunno.....something's
 [not right]...I dunno...

93 EXT. DOWNSTAIRS AIR SHAFT WINDOW - CONTINUOUS - EVENING 93

--Erik and Deirdre seen through the window, conversing.

94 INT. UPSTAIRS - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS - EVENING 94

Aimee's on her phone. Aimee feels Brigid's eyes on her.

AIMEE

...sorry, they even find me on holidays.
It never ends...how's work for you?

BRIGID

Uh, the restaurant pays me under the
table so I can still collect
unemployment, so that's been good...
but...my career is...[non-existent]...

AIMEE

Hey, okay...

BRIGID

I'm just glad Rich and I made the leap,
it was time, you know?

AIMEE

Yeah...he's great, Bridge...

BRIGID

Yeah, he helped me realize how we were
never taught about, like, eating well as a
kids so--I've lost 7 pounds since we've
been together...

BRIGID (CONT'D)

...and--yeah, thanks, it's
crazy how we grew up eating
so much junk...

AIMEE

That's great--

AIMEE (CONT'D)

Yeah, well--

BRIGID

Rich made up this list of pros and
cons...to move in or not to move in--

Brigid checks the stairwell to ensure they have privacy--

BRIGID (CONT'D)

--Aimee, his lists...I found this
posted to the fridge this morning...

Brigid produces a WORN INTERNET LIST with footprints-in-the-
sand/sunset stock imagery behind them:

3 Simple Ways to Find Joy:

1. Dance with yourself
2. Take long nature walks
3. Game nights

BRIGID (CONT'D) [I mean, can you even?!] I literally took it down. I will not! No...	AIMEE [Sweet God even clip art!] Put it back! This is endearing...
---	---

Wafting through the stairwell, chatter between Deirdre/Rich.

95 **INT. DOWNSTAIRS - ANTEROOM - CONTINUOUS - EVENING** 95

Erik in front of former 'crackling fire'--now an aerial screensaver of Earth at night, from space. Erik studies a HEAVILY FOLDED PIECE OF PAPER. He hears Deirdre and Richard's chatter...Brigid and Aimee laughing upstairs...

96 **INT. UPSTAIRS - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS - EVENING** 96

...Brigid, fully reclined in the fancy chair.

BRIGID
 ...we were happy without making it
 so...official, so...I dunno...

AIMEE
 ...yeah, well Carol and I broke up
 because...we were unhappy? And now I'm
 [wondering]... maybe loving someone long-
 term is more about...deciding whether to
 go through life unhappy alone...or
 unhappy with someone else?

BRIGID
 Richard can draw up a list of reasons why
 your breakup was a good thing, if you
 want.../I can ask him to draft a very
 long list--

AIMEE
 No, shuttup so...ugh...

Aimee gestures for Brigid to move further from the stairs into the **VESTIBULE**

BRIGID What?...	AIMEE (CONT'D) ...just, I need to have that surgery.../the one where they'll--
--------------------	---

BRIGID (CONT'D)
 I thought you could put that off until
 your 60s or--

AIMEE

This test showed--it's just dysplasia which means--it's not cancer, but with colitis it'll become cancer if they don't take it out, so...

BRIGID

You'll lose the whole intestine?

AIMEE

It cures the disease, though, so... but...yeah, they make a hole in your abdomen so the waste can, you know...

BRIGID

Do Mom and Dad know?

AIMEE

No, I don't want to discuss it at dinner and...I'm okay, I'm mostly just like... uhhhh, how am I gonna find another girlfriend?.../I'm serious...

BRIGID

You're a complete catch.

AIMEE

I'm gonna be pooing out of a hole in my abdomen. Who's gonna date me?

BRIGID

Lots of people...

AIMEE

Lotta ugly people...

BRIGID

Aimee!

AIMEE (CONT'D)

...lotta troll ladies, who'll have their own troll problems...living under bridges...

BRIGID (CONT'D)

If you shat out your ears, if they re-routed your colon to your ears I'd still marry you.

AIMEE

Uh-huh...

97 INT. DOWNSTAIRS - SPIRAL STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS - EVENING 97

Erik, halfway up the stairs, hears Aimee and Brigid talking indecipherably, eventually hearing--

AIMEE (O.S.)
 ...I'm more worried about...did you notice Mom's knees?...Going down /the stairs...

98 INT. UPSTAIRS - VESTIBULE - CONTINUOUS - EVENING 98

BRIGID
 I saw, yeah...I'm afraid to ask how her arthritis is...or Dad's back...

99 INT. UPSTAIRS - SPIRAL STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS - EVENING 99

Erik stops, reverses course...

AIMEE (O.S.)
 Well it's bothering him--can't you--

BRIGID (O.S.)
 No, yeah, but maybe that's just...

100 INT. UPSTAIRS - VESTIBULE - CONTINUOUS - EVENING 100

BRIGID
 ...he hasn't been sleeping, right?...

The light fixture outside in the hallway burns out. Aimee and Brigid sit silhouetted by the indirect light.

BRIGID (CONT'D) AIMEE
 Shit... Was that the light?

101 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - EVENING 101

Erik descending the staircase, sits beside Momo on the couch. She's sleeping. Deirdre enters from the kitchen area.

DEIRDRE
 What are they doing up there?--

BRIGID (O.S.) ERIK
 Richard!...Rich!...babe, do They're comin', they're
 we have a spare bulb? The comin'...I'll talk to them
 light up here is out! after dinner...

Richard emerges from the kitchen, yells up the staircase:

RICHARD

Can you just...open the bathroom door,
let that light spill into--

BRIGID (O.S.)

Richard, that's not a very good solution
to the problem!

RICHARD

Well, I'm not a magician,
do you want me to make a
light bulb appear out of
thin air?!

DEIRDRE

...hey, how--Rich, how
'bout, there's an LED
lantern in our care
package...lemme get that
out so it's not like a cave
up there...problem solved.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

No, Deirdre, you don't have to do that.

102 **INT. UPSTAIRS - VESTIBULE - 2 MINUTES LATER - LATE EVENING** 02

RIP, RIP--Deirdre tears open the care package, takes out the
LED lantern. A FLASHLIGHT. Aimee turns on the bathroom light.

BRIGID

You bought us a lantern?!

ERIK (O.S.)

I bought it!--

103 **INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - LATE EVENING** 103

ERIK

--after what the hurricane did to this
neighborhood...you can't be without
light, not in a basement apartment!--

104 **INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - LATE EVENING** 104

Aimee and Brigid exchange amused glances.

ERIK (O.S.)

--they say another storm's gonna strike
this year, you're in a Zone A flood zone!

Brigid pulls out A CASE OF TUNA FISH CANS...*Mom, seriously?!*

DEIRDRE

You gotta be prepared.

Rich listens to Erik, but continues to set the table. He's worried if he becomes too interested Erik won't continue...

ERIK (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
...she loved teasing me because
Scranton's a stone's throw from the
greatest city in the world but I've never
even, you know...

CONTINUE ERIK'S SPEECH OVER GLIMPSES OF APARTMENT:

108 INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - LATE EVENING 108

The long empty corridor with its warped wood floors.

ERIK (V.O.)
...I'd never even seen the Statue of
Liberty, never seen the--[anyway]--she's
a piece of work...

109 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - LATE EVENING 109

REFLECTION OF MARY STATUE IN THE KITCHEN BACKSPLASH.

110A INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS - LATE EVENING 110A

THE AIR MATTRESS IS SEMI-DEFLATED.

ERIK (V.O.)
...so when--Aimee got a, an interview to
be a paralegal at this New York firm...
...I took the day off, drove her in...

110 INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - LATE EVENING 110

THE BASEMENT DOOR--and the strip of light visible beneath it.

ERIK (V.O.)
...Aimee's at her interview by 8:45, 37th
floor and...I'm at a Dunkin' Donuts
across the street, 'cause the observation
deck didn't open until 9:30, otherwise...

111 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - LATE EVENING 111

BACK TO THE TABLE. THE RADIATOR chugs softly, clanks...

RICHARD

Oh man...

ERIK

...took me hours to find her 'cuz--
I had no cell then...but...

RICHARD

Man, I can't even...it's
just crazy....

ERIK (CONT'D)

...yeah...well...

112 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - LATE EVENING 112

BATTERIES CLICK into the LED lantern; IT LIGHTS.

113 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - LATE EVENING 113

ERIK

...what's crazy is how you still mess
up...you know?...

Erik stares at the REFLECTION OF LIGHTS ON HIS BEER BOTTLE.

114 INT. UPSTAIRS - VESTIBULE - CONTINUOUS - LATE EVENING 114

...Deirdre walking, lantern-in-hand. Strange shapes form
around her as light bounces off the chicken-wire window...

115 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - LATE EVENING 115

ERIK

...yeah...it's crazy how you still--

A WOMAN'S PIERCING SCREAM from upstairs stuns Rich and Erik--

ERIK (CONT'D)

What, what happened?

RICHARD

Is everyone okay?

