

Everybody Wants Something From The Gardner

Genre: Upside Down Farce

By Nate Sheehan

Time and Place:

March 17th, 1990, Night. The Parking Garage of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum

Character Descriptions:

The Robbers

Erin – Boston girl, scattered energy and protective. A robber. 20. **Also plays John B.**

Tamia – Boston girl, feels like she needs to be tough as nails. A robber. 19. **Also plays John A.**

Jocelyn – Boston girl, a deep thinker, smaller. A robber. 19. **Also plays Tom.**

The Drag Kings

John A – An industrial baron, Southern money. Middle age.

John B – An industrial baron, NY asshole. Middle age.

Tom – An industrial baron, Silicon Valley nerd. Middle age.

The Rest of Them

Dexter – Wants to get home, a lawyer. 40s, Male.

Bowie – Lost. The brains. A proper queer Boston Irish gangster. Genderfluid.

FADE UP:

SCENE ONE

Three women saunter on, carrying masks and bags, dressed darkly, maybe 90s punk-esque. They are in a parking garage fallen into disrepair.

One of the girls, ERIN suddenly stops in her tracks. The other two, TAMIA and JOCELYN gather their bags, and make themselves comfortable on the floor.

ERIN

I forgot the toolkit.

JOCELYN stares at her in acknowledgment, but doesn't bother to respond. The moment ERIN utters "I forgot", TAMIA, without turning towards her, looks through one of the bags. She doesn't find what she's looking for, so she begins checking her pockets. She pulls out a car key. ERIN begins to run off the way she came while TAMIA simultaneously turns to throw her the key.

Chunk.

Upon the key hitting the ground, ERIN realizes her mistake. She promptly turns around, picks it up and runs off again. TAMIA watches her go, and then...

TAMIA

I couldn't sit in that car one more minute!

JOCELYN

Yes, we heard.

TAMIA

It's hot as balls down here!

JOCELYN

I know. I'm sweating.

TAMIA

And we couldn't even leave the air conditioning on.

JOCELYN

We don't want to draw attention to ourselves. You know that.

TAMIA

And Erin forgot something. Of course she would.

JOCELYN

Of course she would. And we can't fuck up any of it--

TAMIA

(somewhat mockingly)

Cause it's your Dad's stuff, I know.

JOCELYN

... Yeah.

....

TAMIA

We have to wait about another fifteen minutes right?

JOCELYN

Twenty. All the janitorial staff should be gone by latest 9:30.

TAMIA

Right... Is that kinda early?

JOCELYN

The museum closed early for St. Patty's.

ERIN reenters with a small bag. She walks over to TAMIA and JOCELYN with an odd expression on her face, like she's waiting for someone to notice her or... She abruptly holds up the bag.

ERIN

Got it!

They ignore her. ERIN hands TAMIA's car key back. TAMIA puts it in her pocket.

ERIN

It's really a madhouse out there.

JOCELYN

Wait, did you go outside?

ERIN

I took a peak. Someone was trying to get in the garage.

TAMIA

What?!

ERIN

Just some fucker confused in their Corolla.

TAMIA

Oh.

ERIN

I don't think there's anybody in 3 miles of us sober.

TAMIA

How could it be so hot in a parking garage?

ERIN

Hear that?

Whatever sound it is drones on.

ERIN

I think it's a heater. I mean it's for The Gardner Museum. They wouldn't want anybody to catch a breeze walking from the elevator to the car.

TAMIA

(coldly)

No. Guess not.

JOCELYN

Not too rich to barely pay minimum wage when I was a parking attendant.

TAMIA

You kept with that job for so long—

JOCELYN

I mean it was for this--

TAMIA

Yeah, but even for this....

JOCELYN

Everyday... it was "ticket please..."... or sorry those were the good ones. Just "Ticket" ... oh sorry those were the good ones. Usually it was just a hand... A hand that'd say... I guess just some type of vague grunt. I hated it—

ERIN

What do you mean? There's literally so much worse. You just sit all day. But I guess you don't like being bored—

JOCELYN

Yeah, I don't really like sitting still.

ERIN

No.

...

JOCELYN

... Helping this 60 year old man use the machine. You don't need to be literate to use the machine. The entire day in a tiny box -- I'm claustrophobic! -- in that flimsy neon vest that don't fit right at all... like the proportions are just uncomfortably off... between the chest and waist--

TAMIA

Wasn't it always this hot when you worked here?

JOCELYN

Yeah, I think the heat is stuck on high. No one's bothered to fix it.

TAMIA

It's crazy, absolutely crazy.

ERIN

M-hm.

TAMIA

It's like we're in hell!

ERIN

We would be.

TAMIA

What do you mean? There's bitches literally so much worse than us.

JOCELYN

Wait really? 'Cause I like... kinda have a thing for the devil.

ERIN

Ok Jocelyn.

JOCELYN

You know the 1996 Romeo and Juliet movie. The one with Leonardo DiCaprio... And the language doesn't change but it's like modern... yeah, there's this scene at a costume party, and Tybalt is the hottest Satan to ever inhabit this Earth. Forget Leo, Tybalt. I'm gonna marry him.

TAMIA

So that's why you've seen that movie about ten times.

JOCELYN

It's not ten times.

ERIN

Uh... It's at least eight.

JOCELYN

I've seen it seven times over.... (counts) 13 years. That's not even that bad.

TAMIA

It's kinda bad.

JOCELYN

And I haven't gotten either of you to watch it with me!

TAMIA

It's cause you were meant to be bougie. But honestly like 'go you' for that--

ERIN

No she thinks she's better than us. You know I heard that Marty Walsh used to work here.

TAMIA

... In what?

ERIN

I don't know... like security.

TAMIA

Marty in a uniform.

JOCELYN

I can see that....

ERIN

And Tybalt that devil?

JOCELYN

Shut up.

ERIN

Tybalt! Tybalt! Where art thou, Tybalt!?

JOCELYN

Ew. You just made it incesty.

ERIN

You're related to Tybalt? ...

(gasps)

The devil??

JOCELYN

No cus Juliet and Tybalt are cousins--

ERIN

Jocelyn's cousins with the devil, Tybalt–

JOCELYN

No, it's Juliet--

ERIN

Jocelyn's cousins with the devil, Juliet! – ... that's not nice.

JOCELYN

Why is it not nice when it's Juliet?

ERIN

Cus she's like... Juliet. Tybalt–

JOCELYN

You know, it's Tybalt, not Tybalt.

ERIN

Tybalt.

JOCELYN

Tybalt.

ERIN

Tybalt.

TAMIA

Erin, If I keep having to hear that name one more time, I'm gonna take that kit from you, grab the biggest wrench and crank it around both your necks until your heads pops off.

JOCELYN

Fucking relax.

TAMIA

Sorry, just Tybalt got nothing to do with us... or this job.

JOCELYN

Nooo... why not???

ERIN

No, I get it. There's no reason to be talking right now.

...

JOCELYN

A part of me wonders if this is even gonna be worth it--

ERIN

Why?--

JOCELYN

--If they never turn the goddamn heat down!

TAMIA

On Tybalt?

ERIN

You gotta sweat for that dollar bill, girl.

JOCELYN

I sweat easily... where's my dollar bill?

TAMIA

Put on deodorant.

JOCELYN

Ok. It's alright for you to complain, but if it's me--

TAMIA

I'm over it. I just needed that tantrum. What we were offered for this shit...

JOCELYN

I was the one that told you.

TAMIA

It's ridiculous.

ERIN

It's our biggest job.

TAMIA

I know. That's what got me stressing. We got everything out of the car, right?

ERIN

Yeah, we got everything. Now we just gotta get that bag.

JOCELYN

I can't even imagine it.

TAMIA
Imagine what?

JOCELYN
I don't know... like...

Silence. The moments suspends.

JOCELYN
I literally don't know.

ERIN
Is there a way sitting against a post can be more comfortable?

TAMIA
I'm not going back to the car.

ERIN
No, I feel like I'm back in a chair at St. Anthony's.

TAMIA
You and that.

JOCELYN
Why is that actually such a good comparison? Did the design those chairs to resemble sitting against a post?

TAMIA
Why do you have to make everything about St. Anthony's?

ERIN
What isn't about St. Anthony's?

TAMIA
You're so right.

ERIN
No think of literally anything, I'll relate it back to school.

TAMIA
Turning 22.

ERIN
Fuck that's a tough one.

JOCELYN

You had to bring the--

ERIN

You don't turn 22 without turning 16-- oh the .22!

JOCELYN

Remember-- your mom?

TAMIA

That week sophomore year when my mom made me bring a handgun to school? Like just in case when my Dad was being--

ERIN

Oh my GOD! We were so scared!!

JOCELYN

I think they have metal detectors now.

TAMIA

Yeah, that would not work today.

Silence.

TAMIA

That was a crazy week.

JOCELYN

Mm.

TAMIA

Oh my god, I'm just remembering all of that now. That was such a crazy week!

ERIN

We got through it.

TAMIA

You're right.

ERIN

I know.

JOCELYN

That week was a sauna too.

TAMIA

You remember that?

JOCELYN

Yeah.

ERIN

No, I feel like she's right..

TAMIA

I had other priorities... It's way too hot down here. It's claustrophobic.

JOCELYN

And the lights flicker. It's like a haunted house.

TAMIA

Yeah, they flicker.

JOCELYN

Why is every parking garage like a haunted house?

TAMIA

No exit.

JOCELYN

Where's the guy getting paid 20 bucks to scream "Rahh!!"?

ERIN

On break.

TAMIA

He quit because the building where he's working doesn't meet the state building codes.

ERIN

At least the concrete is cool. It doesn't absorb the heat, ya know.

JOCELYN

(disinterested)

M-hm.

TAMIA

(disinterested)

Yep.

ERIN

I don't think I could sleep here.

TAMIA

Why is that even something you're questioning?

JOCELYN

That somehow reminds me.

TAMIA

What?