--sends both men UP THE STAIRCASE--

116 INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - LATE EVENING 116

--out of breath, they find Brigid stalking the space with her
flashlight, THE LIGHT RICOCHETS OFF THE WALLS, the floor--

ERIK

What? /What's wrong?

RICHARD

Hey you okay?

DEIRDRE

It was a rat or something... oh
God.../ Did you see it?

ERIK

You're okay?/ What
happened?

AIMEE

Oh my God I absolutely saw
that what was that?!?

Flashlight in hand, Brigid charges into the

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY--the LED LANTERN is on the floor, it ROCKS
BACK AND FORTH, BACK AND FORTH, where Deirdre dropped it.

BRIGID

Okay don't scream--American
cockroaches are huge...I'm
sure it was just a roach--

RICHARD

Okay, okay, I'll get it...

DEIRDRE

I have nothing to stand on...someone
give me something to stand on...

BRIGID

It was an American
cockroach, they're huge
okay?--don't get so upset--

AIMEE

Ewwwww...

DEIRDRE

A cockroach the size of a mouse is
upsetting!

AIMEE

Ahhhh, I can't be up here
right now...

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

Shouldn't we kill it?

THE LANTERN ROCKS BACK AND FORTH, BACK AND FORTH...

AIMEE (CONT'D)

I'm not killing it...

RICHARD

(*laughing*)
I'll get it if it comes
back...

DEIRDRE

Don't laugh at me.

ERIK

You gotta caulk. If you
let me caulk and put down
some boric acid...

BRIGID

Okay, okay...everyone
retreat...it's just a
cockroach...

RICHARD

I hear you, Erik, I
will...okay, everyone down
for dinner, sorry for the
bug scare...

Richard rights the fallen, rocking LED Lantern. Leaving it lit, he places it in the darkest spot of the corridor...

AIMEE (PRE-LAP)

I had roaches once...

118 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - LATE EVENING 118

CLOSE ON ERIK'S HAND GRASP A RUSTED SECTIONS OF THE STAIRCASE, as Erik descends.

AIMEE (O.S.)

...in my first Philly apartment...

DEIRDRE (O.S.)

Jesus, Mary and Joseph...

ERIK'S HAND STOPS, GRIPS THE RAIL.
ERIK POV MAIN ROOM: MOMO IS NOT ON THE COUCH.

ERIK

Mom...Mom...?

DEIRDRE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I should have included
insect traps in the care
package--

Erik's heart pounds--

ERIK (CONT'D)

Mom...hey where's, Dee, where's Mom?

--he rushes to the couch, throws the blanket off--runs down the bedroom corridor--NO SIGN OF MOMO.

Erik, panicking, running DOWN THE HALLWAY, throws open the basement door; no sign of Momo.

ERIK (CONT'D)

...help me look for her!
Just look!

DEIRDRE

Well where could she -- you
want me to look under the
couch where the hell could
she be?!

Erik rushes into the **KITCHEN**--she's not there--Erik runs out--

118A INT./EXT. BASEMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - LATE EVENING 118A

--Erik runs down hall, opens front door. Through the glass square in the door, we see him stop Momo from entering street, turn her back towards the building.

119 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - 2 MINUTES LATER - LATE EVENING

SHOTS of Deirdre and Erik struggling to get Momo settled.

CONTINUE SOUNDS OF GETTING MOMO SETTLED (shuffling of feet, pills being sorted, pans being picked up) over--

GLIMPSES OF THE APARTMENT:

--the stairwell and its curves, rusted sections
--a pre-war light fixture medallion sans light fixture

BACK TO SCENE--Deirdre gives mumbling Momo a pill. Richard, Brigid and Aimee clean up the kitchen mess.

120 INT. ANTEROOM - 1 MINUTE LATER - LATE EVENING

120

Deirdre catches a moment alone. Brigid's lit half-used tea candles on the table in the living area. The darkness outside has turned the window into a mirror--she moves her hand, confirms the woman she sees is really her. Behind Deirdre, the 'crackling fire' app has reset to an aerial screensaver of a sunny beach as seen from above. Brigid appears.

BRIGID

Hey, should we bring her wheelchair to the table for dinner?

DEIRDRE

No, no she'll be sleeping soon...

Brigid turns off the projector. Deirdre walks back to the--

121 pt1 INT. LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - LATE EVENING

121 pt1

--and Brigid follows.

BRIGID

Does the medicine make her sleep?

ERIK

It just calms her down--we can bring her to the table,/ see how she feels--

BRIGID

Yeah, don't knock her out just because--

DEIRDRE

Hey, if you want to come home more and help control her tantrums then you can judge the way we care for her.

BRIGID

I'm not trying to judge you I just want--
can't you hire someone to help with--?

DEIRDRE

It'd cost a hundred bucks a night to hire
someone to watch her, a hundred bucks to
make sure she doesn't/ fall and get hurt--

ERIK

Hey...okay--

DEIRDRE

--no, she needs to think before she opens
her mouth.

BRIGID

Sorry.

Brigid, flushed with anger and embarrassment, walks to
Richard in the kitchen. Aimee's left in the midst...

AIMEE

Let's all just...[calm down]... God
bless us, everyone...

DEIRDRE

Yeah, yeah...

RICHARD

Will everybody eat dark meat?/ Or just--

AIMEE

We'll eat it all, Rich,/

just send it our way...

ERIK

Will we eat dark meat?

DEIRDRE

Yeah but--I will, I'm just...oh man...I'm
back on Weight Watchers/ and man...

AIMEE

That's great, Mom...

DEIRDRE

...thanks, yeah...it's tough, one baby
ice cream cone takes up half my points
for the day...same for a junior
cheeseburger at Wendy's, it's tough
staying on track.

BRIGID

Especially if you eat a bucket of ranch
dip before dinner.

Deirdre at the table, wounded. Her pain in focus, the action around her, a blur. Richard bustles behind her, unaware.

RICHARD (O.S.)
...this is the last side dish, yeah?

DEIRDRE
I'm, uh, not being careful with points today, not on holidays.

VOICES (PRE-LAP)
Bless us oh Lord...

pt2 **THREE MINUTES LATER--**

pt2

Everyone's heads bowed, holding hands for grace. Richard doesn't know the grace but participates in the hand-holding.

ERIK, AIMEE, BRIGID & DEIRDRE
...and these Thy gifts...

Momo joins in the grace.

ERIK, AIMEE, BRIGID DEIRDRE & MOMO
which we are about to receive...

Gazes shift to Momo in various stages of surprise.

ERIK, AIMEE, BRIGID, DEIRDRE, & MOMO
...from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord, Amen.

ERIK
Did you/hear that?

BRIGID
Momo, I'm glad you're here!

AIMEE
Amazing...

ERIK
Is it crazy if we do it again? Just/one more time...

They all ad lib "no", "go for it", etc. The family gazes at her, uncontrollable smiles on their faces...

ERIK (CONT'D)
Bless us oh Lord...

ERIK, AIMEE, BRIGID, DEIRDRE & MOMO
...and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive, from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord, Amen.

This time everyone spontaneously claps, Momo too. They laugh at their impulse to applaud a woman for saying grace.

ERIK

Mom, you remember Aimee and Brigid,
these are your granddaughters...

Momo grabs the serving spoon and goes for a bite of sweet potatoes--Deirdre catches her in time--

AIMEE

Don't put the spotlight on
her...

BRIGID

We're happy you're here,
Momes. Guys, dig in, don't
wait...

MOMENTS LATER--

QUICK GLIMPSES of TURKEY BEING CARVED, CHARD SALAD TOSSED,
PEPPER GROUND; a low-end dinner prepared with big love.

ERIK

All looks great...

Everyone ad libs agreement.

DEIRDRE

This looks good, what's this...

BRIGID

It's a rainbow chard salad, it's packed
with nutrients...everything else is
familiar, I think...

DEIRDRE

You guys did a great job...

RICHARD

Thanks.

ERIK

Awesome.

Beat. They eat.

MOMO

Dig a hole shower.

They all laugh at the randomness of the remark.

ERIK

This is definitely not one of your better
days, Mom...oh man, we, uh...we'll all be
there some day, right?/ We love you, Mom.

AIMEE

Yes we will be...

RICHARD

Dig in, everybody,
please...

DEIRDRE

This turkey is so moist,/good job guys...

ERIK

Mm-hmm...

MOMO

Shower in holes.

They stifle laughter; Momo's mumbling is funny and upsetting. They eat. Aimee laughs, stops. Aimee laughs again.

ERIK

What?

AIMEE

Momo's Christmas toast...

Now Brigid can't stop laughing. Richard doesn't get the joke.

BRIGID

On Christmas, Momo--she always delivers a traditional Irish toast, it's ancient, right?

ERIK

It's ancient and it's beautiful, but one year Aimee's mind was in the gutter--

AIMEE

I was 12!

BRIGID

And ever since the blessing sounds kinda dirty to us--

DEIRDRE

Not to us...

ERIK

To you guys it sounds dirty...

RICHARD

What's the blessing?

AIMEE

"May the Virgin and her Child lift your latch on Christmas night."