JOCELYN

I was staying at my uncle's the other night. By the other night, I don't mean yesterday. This was two weeks ago. So I was staying at my uncle's house. And there was a set of wooden Russian dolls in the room I was staying in and on the day I was leaving, as I was picking up my backpack, I knocked them off the dresser. All the little dolls went flying all over the room. I think it made a really loud noise. Somehow, I wasn't fazed. Though I was a little surprised.... Two of them were fine. I put them back on the dresser. Three of them broke. I took the pieces and stuffed them in my backpack. There also was a little glass ornament on the dresser, and I thought I've already come this far.... I pocketed it. I didn't need it. I think it's somewhere in my apartment now. I just remember sprinting down the stairs. I could hear the dolls shaking against each other in my bag and yelled 'goodbyeeeee!!!'.

TAMIA

How does that relate to anything.

ERIN

Yeah, I've done something similar.

JOCELYN

What?

ERIN

Ok, so I'm at Regina's--

A loud crash can be heard off stage. TAMIA and ERIN jump.

TAMIA

What was that??

JOCELYN

That's the heater. It like, I like to say 'burps', sometimes.

TAMIA

Are you sure? That was really fucking loud. There's no one doing construction or anything after the garage closes?

JOCELYN

No.

ERIN

How do you do construction in a parking garage?

JOCELYN

Like you do anywhere else... things break. You have to fix them—

TAMIA

You're 100% sure that's the heater. We're the only ones here?

JOCELYN

We're alone.

TAMIA

Cus if we got a witness, it's less likely the business can do anything about that for this one.

ERIN

Tamia, we're fine. Jos says it's just the heater. She worked here.

TAMIA

You're right... Erin, you were saying?

ERIN

So I'm at Regina's... I forgot what I was going to say.

TAMIA

It'll come back to you if its important.

ERIN

I guess that's the universe – I should just keep it to myself.

Silence.

TAMIA

Wait – were you going to give the accidental dine and dash story?

ERIN

No, it wasn't that. I had something else and it was so fucking relevant.

Another quieter 'burp' from the drill.

TAMIA

That freaks me out.

It's literally just the heater.

JOCELYN

I can't explain it. It's dumb.

TAMIA

Maybe I'm just used to it.

JOCELYN

It sounded like a drill that time.

TAMIA

Maybe it's our worst nightmare!

ERIN

CANNIBAL CLOWNS.

JOCELYN

TAMIA AND JOCELYN
DETAILED DIAGRAMS OF LUNGS.

ERIN
Yes, those... I have a different example of what Jocelyn was saying about her uncle.

TAMIA
What?

ERIN
It's like when you're a little high, and then hit the corner of another car when parking, but you don't do anything about it and just park across the lot so you're not suspected.

JOCELYN
Oh yeah.

TAMIA
Oh yeah.

JOCELYN
CANNIBAL CLOWNS!

ERIN
DETAILED DIAGRAMS OF LUNGS!

JOCELYN stands. She looks out on us for a moment then sits.

TAMIA

What are you doing?

JOCELYN stands again. She begins walking a little aimlessly around the garage, like how one does when they have pent up energy and are bored.

JOCELYN

I don't know.

TAMIA

Yes, I know, but why?

JOCELYN

I needed something to do.

TAMIA

Well that's dumb. Just stay sitting.

JOCELYN

We haven't done something this organized before.

ERIN

That doesn't mean we're not good at this.

JOCELYN

That's--

JOCELYN's eyes suddenly widen in fear. She runs back and slides down behind the post where TAMIA and ERIN are comfortable.

TAMIA

What was that about?

JOCELYN

(whispers)

SHHH. SOMEONE'S HERE.

TAMIA

(whispers)

What do they look like?

JOCELYN

I don't know. I didn't get that good a look.

ERIN
(whispers)

Did they see--

In business casual, DEXTER enters with a very large briefcase appearing simultaneously exhausted and uptight. He walks past in front of the trio. He takes out his cellphone, and begins looking at it. They follow him with their gaze. He doesn't seem to notice them. Once he passes, TAMIA rises. She produces a large switchblade from seemingly nowhere and sneaks up behind DEXTER. She does not move fast enough for any blocking of violence. DEXTER exits, and TAMIA follows. The lights flicker dramatically. JOCELYN and ERIN look up at them. Someone screams.

BLACKOUT.

LIGHTS UP ON:

SCENE TWO

Dexter stands alone, center.

DEXTER

Isabella Stewart Gardner, in her day, often called affectionately by her city “Donna Isabella”, “Isabella of Boston” and “Mrs. Jack” was born in 1840 in New York City, New York, United States. Daughter of a wealthy linen merchant. Childhood in Manhattan. High School in Paris. Fluent in French and Italian and art. Once, in 1912, while attending the Boston Symphony, she wore a white headband which read “Oh you Red Sox”. She was the most eccentric woman. No one knew what to do. She was the most eccentric woman.

In 1858, while visiting a friend, in Boston, she met John Lowell Gardner, often called Jack, a man so Boston that entire towns are named after his lineage. Descendent of Percivell Lowell. Grandson of John Peabody. Of course he went to Harvard. Isabella married Jack. Their first baby died of Pneumonia. The second was lost in a miscarriage and doctors said Isabella couldn’t carry children. So Jack and Isabella traveled. They saw Paris. They saw Russia. They saw Scadanavia. They saw Egypt and Turkey and Central Europe and China and Peru. They even painted her in Venice.

Project painting of Isabella Stewart Gardner in Venice by Anders Zorn.

DEXTER

And she didn’t just travel. She collected. In 1898, after Jack passed, she bought new property to dedicate a house in Boston’s Fenway district to all the art she brought home. She packed every room with paintings, ceramics, textiles, furniture, rare books and manuscripts. Each with its own period or theme. Each with its own name. The Yellow Room. The Dutch Room. Little Salon. Short Gallery. Tapestry Room. Gothic Room. Over 7500 art pieces in a three story house. With breathtaking courtyards and gardens. I don’t know where to look. Once she hosted a boxing match in her home and danced while the men fought. She wore diamonds in her hair. She was the most eccentric woman. She often spent hours burning papers and documents about herself. The Boston Reporter once called her one of the “seven wonders of Boston.” Another newspaper said she walked zoo lions in the Boston Common. She opened the museum to the public in 1903. Originally called “Fenway Court”, it now adorns the name of its founder – The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. At the reception, she served champagne and donuts.

And before she died, in 1924, she instructed that not a detail of the museum be changed. This was her collection. Everything in its place. Exactly how it's meant to be perceived. Everything confounding.

By the 1980s, the museum began struggling for money. On March 17th, 1990 – I should’ve known. I should’ve just gone home early like everyone else. Or at least not left through the parking garage.

BLACKOUT.

LIGHTS UP ON:

SCENE THREE

TAMIA, JOCELYN and ERIN as at the end of Scene One. TAMIA is back to where she was sitting before she chased after DEXTER, as if she never moved. The weapon has disappeared. DEXTER is a little more awkward. He lays with a pool of blood by his neck. ERIN and JOCELYN glare at TAMIA.

The glares are held, beginning to make TAMIA uncomfortable. There is a pause, then...

TAMIA

I didn't mean to do that, really!

JOCELYN

(sarcastically)

Uh-huh, just like how I didn't mean to steal the Russian dolls at my uncle's house.

ERIN

(sarcastically)

And how I didn't mean to hit that car in the parking lot when I was high.

.... TAMIA sputters a bit.

TAMIA

But both of you didn't actually mean to do those things!!

ERIN

How do you know?

TAMIA

Because you don't purposefully hit another car when parking.

JOCELYN

Yeah, but you don't accidentally murder someone when sneaking up behind them with a switchblade.

TAMIA

And you broke the Russian dolls by accident! Your argument makes no sense.

JOCELYN

You murdered someone!

TAMIA

No, it was by accident!

Silence.

ERIN

I wonder what he was still doing here?

JOCELYN

He's dead. He can't do much of anything.

ERIN

No, I mean most people would have gone home by now.

JOCELYN

I don't know... must of been working late.

ERIN

Did people often work late when you worked here?

JOCELYN

I wouldn't know. I was always out by 6. I just let people in, they could get out on their own.

ERIN

Have any of you ever thought about why we were hired for this job?

TAMIA

Because I'm good at this. It's something I'm good at.

JOCELYN

Someone wanted me to die of heat exhaustion.

ERIN

No, yes I know, but why did they want what we're taking?

JOCELYN

Why would I know?

ERIN

Don't you want to look into the paintings we're stealing?

TAMIA

It's better not to.

ERIN

It's just shit has already very clearly hit the fan, right? I want to know if this is worth it.

TAMIA

One dude died. That's not a reason to abort this shit.

JOCELYN

Look, no one but us knows he's dead.

TAMIA

Exactly.

ERIN

I want to know why we're here. Like why that probably a lawyer – look at that suit – is worth the trouble.

TAMIA

It doesn't matter why, it just matters how. We all know what we're doing, right?

JOCELYN

Yes.

ERIN

Yep.

TAMIA stands. She begins stretching.

JOCELYN

(to TAMIA)

Ok. It's ok for you to stand and be weird, but when I do it--

ERIN

I want to live on a ranch.

TAMIA

That'd be nice. Like, open country?

ERIN

Yeah.

TAMIA

I'd really like that. Some place like Colorado... Or Montana.

ERIN

I feel like it actually suits you better than me. I'd eventually get tired of it.

TAMIA

We should probably move our friend.

BOWIE stumbles on. They is dressed in business casual and hold a cigarette and give the demeanor as if high on something else. They silently although dramatically gasps.

ERIN

The dead guy?

TAMIA

Who else?

ERIN points at BOWIE.

ERIN

Them.

TAMIA turns.

BOWIE

What the fuck did you do to him?!?!?!?

TAMIA

It was an accident, ok? I've already gotten enough crap about this. They won't believe--

BOWIE

But he's dead!!! He's been sliced at the neck. What type of accident is that?

TAMIA

Sometimes we do things by accident!

BOWIE

God, it is so hot down here. Is it alright if I take off my jacket? I'm gonna lay it over our friend Dexter.

BOWIE lays their jacket over DEXTER's head.

JOCELYN

You know him?

BOWIE

No, not really, it's just he looks so ugly with the blood and stuff....so what brings you three to the parking garage tonight?

ERIN

What brings you to the parking garage?

BOWIE

I work here.

TAMIA

Uh-huh. Who are you?