Some beer dribbles out of Richard's mouth.

DEIRDRE

Not you too, Rich...

BRIGID

I know, right?! They don't get it.

ERIK

We get it we just don't agree.

DEIRDRE

At first I thought latch-lifting was a kinda sexual position...

BRIGID

Ewww, Mom...

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

...I'm serious...

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

...thought maybe it was like scissoring, or/ somethin'--

BRIGID

Mom! Eewwww...

AIMEE

Oh my God Mom, I'm never telling you anything again, /we're not discussing this at the table.

BRIGID (CONT'D)

...you must never say the word 'scissoring' again...

RICHARD

I'm steering clear of this conversation...

ERIK

Its *real* meaning is beautiful--it's old Irish custom to leave the door unbolted and a candle in the window for Mary on her way to Bethlehem.

AIMEE

Well, it's premature, but...in honor of you, Momo...

(struggling not to laugh)

May the Virgin and her Child lift all of your latches...

They ad lib "cheers"...

PASSAGE OF TIME AS WE HEAR SOUNDS OF GLASSES CLINKING, FORKS CLINKING, FOOD BEING EATEN ALL OVER:

GLIMPSES OF THE APARTMENT:

--faded honeycomb black & white kitchen linoleum
 --peeling wallpaper on a section of the kitchen wall
 --an old intercom/phone jack no longer operational

BACK AT THE TABLE--Deirdre notices MOMO'S A BIT DAZED, HER NECK IS NOT AT A GOOD ANGLE. Deirdre goes to help her--

ERIK

I got it...she'll be dozing soon...

DEIRDRE
No, you stay and--

ERIK (CONT'D)
No I got it, keep eating...

Deirdre watches ERIK WHEEL MOMO TO THE COUCH. Beat.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)
So where's your family, Rich? They upset
we stole you away?

RICHARD
Oh, they're good, thanks. My Dad's in
L.A. and my Mom's on the Cape now.

DEIRDRE
What Cape?

BRIGID
Cape Horn, Mom--you know he's from/
Massachusetts--

AIMEE
Hey, hey...it's not a dumb question.

BRIGID
Cape Cod, sorry...I'm sorry.

Brigid picks at her food, upset she can't control her anger.

DEIRDRE
What's your mom do, Rich?

RICHARD
She's a therapist.../she works from
home...yeah...

DEIRDRE
Oh wow, that's great...do you guys have
any Thanksgiving traditions?

RICHARD
Uh, some, yeah, we usually volunteer at
this soup kitchen about 30 minutes from
our house, so...

DEIRDRE
That's beautiful, I volunteer with the
Bhutanese now, /every week they have --

BRIGID
Mom, we know.

RICHARD
No, I'm interested...

AIMEE
[Leave Mom alone...]

DEIRDRE

They uh, the Bhutanese, the level of poverty, guys, is...[unimaginable]...

Erik returns to the table. In the background: Momo asleep.

ERIK

You balancing a job with all your studies or just racking up the college loans?

RICHARD

Ha, I've gone the loan route but I plan on paying them off as soon as possible...

BRIGID

His grandmother--he's getting a small trust when he turns 40--can I tell them?

RICHARD

You want to know if you can tell them after you tell them?/ Seriously?

DEIRDRE

Like a trust fund?

AIMEE

Pass the.../yeah, thanks...

BRIGID

Sorry--babe, sorry, don't be embarrassed...

RICHARD

I'm *not* embarrassed--

BRIGID (CONT'D)

--it's actually great--she didn't want him spoiled so he doesn't see any of the money until he's 40.

ERIK

You haven't reached that milestone yet, Rich?

BRIGID

Ha, ha...

RICHARD

No, not quite, I'm 35...

*

DEIRDRE

Having to wait until your forties is a-- your grandma's a smart lady, it's like that--'member that email I forwarded you guys about Andrew Carnegie--is it Carnegie or Carnegie, /I never remember--

RICHARD

Pretty sure Carnegie is corr--oh, maybe, yeah.

ERIK

Carnegie Hall, right? Carnegie Hall...

DEIRDRE

I forwarded it, Rich, 'cause it had this great answer to the question: "What makes Americans powerful and influential and wealthy?"

Small beat as they eat.

AIMEE

Trust funds?

DEIRDRE

No...not trust funds,/ smart-ass...

AIMEE

What--too soon?/ Too soon?...

BRIGID

Uh--yes, too soon...

DEIRDRE

What makes a person powerful and influential and wealthy is not growing up with power and influence and wealth. That's what the e-mail said, anyway...
(emotions catch her off guard)
...the gift of poverty is a...it's not a myth,/ it's a real thing, it can be a blessing...

AIMEE

Whoa, Mom, are you okay?

DEIRDRE

Yeah, just happy to be with my girls.

Sound of the creaky--

122

INT. BATHROOM - 2 MINUTES LATER - NIGHT

122

--bathroom door closing. Deirdre splashes some water on her face. The soft-white light bulb above the mirror flickers, leading Deirdre to unscrew it and be at the mercy of the lone, bright LED light bulb, which gives off a harsh, blue-ish light. Not flattering. Deirdre sees herself in the toilet water, the colored Christmas lights swim around her.

ERIK (PRE-LAP)

One thing I learned, Rich--and the older I get I see this--it's that having too much money--it can be just as bad for you as, you know, *not* having enough...

123

INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

123

ERIK
 ...you know? Gotta be
 careful...

BRIGID
 Dad, why're you--what are
 you--

CRACK of another beer opening. Deirdre descends the stairs.

RICHARD
 I think I get what you're--do you mean--

ERIK
 I'm saying--Dee's bosses have more money
 than God and they're stingy with her on
 everything, bonuses, vacation days so--
 and this isn't some scientific notion or
 something--but, yeah, I do notice that
 rich people are usually pretty messed up.

BRIGID
 [Oh my God...]

AIMEE
 That's an elegant thesis.

RICHARD
 Well, no, no, it's a good point, I just
 don't think being messed up is
 necessarily linked to how much money is
 in your bank account.

BRIGID
 Of course...

ERIK
 Yeah, but it can shift your
 priorities in ways that
 aren't good.

RICHARD
 We agree on that, yeah, but so can
 being poor. Right?/ Just meaning--

BRIGID
 Yes...

AIMEE
 Everyone's right, guys...

Deirdre re-joins the table.

RICHARD
 --I actually agree with you, I'm just
 adding that...yes, wealth can ruin
 people but so can poverty.

DEIRDRE

Well I'd rather be ruined in a Four Seasons somewhere, on a beach, you know?...I'll take wealth for four-hundred, Alex...

BRIGID

Mom, that doesn't even make sense...

RICHARD

...I hear you, I'm just proud that my family went out of their way to ensure-- you *do* get that I'm not able to touch my money until I'm 40, right?

ERIK

Uh-huh, but do you get how that sounds to a man my age?

RICHARD

No I hear you, I hear you.../ I do...

AIMEE

...pass the--thanks...

BRIGID

We got the veggies from this farmer's market on Essex...

DEIRDRE

They're delicious...

BRIGID

We're gonna try and keep our fridge stocked with them, start juicing for breakfast.

AIMEE

Cool...

RICHARD

You guys liking any of the superfoods?

BRIGID

(to Aimee)

Rich made up a list that I e-mailed to these guys...

DEIRDRE

I even, I bought blueberries last week...they're not cheap.

ERIK

You also bought blueberry donuts.

DEIRDRE

Yeah, and you had three of them, so don't/
act like you're better than me please.

ERIK

I did, no, I did.

AIMEE

Sadly, donuts are cheaper, too, huh?

DEIRDRE

Yeah.

BRIGID

Not cheaper when you
consider how much heart
disease costs once you're
hospitalized.

Aimee covertly nudges Brigid.

123A INT. DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT

123A

OVER GLIMPSES OF THE APARTMENT, SOUNDS OF EATING:
--old writing/initials carved into a built-in shelf
--diamond-shaped window-grate on one of the shaft windows
--stray cable wire worming its way to nowhere

CAROL'S INSTAGRAM PAGE. Aimee checks her phone under table.

124 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - 1 MINUTE LATER

124

ERIK

So what, uh, when 40 comes along, what
happens...do you just, do you retire?

DEIRDRE

Erik...

BRIGID

No, Dad, he's studying to become a
social worker...

RICHARD

Yeah, the main reason I'm not done with
school yet is, I've been/ in and out --

BRIGID

He took time off--

RICHARD

--yeah, because for a while/ I was--

BRIGID

You don't have to tell them...

RICHARD

--it's fine--in my early 30s--I was depressed for a bit, so--I'm fine now, just took me a while to get up and running again, but...I've been better for years, it's why I'm comfortable talking about it...

ERIK

You take medicine for that?

BRIGID

Dad, that's rude/ to ask--

RICHARD

It's okay.

ERIK

Sorry, hey, sorry, just...in our family we don't, uh, we don't have that kinda depression.

AIMEE

Yeah, no we just have a lot of stoic sadness.

ERIK

Well...I'm sorry, if...