BOWIE

A friend of Whitey's.

Sighs of relief.

JOCELYN

God damn, for a second I thought you were a cop.

BOWIE

No, no, no. Please be comfortable.

ERIN

What's your job here?

BOWIE

I don't have a title.

ERIN

Then, why are you here now?

BOWIE

Curiosity. And I have an obligation.

ERIN

To?

BOWIE

Huh, yeah. We don't ask that. I don't ask--

JOCELYN

Who's we?

BOWIE

(whiny and irritated)

Why the heck do you need to know me? Why don't you just accept that I'm here breathing down your neck just like I do with everyone else, ok?

JOCELYN

... Do you work at the museum specifically?

ERIN

(quietly, to JOCELYN)

Jos, I think this guy's just high out of his mind.

BOWIE

I have my role in it... I know you don't work here.

JOCELYN

No, I'm a parking attendant... and my friends and I were originally were going to go out, but I was working late so we came here. Then...

TAMIA

We found the dead guy, but were too scared to call the police because me and Erin weren't supposed be here.

ERIN

Thanks for dropping my name.

BOWIE

I see. I see. Let's pretend that's true. How long have you been working at the parking garage now?

JOCELYN

... Six months.

BOWIE

The thing is I have also been working here for six months and haven't seen you once in the parking attendant booth 300 feet that way.

JOCELYN

I can't explain tha--

ERIN

Oh! She's been sick!

BOWIE

No, I know disease. I can smell it.

ERIN

That means?

BOWIE

SHUT UP! ...

(calmer)

Why did you kill Dexter?

TAMIA

I didn't mean to.

ERIN

What's it to you? How do you know him?

BOWIE

It doesn't look like you didn't mean to. Not a single person in this world is going to believe you.

ERIN

That's what I was telling her!!!

JOCELYN

She literally snuck up behind him.

ERIN

Tiptoeing!

JOCELYN

Tiptoeing!

ERIN

Tip--

TAMIA

(releasing her rage.)

Ok, and you accidentally hit someone's car when parking when you were high!!

(Now pointing to JOCELYN)

And you broke and stole your uncle's Russian dolls!!

ERIN

Those aren't comparable things.

TAMIA

But they kinda are!

ERIN

How?

TAMIA

Hey, don't be so quick to judge.

BOWIE

What did the other one of you ask me?

A loud crash, similar to earlier, is heard off stage. ALL tense. Tamia falls over. Getting back up, she glances under her jacket.

BOWIE

And what the fuck is that?

JOCELYN

The heater down here is a nightmare.

BOWIE

That's not a heater.

TAMIA

Wow, I have blood all down my left arm.

ERIN

Take off your jacket.

TAMIA takes off her jacket. All up and down her left arm is bright red.

JOCELYN

WOW!

ERIN

It's so red! Shit!

TAMIA

Shit. I must of cut myself when I accidentally killed Dexter!

BOWIE

Funny.

TAMIA

I didn't even feel it.

ERIN

Do you feel it now?

TAMIA

No. I don't feel anything.

JOCELYN

We should bandage you.

ERIN

Oh -- I-- I left the first aid kit in the car!

ERIN runs off.

TAMIA

Of course she would.

JOCELYN

Of course she would.

There are two loud crashes. JOCELYN gets up to examine TAMIA.

Knock! Knock!...

BOWIE

What the fuck is that?

TAMIA

Fucking heater agrees they're crazy.

JOCELYN

Who's there?

BOWIE

That was my question.

TAMIA

That was my question who? Something's on its way. Something's definitely on its way – Wait, are you the heist girls? – Jocelyn, they made you one of the heist girls?

BOWIE

We're 3 girls in a parking garage. I work here. How the fuck do you know my name?

JOCELYN

JOCELYN takes a step towards BOWIE. TAMIA pulls her back.

Erin has the gun...

TAMIA
(in JOCELYN's ear)

I hear good. I hear things.

BOWIE

Were you listening in on us?

TAMIA

NO!

BOWIE

Ok. Would you mind telling us how you know Dexter?

TAMIA

BOWIE

No, no, no – don't ask me that.

TAMIA

Why?

BOWIE

That was my question who? That was my question who? That was my question – This morning, there was somebody on my porch, or maybe more than one somebody -- I know because there was three thunderous rasps on my door. Rasp! Rasp! Rasp! – I keep my blinds closed, so I had no view on them. And they had no view on me. I grabbed my shooter, tucked it in my jeans and approached the door with the nimbleness of a mouse. I peered through the peephole. Do you know who was there? I saw those ugly pretty faces. I thought to myself 'why am I here?' I knew I had to get to the garage tonight, make my way over to Fenway -- Catch a ballgame. They're playing tonight.

JOCELYN

Ok, Erin's definitely right.

TAMIA

(to JOCELYN)

About...

JOCELYN discreetly makes a gesturing to indicate someone injecting something in their forearm.

TAMIA

Just cut us the bullshit. I'm starting to feel my arm.

BOWIE

The ballgame I'm talking about isn't at Fenway, it's a few blocks down, across the Muddy. It's right here, isn't it?

JOCELYN

I've never been into sports. Maybe you've got the wrong spot. We really are busy with something right now.

BOWIE

Not here to play? Alright, so, six months in this parking garage! I never saw you.

TAMIA groans. JOCELYN rushes to hold her up.

JOCELYN

We have a little more important things to deal with.

(to TAMIA)

What happened?

TAMIA

I just started feeling it.

BOWIE

This is pretty important. You have been here for six months.

JOCELYN

Quiet or I fucking swear–

BOWIE

Erin will be back in a second, it's ok.

JOCELYN

(to TAMIA, softly)

Put pressure on it with your jacket... Let me tie it.

JOCELYN takes TAMIA's jacket and ties it around her left arm. From here, TAMIA gets increasingly delirious as her pain intensifies. JOCELYN then turns to BOWIE.

JOCELYN

How do you know me?

BOWIE

I sometimes go by Bowie if that makes you feel better.

JOCELYN

Like the singer?

BOWIE

The singer's like me. I know everything.

TAMIA

What is he on?

JOCELYN

What are you on?

BOWIE

Blow. I know everything.

TAMIA

Right.

BOWIE

Erin seems to be taking longer than expected. Try me.

TAMIA

... What caused the universe to start?

JOCELYN

Tamia, don't-

BOWIE

Well when a Mommy pre-universe and a Daddy pre-universe love each other very much... they do this little thing called the // Big Bang.

JOCELYN

O-K.

TAMIA

What was the last thing my Dad said to me?

BOWIE

Was it something along the lines of, "Can you handle the desserts for next weekend? And while you're in the area, could ya pick up the envelope from Mr. Duffy, he's late on his payments again."

TAMIA

Oh my god. That's right.

TAMIA

Did the moon landing really happen?

BOWIE

No.

TAMIA

Is it important that Dexter's dead?

BOWIE

Honestly no clue.

TAMIA

So you lied. You don't know everything. How long do we have on climate change?

BOWIE

We're already dead.

TAMIA

Why is Erin taking so long?

BOWIE turns pale.

JOCELYN

Probably trying to remember where she put the fucking—

BOWIE

I don't know. Something's odd happening that way.

TAMIA

That's twice! You basically don't know anything.

JOCELYN

How are you feeling? Is the jacket putting enough pressure?

TAMIA

I'm fine! They knows what my Dad said to me.

JOCELYN

Lots of people know of your Dad. Maybe they saw something. Maybe they took a guess. Maybe you're misremembering.

TAMIA

I don't misremember.

JOCELYN

They're high as the movie Airplane. I'm worried about your wound being open.

TAMIA

Knew about my Dad.

JOCELYN

And my father's at the bottom of the Mystic. It's not really news.

BOWIE

Uh, it's the Charles actually.

TAMIA

Ask em something. It's fun.

JOCELYN

Why can't you say who you are?

BOWIE

I'm the devil.

JOCELYN

Oh...

TAMIA

He looks nothing like Tybalt.

BOWIE

Like who?

TAMIA

But she still might have a crush on you.

BOWIE

Oh, really?

JOCELYN

No I don't. We were talking about this character from a movie earlier--

BOWIE

Well. Get use to it. This is what you're stuck with.

TAMIA

Though seriously... where's Erin? I'm starting to feel my arm and ow oh oh ah.

In response to the pain, TAMIA loses her footing and falls.

JOCELYN

I can go look for her.

TAMIA

And leave me with the devil?

JOCELYN

I'm sure they are really sweet once you get to know them. Like--

TAMIA

The devil?

BOWIE

Jocelyn, you know if I can't say what's going on that way... .

JOCELYN

No. I don't know.

BOWIE

If I can't tell you...

JOCELYN

Erin's that way.

BOWIE

Ok then. Suit yourself.

JOCELYN exits. There is another loud crash. In an awkward silence, there is a similarly awkward tension between TAMIA and BOWIE. She takes out a cross necklace from under her shirt. Then, DEXTER begins screaming.

DEXTER

AHHH! AHHH! AHH!!

DEXTER stands with the coat on his head. He scrambles to get it off.

DEXTER

(gasping)

There's blood on me! There's... there's... it's all over my shirt. Is it mine?

DEXTER pauses to take a breath. He turns to see TAMIA and BOWIE. He yelps. He points at BOWIE.

DEXTER

It's you! It's you. I saw you in my sleep. You... you.... AHHHH! I think... I think I fainted.

BOWIE

Yeah...

DEXTER

Who-- what are-- who are you-- what are you do--

BOWIE

Nothing.

(BOWIE gestures towards TAMIA.)

She tried to kill you.

DEXTER

Wha?--

TAMIA

It was by accident! How many--

BOWIE

She tried to kill you.

DEXTER

She tried ta--

TAMIA nudges herself forward, from the ground. She takes a breath to begin to speak.

DEXTER

STAY AWAY FROM ME! STAY AWAY! STAY AWAY!

DEXTER begins backing up from TAMIA.

BOWIE

Wait! If you leave that way, you'll probably not come back!

TAMIA

Where's your car? We checked the whole garage to make sure nobody else was here.

DEXTER

I'M WALKING DISTANCE FROM WORK, I MEAN HEL--! WHY AM I-- ! STAY AWAY FROM ME. I'M BACKING UP! I'M BACKING UP!