RICHARD

[It's fine.]

ERIK (CONT'D)

...makes you wonder if--the kind of faith we grew up with...it's not perfect but you take for granted what a, a, a kinda natural anti-depressant it is...

AIMEE

No religion at the table--

DEIRDRE

Hey, my mouth is shut, you know/ where I stand...

BRIGID

You brought a statue of the Virgin Mary into our house--/how is your mouth shut?

ERIK

All right...I didn't mean to get us... I was just saying it's funny you guys'll try--you put faith in, in juice-cleansing or/ yoga but you won't try church--

BRIGID

I did one juice cleanse...one...

ERIK
 --you eat chard to feel
 your best but you still--
 you said half your friends
 are in therapy,/ you said
 that so I'm askin'--

DEIRDRE
 My mouth is shut...

BRIGID
 That's because--yeah, I was trying to get
 you to pay for mine--I can't afford it--

ERIK
 Well save some of the money you spend on
 organic juice and pay for it yourself--

BRIGID
 Don't criticize me for caring about my
 mental health--

Okay...

AIMEE

ERIK
 Well what about--Rich's mom
 is a therapist--why don't
 you get it from her?

BRIGID
 Yeah, Dad, I'll get therapy from my
 mother-in-law, that's an awesome idea.

DEIRDRE
 She's not your mother-in-law unless you
 get married--

AIMEE
 Mom...[don't]...

BRIGID
 Looking for work every day,
 it's depressing--

ERIK
 Well you've still got the will to eat
 superfoods--if you're so miserable why're
 you trying to live forever?

Aimee smiles involuntarily.

BRIGID
 Last week--I shouldn't even tell you--

ERIK
 Tell us what?

RICHARD
 I don't think you
 appreciate how hard she's
 been working....

BRIGID
 Babe, you don't have to--
 Babe--

BRIGID (CONT'D)
He won't care...

DEIRDRE
Tell us...

RICHARD
Play the piece for them,
you'll feel better...play
it for them...

ERIK
Of course I'll care.

DEIRDRE
Play what?

2 MINUTES LATER--

MUSIC PLAYS on Richard's bluetooth speaker. Brigid is nervous. After a few measures of orchestral strains, silence.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)
I th--

The MUSIC PLAYS again suddenly.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)
Oh...oh...

BRIGID
Mom...[it's not done.]

The music shows skill and is interesting. It's hard to pin down. As it plays, its motion--unpredictable, two ideas at once--takes us into Erik's head. Erik views the room--its shadows, water stains, old buzzers, molding--via the music. The MUSIC STOPS--BACK TO SCENE. Brigid feels very exposed.

BRIGID (CONT'D)
I spent a year finishing it,/and I sent it to--

DEIRDRE
Well it sounds good.

BRIGID
--yeah, no mom it's--

RICHARD
This one professor has been
writing her recommendation
letters--

*

Brigid gets out her phone, searches for something.

BRIGID (CONT'D)
Yeah, cuz he's the only one I felt close
to at school, who actually knew who I
was, and...I was gonna miss this one
deadline so I called and--his assistant
agreed to e-mail the rec letter directly
to me...

Brigid hands her iphone to Erik, who reads the PDF of the letter on her phone.

AIMEE

What's it say?

BRIGID

...at least now I know why I'm not even getting interviews for unpaid internships.

ERIK

(reading)

What?--he didn't praise you enough?

Pissed, Brigid grabs her phone.

BRIGID

Are you kidding me?

(reading)

"Brigid is a talented musician and composer; she served as a TA in my music theory class her senior year and many of the students noted how approachable and helpful she was to them in navigating the course. Initially, I must confess, I found Brigid's compositions almost willfully opposed to specificity and urgency. In her senior year, however, she showed marked improvement. And while her orchestral pieces still do not have the range or originality of her contemporaries, she always displays technical proficiency and great verve Her hard work and positive attitude have made her an asset to the music department."

(eyes watering)

....why wouldn't he respect me enough to say he couldn't do it?

ERIK

You can always work retail.

DEIRDRE

Don't tease her--

AIMEE

Dad--

125

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

125

Brigid busies herself trashing some of the plates. Erik appears.

ERIK

Are you so spoiled you can't see you're crying over something hard work can fix?--

BRIGID

Everyone whose opinion I value read that--

ERIK

Your grandma grew up in a two-room cesspool and your tragedy is what--havin to figure out how to get a new letter of recommendation? You're lucky to have a passion to pursue, if you don't care about it enough to push through these setbacks you should quit and do something else--

THE LIGHT ABOVE THE STAIRCASE BURNS OUT.

RICHARD

Oh great...Babe, the staircase light is out! Welcome to New York, guys...

DEIRDRE

...It's just a light bulb, we'll live...

126

INT. CLOSET OFF KITCHEN - 30 SECONDS LATER - NIGHT

126

Brigid throws the closet door open, pulls a chain suspended from the ceiling; the light bulb won't turn on, it swings back and forth. Erik appears behind her. Brigid tries to screw in the bulb tighter. It's been burned out for a while.

ERIK

Hey, I don't wanna see you bent outta shape over something you can fix. The Blakes bounce back, that's what we do.

BRIGID

Shit...lemme just [clean this up]...uh-huh I don't really need a lecture now...Rich--why didn't we ask the landlord to replace all the lightbulbs before we moved in?

Richard appears in doorway.

RICHARD

Because that's a crazy thing to ask for, babe, no one asks for that.

Deirdre appears behind them in the **KITCHEN**, finds the flashlight. Aimee trails her.

DEIRDRE

(stifling laughter)
Yeah, no one asks for that/ and even if you did, it wouldn't matter, 'cause...

ERIK

Well, they're all probably on their last legs...

AIMEE

What are you laughing at?

Deirdre can't stop laughing, puts her bag on the counter--
THE STRESS BALL falls out onto the floor unseen by Deirdre.

DEIRDRE

...she's burning out the bulbs to get our
attention...

BRIGID

What?

AIMEE

What--who is?

DEIRDRE

She-With-No-Face, she strikes again!

127

INT. ANTEROOM/LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

127

Now they are all laughing, move towards the living area.
Deirdre, flashlight in hand, heads to the shadowy stairs.

ERIK

Now you got her started...

AIMEE

What's so funny? What?

BRIGID

Dad sees faceless women in his sleep.

DEIRDRE WAVES THE FLASHLIGHT, SHINES IT UNDER HER CHIN...

DEIRDRE

...woooOOOOoooo...

RICHARD

Tough crowd, Erik...

AIMEE

Where are you going, crazy lady?

128

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

128

THE STRESS BALL slowly rolls into the hallway and gravity
takes it on an intriguing path on the warped wooden floor.

DEIRDRE

To the bathroom. This is gonna be like
spelunking just to go pee...woooooo...

AIMEE (O.S.)

Who is this headless person?

BRIGID (O.S.)

Faceless, she's got skin covering her eye sockets/ and mouth --

AIMEE (O.S.)

Ewwwww...

ERIK (O.S.)

Alright, ha, ha...

129

INT. ANTEROOM/LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

129

BRIGID

...yeah, and I hope she visits you tonight in your sleep and casts an evil spell on you--

ERIK

Oh yeah, smart-ass?

Erik stops Brigid, bear hugs her.

BRIGID

Stop! Dad! Oh now you wanna be compassionate?! Stop! The eyeless sorceress has all my support.

ERIK (CONT'D)

You don't know how good you have it...

RICHARD

Last week I dreamed I fell into an ice cream cone made of grass and became a baby.

BRIGID

Richard, are you kidding me with the sharing...

RICHARD (CONT'D)

...What?--I can share it if I want--

BRIGID (CONT'D)

You can, and I love you, but when you share dreams in front of my family I become a crazy person.

AIMEE

Hey, come with--

--all right, Lover-of-all-- come with me...

RICHARD

You guys need help?

AIMEE

No, no--c'mon, Princess we can do it...yeah no I literally can...

BRIGID

...Aimee...okay you literally cannot call me a Princess...

*

Aimee and Brigid bus a few dishes, head to the kitchen. Outside, darkness. THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS IN THE SHAFT WINDOWS.

129A INT. LIVING AREA - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

129A

Erik and Richard at the table. Richard is unsure what to say now that he's alone with Erik at the table. He drinks.

RICHARD

I got to re-boot my life, it was good...

ERIK

I dunno. Doing life twice sounds like the only thing worse than doing it once.

They drink. Audible-but-indecipherable conversation and laughter from Aimee and Brigid in the kitchen.

RICHARD

The cone was made out of grass from my backyard...?

ERIK

(smiling)

Out of/ your backyard?...

RICHARD

...my backyard?...like it got twisted into an ice cream cone?...in my head it was so normal...

Beat. Erik looks at his REFLECTION IN THE BACK OF HIS PHONE, moves it a bit, it's like a funhouse mirror.

ERIK

In mine there was this one other weird thing I...[remember]...

RICHARD

In your dream?

ERIK

[Yeah]...I didn't bring it up with-- The girls already think I'm losing it, you know but--the woman without a [face]...she's trying to get me in this, like a tunnel?

RICHARD

Yeah? And what do you do?

ERIK

Uh...I don't move, I dunno...

LAUGHTER from Aimee and Brigid in the kitchen. Richard sees them laughing. He turns back to Erik, studies him.

RICHARD

Tunnels are--in my class we got this list of primitive settings?--tunnels and caves, forests, the sea...stuff so a part of us it's...you know, 200,000 years ago...someone might've closed their eyes and...seen a similar kind of [image]...?

A mechanical RUMBLE sounds from behind the basement door.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Trash compactor.

They drink. The RUMBLE stops. Rich senses Erik's quiet anxiety.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

Get in it next time, the tunnel...

ERIK

Thanks,/ I'll try that...

RICHARD

I'm serious, get in it next time--tunnels can just be, stuff hidden from yourself? So passing through one...[I dunno] could be...a favorable omen...?

Beat.

ERIK

Is it a fortune telling school you're at?

ERIK (CONT'D)

--'a favorable omen'?--
--you sure? You gonna
bring out a crystal ball
later?

RICHARD

No...
...no, yeah...
(laughing)
...no, no I am not...

CLANK, CLANK of pre-war pipes...

130

INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

130

...CLANK of the radiator as Deirdre heads to stairs, hears a creak--turns around. The MIRRORED CLOSET DOOR IS CRACKED OPEN--*is there noise coming from inside?* Deirdre walks to the door, OPENS IT: another AIR SHAFT WINDOW hidden along the closet's back wall. Visible across the air shaft, in a neighbor's half-opened window: BARE LEGS MOVING. Deirdre finds it disturbing; she shuts the doors, walks to the stairs--the sound of laughter grows...

131 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 131

...Brigid and Aimee laughing.

RICHARD (O.S.)

What's so funny?

AIMEE

We're conferring about...Mom's latest e-mail forward,/oh man...

BRIGID

(laughing)

Did you get it, Dad?...

ERIK

Hey, hey shhhh....

AIMEE

Rich, the subject line was: "PLEASE READ THIS" in all caps, all caps--so the e-mail got flagged by my IT department for being "potentially harmful"...

The girls leave the kitchen to join the table; ONE POT TEETERS ON THE EDGE OF THE DRYING RACK, THEN SETTLES.

132 INT. UPSTAIRS - SPIRAL STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 132

Deirdre, frozen in the dark. We can't see her face. Her flashlight shines towards the floor, her arm limp.

BRIGID (O.S.)

...She forwarded a Scientific American article about how...

As if with Deirdre's heart, we sink DOWN to the floor...

WIPE TO BLACK, THEN--

133 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS 133

...arrive beneath the ceiling, continue DOWN to the table.

BRIGID

...how nothing's solid; when you're touching a table, you're really feeling its molecules bouncing against...we're not even solid, we're, what... electrons/pushing back against stuff?--

AIMEE

Electrons, yeah...it also had vague religious overtones, there was a poem at the bottom in about ten fonts about how we already are a part of everything, how--

ERIK

Hey don't make fun of your mom,/no, I'm serious--

AIMEE

Dad, come on, it was a little crazy --

BRIGID

We're making fun of the e-mail...

AIMEE (CONT'D)

--it was like: "Happy Tuesday, oh and just FYI: at the subatomic level, everything is chaotic and unstable... love, Mom."

ERIK

You have to start writing her back, okay?/ I mean it...even to stuff like that...

AIMEE

You're right.

BRIGID

I know, I will...

ERIK

...Rich, I hope you don't think the Blakes're [insensitive]...we're better than that,/ we're drinking too much...

BRIGID

He doesn't think that...

RICHARD

No, no way...and hey...no...if my family's meals are any calmer it's only because, the joke in my family is that our holidays are all sponsored by Klonopin, so/...or so the joke goes...

ERIK

What's that?

BRIGID

Richard--[don't talk about your anti-anxiety meds].

AIMEE

Just--it's medicine.

Strange rumbling noise.

BRIGID

That's the laundry room, that'll die
down...

They sit awkwardly, waiting for the noise to die down as Deirdre starts to clank down the spiral staircase.

134 INT. BASEMENT HALLWAY - 1 MINUTE LATER

134

The laundry room noise is louder out here. Richard carries the garbage bag past the MATTRESS WITH BALLOONS (with broken toy now on top), the bag rips before he can set it down, he struggles to keep the garbage from spilling everywhere.

BRIGID (PRE-LAP)

Richard, we're pig-smashing, get in here!

135 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - FIVE MINUTES LATER

135

A HAMMER. AN ENORMOUS HAND picks it up, revealing the hammer to be very, very tiny. THE CANDY PINK PIG on the table.

BRIGID

...we each pass it around, say what we're thankful for, then smash it...

The entire family gathered around the pig except for Deirdre.

AIMEE

And then we each eat a piece of the peppermint for good luck. Mom, c'mon...

She's relocated THE VIRGIN MARY STATUE to the 'coffee table'. Brigid sees it, sighs. Aimee indicates "just let her do it."

RICHARD

That is the weirdest tradition.

DEIRDRE

Please, that's the weirdest? Wait 'til you spend a Christmas with us...

ERIK

She's threatening to invite all the Bhutanese in Scranton over for caroling.

Deirdre joins the group.

DEIRDRE

Oh that's not a threat, honey, that's happening.

BRIGID
Okay, you start, babe.

RICHARD
Ah, now I'm nervous. Okay, uh...this year I'm most thankful for falling in love with Brigid...and for getting a new family in the process.

This elicits "awwwwws" from Deirdre and Aimee and Brigid.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Now I...[smash the pig?]

He takes the tiny mallet and smashes the pig.

BRIGID
(with love)
That was terrible.../do it harder...

RICHARD
Well I don't know you made me go first!

BRIGID
Okay, Dad you go next...

AIMEE
Rich, it was a fine smash...

ERIK
Okay, well...I already gave one speech so lemme just say...I'm thankful for having your unconditional love and support. Hope there's nothing any of us could ever do to change that, 'cause this is what matters...this family...

Erik smashes the pig, passes the mallet to Deirdre.

DEIRDRE
Alright, well I'm with your Dad and--it may sound cliché, but I'm thankful for the both of you.

Deirdre smashes the pig, hands the mallet to Brigid.

BRIGID
Okay...I'll state the obvious, there will never be a year I'm not thankful that the observation deck didn't open until 9:30, so...and I'm grateful Momo's with us....
(MORE)

BRIGID (CONT'D)

oh--a wise old, haggard drunk man once told me that pursuing your passion is a gift--so I'm grateful for that reminder--even if I end up pursuing it while managing an H&M, / I'm lucky...no I'm actually being serious about that--I am...

AIMEE

Ohhh so soon, so soon...

DEIRDRE

See what you've done?

BRIGID

...and while everyone's--if anything were to ever happen to me, like an accident or whatever--and it won't, but... I'd want to be cremated--it's weird to talk about but you guys'd do open-casket so...I've been trying to find a way to bring it up that isn't morbid or weird.

No one knows how to respond to this.

AIMEE

Well you didn't find it, Bridge.

Erik and Aimee start laughing. Richard joins them.

DEIRDRE

Are you serious? You're crazy.

BRIGID

Oh come on--I am seri--
You're crazy--no one in
this family can handle
honesty...

AIMEE

No you're right, Bridge, dinner is the perfect place to discuss what we should do with your dead body, / thank you...

BRIGID

I hate you all.

AIMEE

...pass me that pig. So. In a year where-- I lost my job, my girlfriend, and I'm bleeding internally...really a banner year... I'm thankful for what's right, okay? I love that in times like this I have a home base, a family I can always come home to. Thanks for giving us that.

BRIGID

You always have to win.

RICHARD

Yeah, she really cremated you.

136 **EXT. AIR SHAFT WINDOW - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 136

Silent view from outside: the Blakes start to laugh uncontrollably, a moment of uncomplicated joy...

137 **INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 137

...now we hear the laughter. Deirdre is in tears.

<p>BRIGID (to Richard) ...just when you can't get less funny....</p>	<p>DEIRDRE She cremated you! She really cremated you...oh man...</p>
--	--

ERIK
How about for Momo--should we read Momo's
email?

<p>BRIGID Dad, no, it makes us cry--</p>	<p>AIMEE Oh God get out the kleenex.</p>
--	--

ERIK
This might be our last Thanksgiving
together, can we please give her a
voice...?

<p>BRIGID Of course...</p>	<p>AIMEE Yeah, has he heard this?</p>
--------------------------------	---

RICHARD
I heard about it, but not the actual...

ERIK
She wrote this before she got really
sick, Rich...an e-mail to these girls,
what four years ago?

Erik finds the message on his phone.

DEIRDRE
Here, give it to me, you're gonna end up
asking me to finish...

Erik hands her his phone. MOMO'S REFLECTION IN ONE OF THE WINDOWS. Brigid goes to Momo's side.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)
"Dear Aimee and Brigid, I was clumsy
around you both today and felt confused.
I couldn't remember your names and felt
bad about that..."