DEXTER exits. He never picked up his briefcase, which is on the ground near what must be really TAMIA's blood puddle.

TAMIA

That didn't really just happen, did it?

BOWIE

I don't know. So it's just you and me.

TAMIA

YOU stay away from me.

TAMIA, very awkwardly, begins to try to crawl away. She moves very slowly.

BOWIE

What have I done? I think I'm somehow being misperceived by all of you.

TAMIA

What's with that guy's head?

BOWIE

You try waking up next to the person that tried to murder you.

TAMIA

Shut the fuck up.

BOWIE

Ok, but you tried to kill him.

TAMIA

Ok, but it looks like I barely even left a scratch... I'm a little disappointed in myself.

BOWIE

So you admit killing him was your intention?

TAMIA

I mean, yeah, I guess... but he might've compromised everything with the robbery and he seems kinda weird, is that really so terrible?

BOWIE

Personally... no, not really. But to me it still looks compromised.

....

TAMIA

Where are my friends?

BOWIE

I don't know.

TAMIA

You said you know everything and I think you do. Where are they?

BOWIE

I never said that.

TAMIA

You literally did.

BOWIE

Did I?

TAMIA

Yes.

BOWIE

Oh.

TAMIA's panting at this point from the pain in her arm.

TAMIA

Why is it so fucking hot down here?

BOWIE

It's hell.

TAMIA

What in the hell?

BOWIE

Something like that.

....

TAMIA

I'm gonna find my friends.

BOWIE

As I've tried to say before... I can't guarantee you'll come back.

TAMIA

I know. But I need the first aid kit. My arm is killing me.

BOWIE

Word choice Tamia!

TAMIA

I need to get this wrapped up.

BOWIE

That's better.

TAMIA, most the way to the exit, hobbles or crawls off, leaving BOWIE alone. There is a loud crash.

BOWIE

Yeah, she's not coming back.

BOWIE takes a moment. They changes somehow intangibly. They imitates Tamia, then becomes themself (differently).

BOWIE

'I could not sit in that car one more minute!' It's absurdly hot down here. I wonder... I wonder where I might be able to find some water. I hate this place. Desperately thirsty. Is it ---

A car alarm sounds from somewhere interrupting BOWIE.

BOWIE

Gahhhhh.

BOWIE glowers at something offstage where everyone else has exited. They yells, but still is barely audible.

BOWIE

THIS IS POINTLESS! I HAD A WHOLE THING, BUT NO ONE CAN HEAR ME!

BOWIE stomps off the opposite exit in a huff. The car alarm continues.

Then, ERIN runs on with the first aid kit. She's in a panic.

ERIN

I GOT IT! I GOT IT! WHERE'S EVERYBODY? HELLO?

ERIN begins wandering around the stage, searching for her friends. BOWIE reenters and strides across towards the other exit, still quite angry. As BOWIE is leaving, DEXTER enters leisurely. He has his air-pods on. He pops them off, and then covers his ears as he hears the alarm for the first time. The pain in his eardrums causes him much struggle as he plugs his air-pods back into his ears. Once he finishes, he begins panting, as a response to all the energy that this task took. He spots his briefcase.

He leaps towards it, tries to retrieve it, but can't seem to lift it off the ground. He puts his back into it and struggles greatly, falling over in the process and in other ways injuring himself. DEXTER continues to wrestle this strange unmoving briefcase before eventually taking a step back. He stares at the unmoving object in disbelief. Slowly, he begins to back away before running, falling over himself as he exits again.

Even above the other noise, a loud crash can be heard. The car alarm keeps ringing.

BLACKOUT.

LIGHTS UP ON:

SCENE FOUR

ERIN, TAMIA and JOCELYN arrive as three men in mock, expensive cowboy dress. The car alarm continues very faintly before fading out.

We are on the porch of a luxurious Montana ranch. This vacation home is at least five times the size of wherever you live. This porch is larger than your largest room. The ground and sky extend forever.

Drag kings. TAMIA as JOHN A. ERIN as JOHN B. JOCELYN as TOM. All three gentlemen hold drinks.

TOM

Yeah, looking over the pre-contract, not sure if the—

JOHN B

I told you, if need be, I'll--

TOM

Hm?

JOHN B

I'll throw you off it.

TOM

The Gardner Museum sale?

JOHN B

Just sign it as is.

TOM

.... Ok.

JOHN B

Ok what?

TOM

I'll take it if--

JOHN A

Gentlemen, they don't know who we are.

TOM

Does it matter?

.... to audience.

JOHN A
I'm John A!

JOHN B
I'm John B!

TOM
I'm Tom.

JOHN A
We're here to drink, hunt, finalize the details of a buyout--

JOHN B
The Gardner Museum!

JOHN A
Yes, the Isabella Stewart Gardner in Boston. Along the way we'll impart our wisdom. Then, we'll hunt again. Are we doing anything else, Tom?

TOM
No, I think you covered it.

JOHN B
I could shoot something right now....

TOM
Only you could be this tense in the country.

JOHN B
It's burning out today.

JOHN A
Where are we John?

JOHN B
The devil's porch.

JOHN A
Any reason -- wait, who's porch?

JOHN B
He's the majority owner as of two days ago.

JOHN A
I'll be damned. The little-- damn't! Where are we more generally?

JOHN B
The ranch.

JOHN A
My ranch in the Big Sky//

TOM
Except for the porch. The porch is // the Irishman's.

JOHN A
// Where I spend most my summers-- That Irishman can't be taking the porch. How do they have... I mean, the means--

TOM
But he did, didn't he.

JOHN B
Why wouldn't he? What can't you see from out here?

JOHN A
Shut your trap. It was my porch...

JOHN B
And now it's the Irish's fucking porch.

...

TOM
He uses it to-- for ... ?!

JOHN B
No where you'd come up with that?

TOM
You said...

JOHN A
I have a meeting of sorts with that Irishman next week.

JOHN B
About the museum?

JOHN A
In a way.

JOHN B

In a way?

JOHN A

It's more like a duel.

TOM

What does that entail and how does it relate?

JOHN A

We'll meet at a New York high noon-- which if you don't know, is a 9 AM on Fifth Avenue. I guess it's what gentleman do when they can't find an agreement.

JOHN B

What makes it a duel?

JOHN A

I accidentally spilled a drink on him at his birthday.

TOM

That's all?

JOHN A

If I remember correctly, the shirt he was wearing isn't suppose to exist. All other versions of it have been burned along with any hard copies of the design along with any factories that produced cloth for the shirt to be made. And a digital rendition of the design was found on one iPad which since has been released into space.

JOHN B

Sure, but what I meant was what makes the meeting a duel?

JOHN A

One of us will live. One of us will die.

JOHN B

You mean one of you will leave happy and the other will leave for vacation.

JOHN A

Actually no. I'm--

TOM

To be clear, we're talking about the same person that's brokering our deal with the city for the museum?

JOHN A

Same one.

JOHN B
I could kill something right now...

TOM
You're repeating yourself John.

JOHN B
Call up the hunting guide.

JOHN A
A man needs to blow off some steam.

TOM
\We have this meeting to attend to first.

JOHN B
You have so little fun, don't you, Tom?

JOHN A
He's right. Work then play.

JOHN B
Work is all about knowing when to take the shot. Lets go shooting.

JOHN A
No--

JOHN B
I've said this before, but I'll say it again.

JOHN A
John.

JOHN B
I always made every decision on instinct. Then there's Tom here who's hires McKinsey to maximize efficiency. In the short term it's effective and I respect it, but that little voice in me that's never failed me-- I don't really trust it.

TOM
I disagree with you on this premise that more recently developed modes of analysis are necessarily replacing intuition, rather, it's just indisputably preferable to gather as much information as possible.

JOHN B
Well--

TOM
But let me be clear, I built my empire of algorithms--

JOHN A
Oil.

JOHN B
Steel.

TOM
With nothing but my grit, drive and survival instinct. I got

JOHN B
Several international subsidiaries

JOHN A
Lobbyists

TOM
Media connections

JOHN B
And I can still make more.

The sound of an eagle's cry echoes through the valley.

TOM
I didn't know the Big Sky had bald eagles.

JOHN A
It has very few. This is a lucky sight.

They look.

JOHN A
You know, it's always incredible... the air out here is so fresh... it keeps my skin young.

TOM
You look plastic.

JOHN A
(suddenly)
Now about our deal.

TOM
Our deal.

JOHN A

The Gardner is a place suspended in time. Left to painstakingly detailed specifications of the woman who founded it. Every painting, every couch from which to sit on to look at a painting has its own rules--

JOHN B

Because the three of us taking the time to consider improvements for a city's art institutions is now to be looked down upon.

JOHN A

As our actions may be considered an intrusion to this legacy, we see a barrier to our purchase.

TOM

This is where that Irishman who you are having disagreements with comes into play?

JOHN A

The Irishman has various connections in the city that will help us get our way.

JOHN B

But you have a "duel" with him?

JOHN A

I'm told it's one sin too many--

TOM

Between the museum and the shirt, that is?

JOHN B

Your sins maybe. I don't sin.

JOHN A

--So we've made an arrangement.

JOHN B

Sure.

TOM

Should this, um, conflict of yours be any concern for the rest of us regarding this sale?

JOHN A

No, my personal life aren't issues for either of you. We're buying this museum.

JOHN B

// Like how the Irish bought your porch.

JOHN A

Shut up!!

JOHN B

Was it just the porch? I heard he was speculating about the pool as well. Johnny here LLC'd every room of his mansion and put them into stocks in hopes to sell off each individually. Either that or each room was on the housing market and his hands have been forced into a few deals. Like selling a porch and keeping the rest of the property. No matter, we're on your neighbors lawn--

TOM

Wood.

JOHN B

What?

TOM

We're on his neighbor's wood.

JOHN B

What?

TOM

The porch is made out of wood.

JOHN A

Let's get back to the--

JOHN B

The Stewart Gardner.

JOHN A

Confirming that we've established that the ownership will split equal to the contributions to the purchase. And before we sign any contracts, I want to get to some consensus on renovations.