CONTINUE MOMO'S EMAIL OVER SHOTS OF:

--SHIFTING SHADOWS ON THE STAIRCASE (MADE BY THE BLAKES).

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

...It's strange slowly becoming someone I don't know. But while I *am* still here, I want to say: don't worry about me once I drift off for good. I'm not scared.

--TREMORING LIGHT being reflected off of someone's watch.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

If anything, I wish I could've known that most of the stuff I *did* spend my life worrying about wasn't so bad.

--THE CEILING FAN BLADES ROTATE SLOWLY, SLOWLY

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

Maybe it's because this disease has me forgetting the worst stuff, but right now I'm feeling nothing about this life was worth getting so worked up about. Not even dancing at weddings."

THE FAMILY MEMBERS, some cracking smiles through tears...

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

"Dancing at weddings always scared the crap out of me, but now it doesn't seem like such a big deal.

BRIGID'S SMOOTH HAND HOLDING MOMO'S WRINKLED HAND.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

Dance more than I did. Drink less than I did. Go to church. Be good to everyone you love. I love you more than you'll ever know."

Quiet tears of appreciation. They pass around the SMASHED PIECES OF PEPPERMINT; they take a bite, one at a time.

RICHARD

I'm buying a pig for my family.

Richard heads to the kitchen.

BRIGID

He wants you to like him.

AIMEE

We do,/ he's in...

DEIRDRE

We love him...

*

ERIK
 (getting up)
 Just look out for each other, okay?

AIMEE
 Hey if you're having another beer, fine,
 but I'm calling a car for you guys.

BRIGID
 Thanks for drinking responsibly, Dad.

DEIRDRE
 Erik...

ERIK
 I'm forgetting I'm not home, I'm
 sorry...I'm sorry...

AIMEE
 I don't mind using my work account now
 that I'm on my way out--

ERIK
 No way, that's gonna cost a
 fortune...what'd we do
 about our car?

DEIRDRE
 No way, no, I'll drive,
 I've been drinkin water...

AIMEE
 This is on me--I'm calling
 a car, end of discussion.

BRIGID
 Mom for like the last ten
 minutes.

BRIGID (CONT'D)
 Just--bus it into the city and help us
 paint this weekend, okay? We'll put you
 to work, just/ take the car...

ERIK
 Yeah, just, I'm not used to driving on
 Thanksgiving, Rich--

RICHARD
 No worries--Bridge, should we re-park the
 car? I think it's street cleaning in the
 morning but...we'll figure it out...

ERIK POV: Brigid mouths "Thank you, I love you" into
 Richard's ear. They kiss. Their affection triggers something
 in Erik--*embarrassment that Richard needed to take care of
 him? Nostalgia for his early romance with Deirdre?*

BACK TO SCENE, WIDER--Both couples: Brigid and Rich's flawed-
 but-alive connection; a gulf between Erik and Deirdre.

AIMEE (PRE-LAP)
 ...Hi, I--yeah, I need a car...

138 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 138

Aimee, on her cell, walking into the deepest corner of the eastern corridor, lit by the bright LED lantern.

AIMEE
(on the phone)
...no case number, take it out of my
personal--yeah, exactly...uh, three--but
one of them is in a wheelchair--

Erik appears at the end of the corridor, Aimee turns--

AIMEE (CONT'D)
Do you guys need a van for Momo...?--

ERIK
Here...[mouths "go downstairs"]...

139 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 139

Deirdre, alone at the table, listening to Erik and Aimee's audible-but-indecipherable conversation upstairs. A few beats go by, Deirdre stares into space...then, a shift--she's overcome with emotion, stifles sobs; Richard and Brigid are in the kitchen, moving about. No ones sees this.

ERIK (O.S.)
We don't need a van if it's...no it
folds...a lot cheaper or--?--then a
van's good then, that's fine...

The CLANK of Aimee down the stairs prompts Deirdre to regain composure. STAY WITH DEIRDRE--

RICHARD (O.S.)
(calling from the kitchen)
Dessert is on the way...

AIMEE (O.S.)	DEIRDRE
Thank you...so is a car...	Oh man...I can't believe there's more food...

Deirdre's eyes are a bit red. Aimee notices.

AIMEE (CONT'D)
Mom, don't worry about it, it saves me a
cab ride--I can hitch a ride with you
guys to Penn Station...

Erik descends the stairs in the background.

ERIK

Okay, they'll come at six...but we can change the time if you want...

DEIRDRE

Sounds good...

AIMEE

Okay, I can make a 7:05 train.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

Thanks, Aimee, I'm embarrassed we had to do this.

AIMEE

Hey, first time for everything, right?

Aimee goes to the kitchen to help Brigid.

DEIRDRE

(to Erik)

Are you too drunk to thank your daughter?

BRIGID (O.S.)

(to Aimee, in the kitchen)

This is all from a local bakery...

DEIRDRE

Hey, are you too drunk to thank your daughter?

This pisses Erik off, he ignores her.

RICHARD (O.S.)

Incoming...

A DESSERT PLATE lands in front of Deirdre. RUGELACH. VANILLA CUPCAKE. CHOCOLATE CROISSANT.

DEIRDRE

Wow...well today I officially fell off the Weight Watchers wagon, so...man, these all look good...I'll have, uh...
...I'll have--

ERIK

Give her the one with all the frosting, that's the one she wants.

That was the one Deirdre wanted, but now she's too stung. The world around her blurs...

DEIRDRE

I'll have, the, uh...I'll, uh...

RICHARD

Which one can I get you?

DEIRDRE

Just gonna...[sit here for
a minute]...

MOMO (O.S.)

(waking, mumbled)
...nairywheres do we blag
werstrus, doll sezzer...

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

...I'm gonna take her to
the bathroom, yeah
Erik?..../okay?...

BRIGID (O.S.)

You okay, Momes?...

ERIK

Yeah...

BRIGID (CONT'D)

I can help you--

DEIRDRE

No I'm good.

MOMO'S POV--as she is helped into her wheelchair:

ERIK

(to Richard)

Would you help her get Momo settled
upstairs,/ I don't want her lifting her
by herself...

RICHARD

Sure...

BRIGID

Dad, I said I'd help...

ERIK

No, stay here, will you?/ Stay here...

Deirdre wheels MOMO into the long **DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY...**

BRIGID (O.S.)

Why?

ERIK (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I wanna talk about how...

AIMEE (O.S.)

What?

ERIK (O.S.)

...we might be movin' soon if, uh--

Deirdre wheels Momo out the basement door--

BRIGID (O.S.)

Dad, what's wrong?

AIMEE

But--why did they fire you?

ERIK

It's [complicated]--they have this morality code, okay?, St. Mark's makes

AIMEE

Okay...

ERIK (CONT'D)

you sign it/ and if you--

BRIGID

Why would a morality code--were you, like, selling drugs on the playground?

144 INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

144

Momo and Deirdre going up. Deirdre's eyes wander up to the fluorescent light above the plastic white-grated ceiling. The DING of the elevator arriving. The doors open.

ERIK (PRE-LAP)

There was an incident, and...

145 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

145

ERIK

...alright?, so/ they could--

BRIGID

What kind of--

ERIK

--they could fire me...because of this incident, it's--

AIMEE

What are you talking about?

ERIK

I cheated on your Mom, with, uh, a teacher from school and...we're okay but, I realize this is a lot to just [unload]...you guys okay?

AIMEE

[Uh, not really...]

BRIGID

Just...[keep going]...

146 **EXT. AIR SHAFT WINDOW - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 146

Aimee and Brigid, silent at the table, unsure how to react. As if mirroring their emotional experience, Erik's mouth moves--but we can't hear him.

147 **INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 147

ERIK

--we worked through it, okay?/we met with Father Paul and...

AIMEE

Okay...

ERIK

...we're good, but people talk and we don't want you hearing from other people, okay?/ We'd rather you hear it from us, okay?...

AIMEE

Okay, so...you guys...you just want us to...just...to know?...

ERIK

Yeah, and I'm already at a Walmart in Danville/ to keep money coming in--

AIMEE

God, Dad...for how long? --

BRIGID

Why the one in Danville?

ERIK

I don't want kids from school seeing me there. Something full-time should open up this spring, so.../the trick's been...

AIMEE

...so...

ERIK

...the cost of taking care of Momo's been a surprise,/ you wouldn't even believe how much the [medical stuff costs] --

BRIGID

Are you guys...

AIMEE

...okay...
So you're behind?
How much are you behind?

148 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 148

Richard backlit by the hallway light in the doorway. The grumble of the elevator from the hall. He strains to hear voices downstairs but can't make out what's being said.

ERIK (PRE-LAP)

The plan is to sell the house and rent an apartment...we don't need space...

148A INT. UPSTAIRS BUILDING HALLWAY - NIGHT 148A

Deirdre wheels Momo down the building hallway to apartment.

149 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 149

BRIGID

Are there even apartments in Scranton?/
Who lives in--

AIMEE

Of course there are --

ERIK

Hey, getting a place on one level will be good, Mom won't be climbing stairs --

AIMEE (CONT'D)

It doesn't sound good, Dad--

AIMEE (CONT'D)

--it sounds like you're in deep hole --

ERIK

Well I'm working it out, Aimee --

AIMEE (CONT'D)

Do you have anything saved? Dad, do you have any/ savings?--

ERIK

We don't have savings, Aimee--

150 INT. UPSTAIRS BUILDING HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 150

--Richard holds the door open for Deirdre and Momo. Awkward trying to get her wheelchair back inside. Deirdre hears the voices downstairs--

ERIK (O.S.)

--we've been stretched--

AIMEE (O.S.)

--okay, okay well you're telling us this when you're drunk so sorry if I'm getting frustrated...

--Deirdre leaves Momo with Richard...

151

INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

151

Something's fallen apart for Brigid, thoughts spinning.

BRIGID

Have you asked Uncle John to help?

AIMEE

He lives in a trailer, /you think--

BRIGID

That doesn't mean he has no money--

AIMEE

That's exactly what it means, / grow up...[fucking baby]...

BRIGID

Relax, I'm just... [I'm shocked, I don't know what I'm saying...] sorry I'm not grown up like you and make a ton of money--

ERIK

Don't get upset with her, hey this is on me--

AIMEE

Right, you've got no choice but to collect unemployment/ while you try to -- it's not unfair for you to get some marketable skills--

BRIGID

That's not fair--I can't get a break if I'm working full-time...

ERIK

Hey easy, cut it out, this is on me and--hey, I'm working it out, / I love your mom, we're good...

BRIGID (CONT'D)

No, I'm glad you're working it out but-- you're good but you're not sleeping and Mom's still eating her feelings, / it's freaking me out--

AIMEE

Brigid.

DEIRDRE'S FEET ON THE TOP OF THE STAIRS. Deirdre reverses course, goes upstairs. Brigid runs after her--

BRIGID

Mom...I didn't mean it...

ERIK

Stay here...

ERIK (CONT'D)
 Would you stay down here, please?
 Brigid!

153 **INT. UPSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 153

Brigid trails Deirdre--

DEIRDRE
 Go talk to your father,
 please, I know you think
 something's wrong with me,
 it's not a newsflash.

BRIGID
 Mom--I will, but--I don't
 [think that]-- I think
 something's wrong with
 everyone-- please don't act
 like a martyr when I'm
 trying to apologize...

154 **INT. UPSTAIRS - STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS** 154

THUD above the ceiling as Erik clanks up the stairs...

BRIGID
 (to Richard)
 Can you go up and tell that lady how loud
 she's being?

RICHARD
 I will, just relax.

MOMO
 (barely audible)
 Nevery blacken wherenall
 blezzick...

Brigid comes into Erik's view as he arrives--

155 **INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 155

--just as another THUD sounds above the ceiling.

ERIK
 Brigid, please come talk to me.

BRIGID
 (to Erik)
 I'm gonna ask that woman to stop banging
 her fucking feet.

Brigid exits. Richard stops Erik from following her.

156 **INT. BUILDING STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 156

Brigid runs up narrow tenement stairs. Richard is a flight
 behind her.

RICHARD

Brigid!

157 INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

157

Aimee arrives upstairs, Deirdre passes her, going down the spiral stairs, Momo's mumbling grows--

DEIRDRE

I can't hear her now...

MOMO (O.S.)

...nevery where do we go back...do we never go hole you hole do we nairywhere...

Momo is agitated; Aimee isn't sure what's happening--Erik wants Aimee out of there.

AIMEE

Is she...[okay?]

MOMO

ERIK

Go with Mom...
(to Aimee...)
Go with her? She's okay,
just give us some
room.....go with Mom,
okay? Go with Mom.

MOMO (CONT'D)

...nevery where do we go
back do we never go hole
you bitch...nevery black
hole you do we you did this
do we back...
(fixed on Erik)
Go hole. Go hole! Go hole!

Aimee sits at the top of the stairs as Erik rolls Momo deeper into the corridor, backlit by the bathroom light.

MOMO (CONT'D)

Ohhhhhh God they're
everywhere! They're comin'
to you you bitch what's
wrong with you did this...

ERIK (CONT'D)

Hey, hey...shhhh...
...shhhh...
...shhhhhhh...

Aimee scoots another step down the stairs, peers through the railing--she's never seen Momo like this.

159 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

159

Deirdre holds the Virgin Mary statue in her hand. Mary is horizontal, Deirdre stares into space, resigned...

MOMO (O.S.)

--oh airroridoll...aawwwhhh...

160 INT. UPSTAIRS - SPIRAL STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 160

AIMEE POV through the railing: ERIK, in the depths of the corridor holding Momo as she has a fit. They are backlit by bathroom light. It's as if Momo's possessed.

<p>MOMO</p> <p>...go home to fuck you you bitch!.. Aaaaawwwwhhhh... where do you go hole! They're comin to <i>what's</i> <i>wrong with you</i> did this...</p>	<p>ERIK</p> <p>Okay, okay, okay...we'll go for a walk... okay...shhhh... ...shhhhhh...you're okay... shhhhhh... shhhhhh...you're okay.... shhhh...</p>
--	--

Momo's screams TAPER OVER GLIMPSES OF EMPTY AREAS OF THE APARTMENT: corridors, forgotten corners, electrical tape flapping by a vestigial heating grate etc.

<p>MOMO (CONT'D)</p> <p>(tapering)</p> <p>...where do go hole in a wheres do go hole in a wheres do go hole in a wheres...</p>	<p>ERIK (CONT'D)</p> <p>...there we go... there we go, shhhh... shhhh...you're okay... shhhh....</p>
--	--

The floor creaks as Erik starts to wheel Momo around, calming her. Aimee creeps down one spiral step at a time.

161 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 161

Deirdre at the table. The tea candles have burned out.

162 EXT. AIR SHAFT WINDOW - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 162

Through the window bars: Aimee and Deirdre. Aimee walks out. Aimee reappears with a glass of water for Deirdre.

163 INT. BUILDING STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 163

Brigid hustles up the final set of building stairs, bursting from the cramped, narrow stairwell onto the--

164 EXT. TENEMENT ROOFTOP - NIGHT 164

--expanse of a ramshackle roof and its stunning view of the financial district lit up against a navy sky.

Richard arrives, out of breath. We see Brigid and Richard talking but we can't hear them--the hum of the elevator motor room and whoosh of the city is our soundscape.

AROUND BRIGID AND RICHARD, WE TAKE IN THE SKY AND CITY LIGHTS. BLURRED, THE CITY LIGHTS resemble the glow-balls made by the strands of Christmas lights. Focus returns to Brigid and Richard, now silent in each other's arms, small against the enormity of the city.

165 **INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 165

Aimee and Deirdre search for something to say.

DEIRDRE

If I ever get like that...I don't ever want you guys to have to...

Beat.

AIMEE

Mom...I'm sorry.

Deirdre goes to say something, stops.

DEIRDRE

Sorry you're sick.

(Beat.)

That e-mail about us being electrons wasn't religious--it was from a science website.

Aimee goes to respond, can't find the words.

166 **EXT. TENEMENT ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 166

Brigid and Richard against the expanse of the city. Richard stands to leave, Brigid pulls him back down; she holds him.

167 **INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 167

Deirdre studies Aimee who's a bit lost herself.

DEIRDRE

Think you and Carol might still...?

Deirdre realizes this isn't what Aimee needs now.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)

If I skinned my knee or had any kinda setback, my Mom'd say...'This, too, shall pass', and I'd roll my eyes at her, but...this'll pass, it will...

AIMEE
[I know, I know...]

Aimee resists breaking down. Deirdre knows she's hurting.

DEIRDRE
You can love someone for 40 years...
there's still times you're alone, you
know?...but, uh...[I don't know how to
describe it].

Aimee looks to her mom for more, in spite of herself. For a second, it's like she's a little kid again.

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)
...I, uh, drank too much...gotta use the
[bathroom].

Deirdre goes up the staircase; her knee gives her trouble.

AIMEE
Mom...[I love you]...sorry, it smells
really bad in there.

DEIRDRE
Shoulda got Brigid that candle.

Deirdre disappears up the stairs, Aimee hears ERIK AND DEIRDRE UPSTAIRS EXCHANGING WORDS. *Are they arguing?...*

168

INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - 1 MINUTE LATER - NIGHT

168

...Aimee in the stairwell, observing Deirdre and Erik through the bars. They're having an audible-but-indecipherable argument. Deirdre wants to get Momo to the bathroom but Erik insists Deirdre sit down and rest. Deirdre relents, Erik cares for her. He massages her patella tendon. They have a routine. The historic love underscoring this moment hits Aimee hard. SHADOWS CAST FROM ERIK AND DEIRDRE DANCE ON AIMEE'S FACE, LIKE A HOME MOVIE PLAYING ON HER SKIN.

Aimee CREAKS up the final steps as Deirdre helps Momo into the bathroom. Erik sees Aimee, approaches.