JOHN B

As long as we don't make changes to the courtyard.

JOHN A

It might not be in our best interests to force ourselves into sentimental holes.

TOM

I looked over the design. The entrance is currently poorly positioned as it sits away from the main street and the parking garage is a little too close to the museum itself. Our patrons shouldn't be hearing traffic.

JOHN A

It's Boston, not California. Everything's close together.

TOM

I don't see how that means we have to make it that way.

JOHN A

I don't have the patience to explain why--

TOM

You're acting as if we don't have options.

JOHN B

(indicating JOHN A)

HE doesn't have options.

JOHN A

We're not talking about options, we're talking about decisions.

JOHN B

I'll buy your living room!

JOHN A

What did you just say?

JOHN B

I'll buy your living room!! Will that make it easier?

JOHN A

You and me on Fifth, tomorrow morning!

TOM

What are you so worked up about, John?

JOHN A

How about you start digging for me?

TOM

What?

JOHN A

Start on those renovations. Dig to the Gardner.

JOHN A finds a saw. With much effort, he cuts a fairly large hole in the porch.

TOM

Here? Now?

JOHN A takes his glass and raises it.

JOHN A

To the Gardner!

JOHN B and TOM follow suit.

JOHN B AND TOM

To the Gardner!

*TOM rises. JOHN A now finds a jackhammer and lumbers over to position it in the center of the porch, where the hole is.. Once he has it set, he hands it off to TOM, who starts the hammer.**Everyone watches for a few. JOHN A hums to represent the hammers noise. TOM stops the jackhammer to take a breath. JOHN A stops humming.*

TOM

This is so much more difficult than I thought It'd be!

JOHN B

(while wiping tears)

I find this all so amusing.

*TOM resumes with the jackhammer. JOHN B wanders down center, with a spotlight. JOHN A, behind him, follows.**Music cues. JOHN A takes lead on this-- he may play a piano tucked in the corner, strum a guitar, conduct an invisible orchestra or even an orchestra represented through some object. Whatever suits him.**JOHN B takes center. He sings My Way in the style of Frank Sinatra. It's very dramatic, in equal parts searingly emotional and masculine.*

JOHN B

[Verse 1]And now, the end is nearAnd so I face the final curtainMy friend, I'll say it clearI'll state my case, of which I'm certainI've lived a life that's fullI traveled each and every highwayAnd more, much more than thisI did it my way

[Verse 2]

Regrets, I've had a few
But then again, too few to mention
I did what I had to do
And saw it through without exemption
I planned each charted course
Each careful step along the byway
And more, much more than this
I did it my way

[Chorus]

Yes, there were times, I'm sure you knew
When I bit off more than I could chew
But through it all, when there was doubt
I ate it up and spit it out
I faced it all, and I stood tall
And did it my way

[Verse 3]

I've loved, I've laughed and cried
I've had my fill, my share of losing
And now, as tears subside
I find it all so amusing
To think I did all that
And may I say, not in a shy way
Oh, no, oh, no, not me
I did it my way

[Chorus]

For what is a man, what has he got?
If not himself, then he has naught
To say the things he truly feels
And not the words of one who kneels
The record shows I took the blows
And did it my way

[Outro]

Yes, it was my way

Before he can finish the song, TOM interrupts JOHN B. He leans against the jackhammer, now wears a construction vests on top of his cowboy attire.

TOM

John, I think it should be your shift now

JOHN B

Can't you see I'm busy.

TOM

Your shift.

*JOHN B begrudgingly lumbers over to the jackhammer and puts on his own vest.
JOHN A stops music making as well to join them. He puts on a vest as well. When JOHN B starts the jackhammer, JOHN A starts the humming noise.*

TOM

Tell me more about this list you were making.

JOHN B

WHAT LIST?

TOM

The entrepreneurial habits list you recently published. In Forbes. I haven't gotten the chance to look at it. What's it about?

JOHN B

WELL, HOW DID YOU START YOUR BUSINESS, TOM?

TOM

... I thought about what I wanted. And then I made sure I got it.

JOHN B

WELL, I DID THE FIRST PART OF THAT. THAT'S THE LIST...

TOM

That's all it is?

JOHN B

Read the article.

TOM

Is it in your plans for restructuring?

JOHN B stops hammering and looks at TOM. JOHN A stops making the noise.

JOHN B

You're a nerd, Tom.

TOM

Why?

JOHN B

Because you make smartphones.

TOM

You should continue working.

JOHN B

Sometimes I don't know where guys like you belong. Nothing you say makes sense.

JOHN B re-continues working. JOHN A resumes the noise.

TOM

The way you're using that hammer is an attraction in itself.

JOHN B

That damn Irish devil. Thinking he can buy out the porch.

(putting emphasis on his hammering)

WHAT HE DOESN'T KNOW... ..

TOM

What he doesn't know--

JOHN B

Is I'm about to move myself onto that real estate!

TOM

I'll do the Gardner deal as is.

JOHN B

Good. We need you.

TOM

... Are you getting to the bottom?

JOHN B

Not even close.

TOM

On the subject of bottoms, what exactly are we looking for?

JOHN B

What do you mean?

TOM

Oil paintings?

JOHN B

Oil?

TOM

Body oil?

JOHN B stops hammering. JOHN A stops making the noise.

JOHN B

Excuse me... We said we're digging to the Gardner, right?

TOM

That's right. I was just thinking because you mentioned your shoulder was tightening up.

JOHN B

That's... ok.

JOCELYN resumes hammering. JOHN A resumes his noise.

TOM

About John A's 'duel' with the Irishman this week? Know any more about that?

JOHN B

Something between a meeting and a shootout. He was being very odd about it.

TOM

I heard the stain didn't really come out.

JOHN B

I actually heard he refused to have the shirt washed out of anger.

TOM

I heard he's wearing it as a nightshirt to keep himself heated. And about the duel?

JOHN B

I saw a story about it on the news, but I'd really have to ask.

(to JOHN A)

John?

JOHN A ignores them. He just keeps making the noise.

TOM

He doesn't seem to want to talk about it.

JOHN B

(to TAMIA)

JOHN A?!

TOM

Must mean he's trying to hide something from us.

JOHN B stops hammering again. JOHN A gasps for air.

JOHN B

Damn right. Maybe he's having an affair. I know him and Clarissa been having problems.

TOM

Maybe he sold more than the porch and it's not yet made public.

TOM

Why do you think people hide things?

JOHN B

Like John A?

TOM

No, I can't find my water anywhere. I think my assistant has it.

JOHN B

Isn't that guy a lawyer?

TOM

He's convenient is what he is and he has my water.

JOHN B

Well.

TOM

I'll take some of yours.

JOHN B

I'm using mine.

TOM

What you're doing is using the hammer. Get back to work.

JOHN B

All I do is work.

JOHN B resumes hammering and thus as does JOHN A's sound.

TOM

Your list, John!

JOHN B

WHAT ABOUT IT?

TOM

I know you name checked a few of your peers as counterexamples. Are any of us on it?

JOHN B promptly stops hammering and so does JOHN A's sound.

JOHN B

If you're truly entrepreneurial-- Look, I'm writing a book here--

TOM

What do you mean?

JOHN B

To avoid placement on lists like the sort that I make, you or your group must be ambitious, enterprising--

TOM

What makes you so well informed on who's what?

JOHN B

Only God knows what we are, Tom, but I know exactly who you are.

TOM

That just sounds like bullshit.

*JOHN B stops hammering, so does the noise a little late.
Then, JOHN B slaps TOM.*

JOHN B

Every person's a sum of their motivations and their weaknesses.

TOM slaps JOHN B back repeatedly as he speaks.

TOM

You have a way of designing a new belief system every other week to distract yourself. Most expressed beliefs distract. I don't believe in God. And you're full of shit.

JOHN B

I killed my God.

JOHN B resumes hammering with a bit more vigor than before and so JOHN A's sound returns with matched energy.

TOM

Of course. And what about the devil?

JOHN B

Who cares! You can't trust anyone, Tom!

TOM

I never said I did.

JOHN B stops hammering.

JOHN B

My shoulder's not handling it.

JOHN A

Your 'bad shoulder'?

JOHN B

Golfing injury.

JOHN A

Give me that.

The two switches places. JOHN B begins to imitate an entirely different sounding hammering noise as JOHN A hammers.

JOHN A

It looks like we're making progress.

JOHN A stop hammering. JOHN B stops his noise.

JOHN A

Does anyone have any gloves? I despise getting my hands dirty.

Gloves are thrown on, dropped from the fly, thrown from the audience, appear from somewhere.

JOHN A

Thank you.

JOHN A puts on the gloves, which are several sizes too large. JOHN A resumes hammering and JOHN B resumes his noise.

JOHN A

This is important, Tom. This is important for future men that aspire to be like me. Future capitalists.... Gloves... are how we-- Gloves are very good. Gloves are important, necessary even. Gl-oves. How we get it done.

JOHN A suddenly stops drilling. JOHN B gasps for air.

TOM

Rough spot?

JOHN A

This seems to be a rough spot.

BOWIE enters.

BOWIE

If you think you've had it rough, you haven't heard about my day-- what are you doing to my porch?

JOHN A

We'll talk about this when we meet next week.

BOWIE

You think we'll talk? After what you did to my shirt.

BOWIE whips off their jacket – revealing a white dress shirt with a wine stain. TOM and JOHN B gasp.

JOHN B

It's true.

TOM

That doesn't look like it's coming out.

JOHN A

It's not.

BOWIE

Something we both know well. You stain my shirt, you dig into my porch – you have a death wish. And you want to talk?

JOHN A

Yes, we will fit it in. A discussion. How about that?

BOWIE

No, let's talk now.

TOM

It's not really your porch. It's the markets porch. It's a product to invest in. We have been spending the past few hours investing.

BOWIE

By cutting a hole and digging under it?

JOHN A

Yes! Just to... pass the time.

BOWIE

Really?

JOHN A

Seems to be.

BOWIE

You know what? I'm not mad.

TOM

Well neither are we.

BOWIE

When you men become rich for too long, you'll do anything to pass the time...
Like DIGGIONG A HOLE IN MY PORCH.

JOHN A

We all know there's a difference between something being "yours" and actually yours.

BOWIE

What do you mean?

TOM

By the time you sort out the legal logistics of this mishap, we'll be far on our way.

BOWIE

What's "yours" and what's "yours". Of course – solid.

TOM

I'm sure you're very busy.

BOWIE

Well, there's a car alarm going off at work. And I don't know where the keys are. If I don't find them soon, I might just go ahead and set the car on fire. That sound -- it disrupts me. And now my fucking porch.

JOHN A

That must be difficult.

BOWIE

Don't talk to me like that.

JOHN A

What are you referring to?

BOWIE

I don't like being disrespected.

TOM

We don't mean disrespect. We mean to put a hole in your porch.

BOWIE

You just want to see where you can dig. You're like children.

JOHN A

Who's whining?

BOWIE

The car.

JOHN A

Anyone else?

BOWIE

Don't think I'm not going to do something about this. And I'm going to kill you on Monday.

JOHN A

We'll see.

TOM

Do you actually mean that?

BOWIE

You shouldn't give a fuck what I mean. I came to MY porch to relax. To think I have a moment to--

TOM

Well we're busy here.

BOWIE

And you don't have a drop of water in my city, you and your company mean nothing to me. You want to set up a time with me like your friend?

TOM

With all respect to your work, the group of us are in different leagues, Bowie.

BOWIE

I'll kill all of you.

TOM

If you say so.

JOHN B

All of you shut it! You're sounding like dumbasses. This is exactly what I was writing about in that article none of you read. Pettiness. You are so fucking petty.

JOHN A

John, watch the temper.

JOHN B

I'll watch what I want and when I want. But right now? I haven't laid down in years. So do you know what I'm gonna do? Lay down.

JOHN B lays down.

JOHN A

Get the fuck up.

BOWIE

You're just laying on my porch.

JOHN B

I have a bad shoulder. No.

JOHN A

John...

JOHN B

Shut the fuck up.

JOHN A

You need to get serious.

JOHN B

Then how about a duel? How about we fight in the coliseum? You dumbass.

JOHN A

9:15 Monday.

JOHN B

Is that a challenge?

JOHN A

Yes. My lawyer will follow up on details.

BOWIE

Cute.

JOHN A

Am I--

TOM

John, lets just get back to work.

BOWIE

Like I'm not even here.

JOHN A

Because you're not. And you never were.

BOWIE

See you Monday.

JOHN A

Monday.

BOWIE

In the meantime, have fun with your "playtime".

(mumbling to himself)

Find those fucking keys.

BOWIE exits.

BLACKOUT.

LIGHTS UP ON:

SCENE FIVE

BOWIE reenters, alone and back in the parking garage. The girl's bags are gone and a car key lies in the center. They don't notice it. They clears their throat, fearful and scattered. They change their voice slightly. This is new.

The car alarm continues faintly.

On the other side of the stage, ERIN stands alone, appearing lost, still searching for her friends. She has the first aid kit in hand. She doesn't see the key either.

BOWIE

Since when did being corrupt get weighed with so much responsibility?

It's as if someone has put a hole in my porch. And that's now something I have to just deal with.

The whole world can see just how fucked up my porch is. Somehow I have to take pride in it.

Lay claim to what's mine, time to butch it up. Let them know who runs what. I keep running it and running. I'm never clear on what I'm running from.

Can I be? I'm not the type of devil you say I am. I'm not Tybalt. Sorry. Which of you made me malicious? I will hurt you. Now, everything's heating up. So many stones crack. Guns pop.

Storms are harder to weather. I just want more advanced notice on which fragments are going to make it. It'd make relationships... easier. Cus now, it's all so much less fun.

I'm tired. I'm too frightened to look beyond my own shadow these days. I feel so much less universal. Am I surrounded and suffocating or suffocating and alone? I love that the Earth is constantly spinning, around and around and around. The sun, the different gazes of the moon, and all the other stars, the galaxies pirouette... Some things I must hold on to... but we let go....

And--

BOWIE can't find their words. They stares into space, lost.

BOWIE

I am the devil...

BOWIE turns to exit.

BOWIE

(mumbling)

Now about that fucking key.

BOWIE exits. JOCELYN runs on.

JOCELYN

ERIN!!

ERIN

JOS!!

JOCELYN is out of breath.

JOCELYN

I thought I'd never see you again and then out of nowhere you were like 100 yards in front of me.

ERIN

Oh my god! That's so crazy. Where's Tamia?

JOCELYN

I don't know.

ERIN

What do you mean you don't know.

JOCELYN

I went after you. I left her with the devil.

ERIN

The what?

JOCELYN

Nevermind.

ERIN

Where is she?

JOCELYN stares at ERIN out of breath like she is at a loss, or someplace else entirely.

ERIN

I got the first aid kit.

JOCELYN

ERIN

Where are we?

JOCELYN

... The Gardner... the parking garage...

ERIN

No. I mean I think we're somehow on a different floor or a different part...

JOCELYN

Yeah, I know... I don't know.

BOWIE enters. JOCELYN and ERIN don't notice them. BOWIE walks over to the car key, and picks it up. Car alarm stops. JOCELYN spots BOWIE with key in hand. ERIN turns around.

HEY!
JOCELYN

Whose keys are those?
ERIN

Where's Tamia?!
JOCELYN

JOCELYN and ERIN begin to approach BOWIE angrily.

Enough of this.
BOWIE

Hand over the keys.
ERIN

Look around. What do you see?
BOWIE

The keys.
ERIN

Do you know who was on my porch this morning?
BOWIE

I don't give a fuck.
ERIN

Three pitiful sewer rats, just like you. Do you know what I did to them?
BOWIE

I don't give a fuck.
ERIN

Don't think for a second you get what you want--
BOWIE

Remember what happened to your friend? The same can happen to you--
JOCELYN

DEXTER enters and this startles all. He makes sure to avoid the briefcase as he finds his way. He looks around as if he is lost, like he literally can't figure out how to get to where he wants to go. He takes out his phone and holds it up in hope of getting a connection. He is frustrated, having no luck.

DEXTER

This gosh darn thing! Next time I see Steve, I am going to have a very strongly worded conversation with him. I'm going to draw the line in the ...

(looks down)

solid cement. And I'm going to-- gonna-- tell him! In fact, I will go see him right now. Nothing is right.

DEXTER exits.

BOWIE

Who do you think hired you for this gig?

ERIN

None of your business.

BOWIE

Really? Because I think it's exactly my business.

ERIN draws a .22. BOWIE draws their own firearm a beat quicker and with it knocks ERIN's weapon out of her hand.

BOWIE

(to JOCELYN)

You! Empty your pockets... ALL of your pockets. All of them.

JOCELYN empties her pockets with far too many miscellaneous items, some of which includes parts of a broken Russian doll.

BOWIE

(to ERIN)

You too.

ERIN demonstrates she has nothing else on her.

BOWIE, while still keeping their gun on the two women, grabs ERIN's weapon on the floor. Then, they slowly exit the stage. Once they're gone...

JOCELYN

FUCK! You dumb fuck why did you pull it out so close to them!

ERIN

I wasn't thinking!

JOCELYN

Obviously!

ERIN

What are you doing with the doll in your pocket?!

JOCELYN

I don't know!

JOCELYN starts picking up what she emptied from her pockets, but neglects to pick up the Russian doll.

ERIN

We're fucked!

TAMIA enters. She runs over to JOCELYN and ERIN. Her arm is still bandaged with the jacket, but seems ok?

TAMIA

(to ERIN)

You know instead of trying to break into my car, maybe... maybe you should come ask me for the keys!

....

ERIN

Well then, can I have your keys?

TAMIA

I think it's a little late for that. You know what...

TAMIA reaches into her pocket. She fumbles around for a moment, then reaches into her other pocket.

TAMIA

I can't find them. They're—

ERIN

Gone! I know.

JOCELYN

What happened to the dead guy?

TAMIA

He went home.

JOCELYN

What?

ERIN

We just saw him.

TAMIA

Then I guess he's still here. Erin, could you just wrap my arm?

ERIN

Sure.

ERIN opens the bag of medical supplies, removes the makeshift jacket-bandage, then gently wipes the blood not soaked up by the jacket off TAMIA's arm. Once TAMIA's clean, ERIN applies an antibiotic. It stings, but TAMIA powers through it.

ERIN

You ok?

TAMIA

Yeah.

ERIN wraps a real bandage around TAMIA's arm. Lights flicker. ERIN cuts the bandage, secures it in place, and closes her bag.

TAMIA

Thank you.

The three women look at each other like strangers, or like everything else is strange.

JOCELYN

We still have a robbery to do.

.... This statement hangs in the air.

ERIN

WHO THE FUCK CAME UP WITH THIS??

ERIN sighs.

ERIN

Tamia, is your bandage tight?

TAMIA

Yup. Came up with what?

ERIN
This.

TAMIA
The job?

ERIN
No, with everything.

Silence.

JOCELYN
I'm not sure we'll ever leave.

TAMIA
But we can still get paid.

TAMIA adjusts her bandage.

TAMIA
Ok. I'm ready.

ERIN
So it was loose?

TAMIA
No...

ERIN
Liar.

TAMIA, JOCELYN and ERIN begin to walk off to exit with a little rhythm to their step.

JOCELYN
Wait.

All three women stop.

JOCELYN
Where are we going?

ERIN
Does it matter?

They continue. They dance off stage.

FADE TO BLACK. LIGHTS UP ON:

SCENE SIX

The return of JOHN A, JOHN B and TOM. Right now only present are JOHN A and TOM. Still hammering that porch. Cowboy and construction dress. The bags that belonged to three women have returned to the stage.

See the bottom yet?
JOHN A

Not yet. We're making progress!
TOM

Good. I like having progress.
JOHN A

That's when they're off-guard.
TOM

You read my mind.
JOHN A

That's cause we're the same.
TOM

In that?
JOHN A

We're in the shadows. Wait, the devil didn't care about their porch, right?
TOM

We'll make sure the devil doesn't mind.
JOHN A

How are you going to do that?
TOM

Simple.
JOHN A

I mean, it is their porch and you have hammered a hole in it.
TOM

Which is why they'll sell it back.
JOHN A

TOM

And not have questions? I've heard satanic beings are nosy.