AIMEE
Gonna go for a walk around the block...

ERIK	AIMEE (CONT'D)
You okay?	I'm--yeah, I want some air, Dad.

Aimee puts on her coat. Erik searches for something to bridge the gap, to stop her from going, thoughts racing...

ERIK (CONT'D)

I've been losing sleep trying to--I was saying to Father Paul in how.../just *thinking* about losing you guys gets me thinking about...

AIMEE

What're you [saying?]...

In the dim light, ERIK SEES AIMEE IN SHADOW, featureless.

ERIK

...when you were gone, this--

AIMEE

What're you [saying?]...

ERIK (CONT'D)

--fireman was holding a body with your suit on?

AIMEE (CONT'D)

Dad...

ERIK

...but a coata ash melted onto her?, like she got turned into a statue like...

AIMEE

Dad...

Aimee aches for her father but needs to take care of herself. She heads for the UPSTAIRS HALLWAY...

ERIK

...there was gray in her eyes and mouth even, it was...like her whole...

(a discovery)

[...face was gone...]

Aimee doesn't clock it, she's already WALKING OUT--

AIMEE (O.S.)

The car company will call when they're ready, leave your phone by the window so it'll ring.

--Sound of the door shutting--

--Erik, alone. The empty apartment. Strange silence. A toilet flush.

Erik takes out his cell per Aimee's instructions and places it on the windowsill when--A SHADOW CROSSES HIS FACE. He looks outside but can't see anything. He goes into the

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY, gets the LED lantern. He walks back to the window to get a better look, holds up the lantern to the window but THE GLASS ONLY REFLECTS HIS IMAGE. A LOUD CRASH of fallen pots and pans from downstairs.

ERIK
(calling down)
Brigid...?

No answer. A bit unnerved, Erik slowly DESCENDS THE STAIRS...

170 **INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT** 170

...it's brighter here; Erik turns the lantern off, leaves it by the staircase. Pipes clank. He moves into the

KITCHEN--he sees a FEW POTS AND PANS (the ones we saw teetering earlier) fallen in front of the drying rack.

AIMEE(O.S.)
Guys, the car's out front!

171 **INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - 1 MINUTE LATER - NIGHT** 171

Aimee holding the main door open. Deirdre and Momo hustle into their coats, backlit by the hallway fluorescent light.

DEIRDRE
Help her with her coat, will you?...

AIMEE
Is Dad...?

DEIRDRE
[I dunno...]

AIMEE (CONT'D)
(calling down)
...Dad!

DEIRDRE (CONT'D)
Where's Brigid?

AIMEE
With Rich...
(Deirdre wants more info)
...she's embarrassed, she's...[I don't even wanna get into it.]

172 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 172

AIMEE (O.S.)
...Dad!...

ERIK
(calling up)
I heard you...

DEIRDRE (O.S.)
(to Erik, calling down)
Hey, can you grab Mom's blanket and the
pan we brought?

ERIK
Uh-huh.

173 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 173

Aimee and Momo exit the apartment. Deirdre follows, then stops.

174 EXT. VESTIBULE - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 174

Deirdre's figure, hesitating. She walks to the window, until her figure fills most of the window frame. Deirdre walks away, her figure shrinking, revealing the outline of THE VIRGIN MARY STATUE on the air conditioner.

CLOSE ON MARY as we hear the sounds of Deirdre's footsteps leaving, then the sound of the door close as--

174A EXT. ELDRIDGE STREET - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 174A

--as DEIRDRE AND RICHARD AND AIMEE SLAM THE TRUNK shut on Momo's half-folded wheelchair, it's stuck.

DEIRDRE
No, no you gotta...[let me]...

WIDER--they struggle to collapse the wheelchair. They're fighting over how to do it--but can't be heard above the street noise. Eventually one of the foot holders snaps back, scaring Deirdre, who YELPS. This starts Aimee laughing involuntarily. BRIGID BOUNDS OUT OF THE TENEMENT'S FRONT DOOR--she shoos Deirdre and Aimee into the van. Momo stares out of the van window, already buckled in. The tenement's front door light flickers. Richard is exhausted.

AN ELDERLY FUJIANESE COUPLE looks on from across the street.

175 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 175

Erik searches for Momo's blanket. He finds it, folds it when--
-THE DOWNSTAIRS LIGHTS FLICKER, then steady. Then go out.

ERIK

Shit.

Erik is barely visible via artificial light from neighbors' air shaft windows. He puts the blanket down; gropes for the lantern, knocks over a chair, then hears--VIBRATING, faintly, from...*is it in the room?*...

Somewhere--a phone vibrates. Vibrates. Vibrates. Erik finds the lantern, turns it on...the vibrating stops. LED lantern in hand, Erik goes to the fuse box. He tries the switches to no avail. He tries them again, when--VIBRATING, again.

ERIK (CONT'D)

[Is that the phone?]

A phone vibrates. Vibrates. Vibrates. LED lantern in hand--
ERIK GOES UP THE STAIRCASE and into the--

176 INT. UPSTAIRS MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 176

--where steel curves of the stairs throw FANTASTIC SHADOWS on the wall. Erik's phone lights up the windowsill, moving slightly as it vibrates. Vibrates. His heart races as he reaches for the phone.

ERIK

Hello?...hello--

Sudden rumble of the TRASH COMPACTOR from below. He goes to the stairs; as he descends THE MIRRORED CLOSET DOOR IS HALF-OPEN and reflects his lantern, stopping him for a moment. He continues downstairs--

177 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT 177

--where the rumble grows louder with each step...Erik's breath quickens as he moves DOWN THE DARK HALLWAY towards the THE BASEMENT DOOR. He throws it open; fluorescent light floods in--the rumble of the trash compactor is now even louder but more familiar, more like a loud trash compactor.

The trash compactor completes its cycle. Silence.

Erik comes back inside but the spring-hinged door doesn't stay open, it slams shut plunging the room into darkness. It scares him, he drops the lantern.

Erik gropes for something to hold the door open, grabs a paint can holding the anteroom door open, uses it to prop open the basement door...

Fluorescent hallway light spills into the space again via the basement door. Erik's propping it open with a chair.

Erik grasps for the dropped lantern, which has remained on, holds it up and for a second WE ARE JOLTED by what might be

A DARK OUTLINE OF A WOMAN--which quickly reveals itself to be THE OUTLINE OF BRIGID'S COAT hanging on the wall...

Erik sweats--*what is happening to me*--He swings the lantern around and catches a brief glimpse of what might be a **FACE PUSHING THROUGH THE WHITE WALL**, quickly revealed to be the bubbling water stain as--from the depths of the hallway--

...click-clack, click-clack, click-clack...

Erik backs away from the hallway entrance.

...click-clack, click-clack, click-clack...

Erik's heart pounds, he looks towards the door.

...click-CLACK, click-CLACK, click-CLACK...

In a breath, AN ELDERLY CHINESE WOMAN passes the basement door on her way down the hall, wheeling her laundry in a cheap metal cart with a busted wheel. The sounds slowly disappears as she rolls the cart down the hall.

This ordinary event overwhelms Erik; triggers a few ugly sobs. His face, half-visible via the lantern. He sits, quietly terrified, sweating, mumbling the Hail Mary. *Is he recovering from a panic attack?*

ERIK

[What's happening to me?...oh God...]

SLOW PULL BACK, around 25 seconds--almost imperceptible until we glean how small Erik is, alone, surrounded by huge darkness. Then, in the growing darkness above Erik--

A DOOR OPENS. It's the upstairs hallway door. Brigid enters, backlit by the hall light. For the first time WE SEE UPSTAIRS AND DOWNSTAIRS AT THE SAME TIME.

BRIGID

Dad...the driver's gonna have to keep circling the block. Dad...?

ERIK

Yeah, no here I come...

UPSTAIRS:

Brigid searches for something more to say. She stops in the doorway. Brigid returns, searches for something to say.

DOWNSTAIRS:

Erik finds the pan. Erik can't find Momo's blanket.

BRIGID

It's a van for some reason, so...I can ride with you guys to Penn Station... I'll get out with Aimee there, take the subway back...it's not far.

ERIK

Thanks.

DOWNSTAIRS:

Erik at the table.

UPSTAIRS:

Brigid walks down the long hallway, SHUTS the upstairs door leaving--

*

Erik in the epic dark. He goes to leave, but realizes THE LED LANTERN IS STILL ON. Erik turns off the lantern. The shaft of hallway light has a tunnel-like quality. Floating dust particles are visible. Imperceptibly, the dark around Erik slowly saturates, from the darkness of a room without light to a black that voids any sense of architecture. Erik exits down the hallway. *Is the hallway a bit longer than before?* A long beat.

The faint ding of the elevator from deep in the hallway. The sound of the elevator doors opening and closing. The sound of the elevator motor going up. A very long beat.

The propped-open door begins to close entirely on its own; the weight of the chair can no longer hold it open.

The door slowly creaks shut, leaving us in a deep, true

BLACK.

THE END