JOHN A

I already have a committee constructing possible explanations. If necessary, you'll be the fall guy.

TOM

What?

JOHN A

That is if my data finds you to be the least valuable of possible candidates.

TOM

This will not stand!

JOHN A

I'm a possibility too.

TOM

I doubt that.

JOHN A

You're not that idiotic after all.

TOM

Who else is in the running?

JOHN A

That water assistant of yours.

TOM

Oh--

(with relief)

JOHN A

He's a good lawyer.

TOM

And handler of water.

....

JOHN A

But when the devil does sell the porch back, do you know what they won't know?

That--

TOM

That we've dug right to the Gardner!

JOHN A

Wait, that's where we're digging?

TOM

Yes... What the fuck?

JOHN A

I thought we were looking for silver, but a museum will do.

TOM

It will do more than do!

JOHN A

JOHN B enters with just his western dress.

JOHN B

JOHN A!

JOHN A turns towards JOHN B. Both stand as if they're about to initiate a Western draw.

JOHN A

John B.

JOHN B

There's only room for one John on this small planet.

JOHN A

It's gonna have to be a massacre.

JOHN B

9:15 AM.

JOHN A

Fifth avenue.

JOHN B

Where on Fifth?

JOHN A

My shitty lawyer forwarded the details to you.

JOHN B

I'll check with my people.

To the side, JOHN B meets DEXTER. They consult briefly before JOHN B sends him away.

JOHN B

The email says our meeting is conditional on an earlier meeting you have that morning?

JOHN A

Well first I have to win my shootout with the devil... at 9.

JOHN B

You double-dealing prick.... I'm not anyone's second pick John!

JOHN B draws a prop gun and shoots JOHN A.

JOHN B

POW!

From the weapon, a small flag appears, reading the same "POW!". The bullet hits JOHN A.

JOHN A

Ah shit. You'll be hearing from my lawyer John!!

JOHN B

I started a list. It's in Forbes!

JOHN A

For what now?

JOHN B

People I Want To Make Mentally Ill And/Or Criminals.

JOHN A

What type of crimes?

TOM

What type of diseases?

JOHN B

I don't know, I got the teletubbies on there.

JOHN A

What are the teletubbies?

JOHN B

It's a tv show. A bunch of stuffed monkeys with tv's as their tummies. They're all different colors of the rainbows, it's just not right!

JOHN A

You know, I'm from the south, but that idea sounds odd to me, John.

JOHN B

You've just been shot! You can't pick up on the subtext!

JOHN A

Who shot me?!

TOM

The teletubbies make more money as rainbows. I'm sorry, John, but it's just the market.

JOHN A

I don't give a fuck about teletubbies.

TOM

No, not you, John, other John.

JOHN B

You're mostly dead, John, I'm the only John now.

JOHN A

I bet one of the teletubbies' names is John!

JOHN B

Shut up. You're dying, John.

JOHN A

So are you.

While removing hat and jacket...

JOCELYN

I've reached the bottom!

JOCELYN climbs out from the hole. TAMIA and ERIN go to inspect.

ERIN

It appears you have, Jos.

JOCELYN

I know, it took sooo fucking long.

ERIN

Damn, really good job. It took so much less time than we thought it would, right?

TAMIA

Yeah, it did.

ERIN

Are you ok? You're not looking good.

TAMIA

I think I started bleeding again.

TAMIA stumbles and falls into the hole.

ERIN

TAMIA!!

JOCELYN

TAMIA!

ERIN

Oh fuck. Oh fuck. Oh fuck. Oh fuck.

DEXTER enters.

DEXTER

As his lawyer, I am legally required to follow him... Wish me luck gentlemen.

(to JOCELYN)

Oh and Tom, the internet is down again. If you can get someone on that, it'd be great.

Both women look at DEXTER in pure confusion. DEXTER jumps into the hole.

ERIN

He just jumped in...

JOCELYN

People--

ERIN

People will do anything for anything.

JOCELYN

Or something.

ERIN

Yeah. This whole night, I keep thinking there's something above us. I keep searching...

Up. JOCELYN

Both JOCELYN and ERIN look up.

But I can't see anything. ERIN

*ERIN and JOCELYN lay down.
BOWIE arrives at some point and finds a seat off to the side, either a stool, the seat of a car or a beach chair. They pose distinctly, perhaps reminiscent of a famous celebrity, sculpture or painting. Given the speaking actors are laying on the floor, the rest of this scene is an invitation for creativity with the visual aspect of the play.*

Erin. JOCELYN

Jocelyn. ERIN

Look at the stars. JOCELYN

It's just the ceiling of the garage. ERIN

No look past that. JOCELYN

It's just smog. ERIN

No look past that. JOCELYN

... Oh there they are. ERIN

Yeah... what do you think of them? JOCELYN

I think they're beautiful. ERIN

I think they're beautiful too. JOCELYN

ERIN

Remember when we first met?

JOCELYN

Yeah I do. You were in first grade.

ERIN

And you were in kindergarten. And this boy, Nick, kept bothering you. Throwing snowballs and chasing after you. You didn't want to be bothered by Nick at all. Your winter skirt was a little longer and your leggings were a bit stiff. The teachers were all over the place, never quite where they were supposed to be. Or maybe they were trying their best. Or maybe we just hated authority. We were Catholic. Of course we hated order. We were just being taught to make our own kids hate it too.

But Nick would come after you. You didn't seem to have any friends at recess. If I'm to be honest, neither did I.

JOCELYN

No you didn't.

ERIN

No I didn't. The other kids weren't supposed to get too close to me. My family was not respected, not like Tamia's. We were weird.

JOCELYN

You were in first grade.

ERIN

I was in first grade. I was a little taller than Nick. One really cold and windy day, I decided you had suffered enough.

JOCELYN

Absolutely freezing.

ERIN

And I made a really good ice-ball. Was Nick throwing ice-balls at you that day?

JOCELYN

He was trying to.

ERIN

I launched my own personal attack on Nick.

JOCELYN

You put him in shock.

ERIN

The second one hit his face and he started crying.

JOCELYN

I never cried because of him. I was always strong like that.

ERIN

An adult rushed over to him.

JOCELYN

Actually multiple, like two different adults flew in like paramedics to crying Nick.

ERIN

We were of course both sent to

ERIN AND JOCELYN

The Principal's. We stayed after school and wrote lines and Bible verses together everyday for the next two weeks. When I think about it too long, I still get these little hand spasms from the cramps I'd get.

JOCELYN

Doing all that writing... Ohhh shit, remember the drive to the abortion clinic?

ERIN

I'd rather not.

JOCELYN

It was traumatizing in its own way, but it was also kinda funnn.... just a little.

ERIN

Not for me.

JOCELYN

Sorry, I just thought of it cause all the forms they made you fill out. It was like to see how badly you wanted it...

ERIN

I still get hand cramps just thinking about it. Ohhhh Jesus Christ, hand cramps.

JOCELYN

Hand cramps Holy Spirit.

ERIN

It was bad.

JOCELYN

Maybe I'm just remembering what they were putting on the radio that day. And screaming at the top of our lungs to fill any silence there might be on the drive.

ERIN

... That part was ok... Stealing your Mom's car...

JOCELYN

Borrowed.

ERIN

Stolen.

JOCELYN

What are we going to do?

Silence.

ERIN

BEFORE THIS RIVER. BECOMES AN OCEAN

JOCELYN

BEFORE YOU THROW MY HEART BACK ON THE FLOOR

ERIN

OH BABY, I RECONSIDER MY FOOLISH NOTION

JOCELYN

WELL I NEED SOMEONE TO HOLD ME

ERIN and JOCELYN

BUT I'LL WAIT FOR SOMETHING MORE.

ERIN

BUT I GOT TO HAVE FAITH, A-FAITH, A-FAITH.

JOCELYN

I GOTTA HAVE FAITH, A-FAITH, A-FAITH.

(^^ George Michael's "Faith")

JOCELYN

I remember belting that song most... Ever learn any of the constellations like you said you were going to?

ERIN

No.

....

ERIN

Jos, what was the name of that girl you slept with for a few weeks again...

....

JOCELYN

Jamie...

ERIN

I've never seen you as happy as then...

JOCELYN

... Really?

ERIN

You should catch up with her... whenever you can. If you can--

....

JOCELYN

No I don't want to.

ERIN

She always reminded me of the actress that played Juliet in that movie--

JOCELYN

You haven't even seen that movie. Stop talking.

ERIN

No, but I've seen that actress before.... What is it like, Claire something? It was a really English name.... Danes!--

JOCELYN

Shut up.

ERIN

She looked like her.

JOCELYN

It didn't mean anything!

ERIN

Isn't she the angel in the costume scene?

JOCELYN

Wait you've seen the movie??

ERIN

Yeah, it was really weird. And I didn't get a word of it.

JOCELYN

It's cool. It's artistic. Give it another try.

ERIN

How about you give it another try with Jamie. She really liked you--

JOCELYN

Shut up!

ERIN

Just felt like the right time to bring it up with you--

JOCELYN

I said SHUT UP! It's not the right time... It's never the right time!

JOCELYN stands, walks over quickly to BOWIE, studies them and then impulsively kisses them. BOWIE is bewildered.

BOWIE

I'm not--

JOCELYN

Don't make this about yourself.

BOWIE

Of course I will.

JOCELYN

I know.

JOCELYN kisses BOWIE again, passionately.

JOCELYN

You're a man, right?

BOWIE shakes their head and takes a small bottle from their pocket. It is empty.

JOCELYN
What is that?

BOWIE
Nightshade.

JOCELYN
What does that mean for us?

BOWIE begins shaking.

BOWIE
I'll do anything, I'll sweat myself to death to make you miserable.... Did you ever really think they'd make the devil just a man? ...

BOWIE falls off their seat. There is a vacant look about them on the floor.

JOCELYN
Imagine dying in hell.

JOCELYN walks back to where she laid before next to ERIN and lays down again.

ERIN
It's ok, we don't have to talk about it.

JOCELYN
No you're ok.

ERIN
Do you think there's a star up there for each of us?

JOCELYN
Maybe.

SCENE SEVEN

TAMIA and DEXTER return to our attention. They sit in the backseats of a car.

DEXTER

(to someone ahead of them)

How much more time on the GPS?

A pause.

DEXTER

20 minutes?! We can't do 20 minutes!

JOHN A

We'll be fine.

DEXTER

Sir?

JOHN A

They know me. They'll be fine with it.

DEXTER

Sir, I think you might be overestimating--

JOHN A

I'm not overestimating shit. I've been doing this thirty years.

DEXTER

Of course. Right.

....

DEXTER

Remember I can do all the talking for you. You don't have to add your own testimony.

JOHN A

I know.

DEXTER

So you aren't going to add anything this time, sir?

JOHN A

No.

DEXTER
Good. We already have a lot of places to cast doubt.

JOHN A
I know.

....

JOHN A
How's the family been?

DEXTER
Grayson's b-day was two weeks ago.

JOHN A
How old is he now?

DEXTER
He's four.

JOHN A
I swear I thought he was just 6 months yesterday.

DEXTER
Me too.

JOHN A
Incredible.

....

JOHN A
Fuck I love birthdays.

DEXTER
Really?

JOHN A
Not for myself, for everyone but myself.

DEXTER
We should've invited you.

JOHN A
You should've! All I'd have to do is find myself a four-year-old and I'm in. I probably have a grandson somewhere who could....

DEXTER

Hm.

JOHN A (TAMIA) laughs.

JOHN A

Win this for me and I'll make sure you keep seeing your son.

DEXTER

I know.

JOHN A

Jesus Christ I'm pulling your leg! I'm a terrible murderer. You probably don't need to worry about it...

I don't know. Say you were on the run, where would you stake out?

DEXTER

Hypothetically?

JOHN A

Sure.

DEXTER

I don't know. I've never really thought about it?

JOHN A

Well if everyone became zombies tomorrow, where would you go?

DEXTER

I'd make sure I'd be with my family I guess... I don't--

JOHN A

Say your family are zombies too. Just about all of Long Island has been wiped. Where would you go?

DEXTER

Um I don't know. Maybe a parking garage?

JOHN A

Like the one out the window there?

DEXTER

It looks pretty sturdy. Only one entrance and exit. It connects to other buildings, but only by elevator. Stack up on all the employee keys. Lots of cars.

JOHN A
You're thinking this through.

DEXTER
I'm just trying to answer the question, sir.

JOHN A
It's your job to think things through, isn't it?

DEXTER
That's what I do.

JOHN A
Don't kill all the lawyers.

DEXTER
Well, don't kill all the lawyers in case of a zombie apocalypse. If anarchy is what you're seeking to implement, then yes, killing all the lawyers first would likely be the most logical course of action.

JOHN A
Since when were you this funny?

DEXTER
Somewhere around when I stopped sleeping.

JOHN A
I see. I prefer to sleep myself. I get a good 8 hour--

DEXTER
Oh it's not a choice.

JOHN A
Don't interrupt me.

...

JOHN A
What did you say?

DEXTER
I said it's not a choice.

JOHN A
What's not a choice?

DEXTER

Not sleeping.

In that moment, BOWIE rises from their death. They look around. They walk around and in front of JOHN A and DEXTER.

JOHN A

Will it affect your work for me?

BOWIE

Boring.

DEXTER

Not significantly.

JOHN A

How much is not significantly?

DEXTER

You'll notice but the results will be the same.

BOWIE

Boring.

JOHN A

You know it really doesn't matter what you do.

BOWIE

Boring! Boring! Boring! I sacrifice myself and this is how I'm repaid?!?! ... Oh my God, death is so boring. I thought I'd go somewhere else or transition in some way... NO! It was just boring.

BOWIE turns to DEXTER and JOHN A. They still has TAMIA's car keys. They unlocks the car and opens the door.

BOWIE

Both of you get out.

JOHN A

Bowie! Excuse me?!

BOWIE

John, Get out of my car. I need to go for a drive.

JOHN A

What?

BOWIE

My friend owns all the cabs around here. Keep up. Now get out.

JOHN A

(sputtering)

But I killed you last week. At out 9 AM meeting. I have a court--

BOWIE

Yes and thus you have a court date. Just ask them to reschedule. Out.

JOHN A slowly exits the car. DEXTER follows.

BOWIE

Driver, you get out too.

Nothing happens for a bit.

BOWIE

Thank you.

BOWIE steps into the car and starts the gas. They drive for a bit, then swerve and lay on the horn.

BOWIE

MOTHERFUCKER, GROW SOME EYES!!

OFF STAGE VOICE

FUCK YOU!!

They drive a little more. They're on their way somewhere.

BOWIE

I'm from New England originally. When I was young, I'd watch the leaves on the oak trees change color. From green to yellow and orange and red. Then one day they'd fall and a whole new hue of world laid across the ground. All these reds and oranges and yellows. And the trees would stiffen. Look a little voiceless. Like they had their tonsils taken out. Or maybe something more extreme. But that's what I thought when I was young. The late fall was always the most memorable time to drive where I'm from. Sometimes the middle of those winters where snow seemed to have refused to fall as well, it would feel a bit the same. The trees were quiet, as I previously said.... The leaves would crunch. But those would be drowned out by the engine of your car.... No one would be out because it was already frozen outside and the sun set at 4. It'd just be you, the engine of your car whooshing by other engines in the twilight, the frozen brown earth and the red sky.

Of course there was the radio. But I'm thinking specifically of those days where no music you knew of sounded any good. You were just too tired or had too many thoughts weaving through your mind. So you drove in silence instead. You, the engine, the twilight, 4:15 PM. You'd, or at

least, I... I'd want to follow that one bright flash of color in the sky. It was the one proof of heat in the cold. That and my engine of course, which always seemed intangibly tied to those New England winter sunsets. Really the only two things alike. I thought it was kinda beautiful in my own way. I also thought it was cruel.

Since then, my world has become so much bigger. Galaxies, guns and stars and parking garages. How quickly it all decays.

BOWIE pulls up somewhere, stops the car and turns it off.

BOWIE

I'm here...

They take a breath.

BOWIE

Time to get out of this damn thing.

They don't move. After a few moments of that, they start to fiddle with the radio. "My Way" (Not Usher, the one that's the oldie) comes in. They immediately turn the radio off.

BOWIE

Who the fuck puts "My Way" on the radio? – Time to get out, time to get out, time to–

They get out of the car.

BOWIE

I had another monologue a little earlier and I just want the galaxies out there to know that that wasn't me. Well, it was a little bit me. I inserted myself into it as an actor would, but it was actually Tamia's voice.

I'm sitting in my carseat. You're sitting in yours. And Isabella arranged the furniture perfectly at the Gardner museum, but that's not the sort of thing I know about.

But one thing that she said, that really struck me was--

TAMIA appears and interrupts as BOWIE is about to speak.

TAMIA

I'm never clear on what I'm running from...

BOWIE

Shut up you. I-

TAMIA

They spin round and round and round-- they'll never come back.

BOWIE

I said shut it.

TAMIA

How will they dance as stone?

BOWIE

Do you want to start bleeding again?

TAMIA

How will death dance as stone.

BOWIE

I have places to be.

BOWIE walks into the dark. A moment.

TAMIA suddenly clutches her wounds.

TAMIA

Ah fuck.

She struggles to speak. The pain gets worse.

TAMIA

When did being corrupt start to weigh with so much responsibility? I don't want to use stolen words. Just let me speak god fucking damn't. I'm the one that steals. I'm not gonna be stolen from. Don't fucking take my....

I'll spin you around and around and around and around. I can box. I'm light on my feet. I've figured out this life shit. I know I'm powerful. I know I'm powerless. I know. I know duality. I know how to protect myself and thrive. I know the exact Gucci handbag I'm gonna buy when I got you pinned to the floor. You won't know which ways are up and down.

I can be as big as the universe and I can handle it.

The sun, the different gazes of the moon, and all the other stars, the galaxies pirouette... Some things I must hold on to... but we let go.... And--

TAMIA falls to the ground, clutches her wound, struggling.

BOWIE's voice, from somewhere.

BOWIE

So that's it. I think we've seen everyone go.

Time for a new cast call.

LIGHTS UP ON:

SCENE EIGHT

Lights adjust and JOCELYN and ERIN are still where they were, laying down. Or maybe they've sat up.

Do you see them anywhere?

ERIN

No, I think we've lost them.

JOCELYN

You sure?

ERIN

Mostly.

JOCELYN

You know it's been itching my mind all night, do you think their real name is Bowie?

ERIN

Does it matter?

JOCELYN

I'm just curious.

ERIN

I know.

JOCELYN

DEXTER enters and approaches them.

Sirs, I'm sorry to disturb you.

DEXTER

Sirs?

ERIN

What did you call us?

JOCELYN

I need to get my briefcase. It's just over there.

DEXTER

Then get it.

ERIN

DEXTER

No, but--

ERIN

Grab it.

DEXTER

It won't move.

JOCELYN

Hey Erin, kinda like us.

ERIN

Omgf LOL.

DEXTER

Please.

JOCELYN and ERIN exchange glances.

ERIN

Alright, we'll help you. Jos?

JOCELYN

Yeah, just give me a minute. Been here a while...

JOCELYN stands up and groans dramatically in the process. ERIN also stands.

ERIN

Where's this briefcase?

DEXTER

Right over there.

ERIN

Oh that's not that far.

Both JOCELYN and ERIN follow DEXTER.

DEXTER

So this is my briefcase. I need to take it home. The only problem is I can't seem to pick it up.

ERIN

What do you mean?

DEXTER

It's somehow melded into the ground.

JOCELYN

Ok we get it, you don't like homework.

DEXTER

No. It won't budge. One of you try to pick it up.

Instead of picking up the briefcase, JOCELYN opens it. She takes out a medium sized flat package. Shortly, she discovers there are several rolled up paintings inside.

DEXTER

Don't do that. Those are very sensitive--

JOCELYN

Hey, this is one of the paintings we were paid to take.

ERIN

Really?

DEXTER

What?

ERIN

Let me see.

ERIN takes the package and rips it open, inside she takes out a Dutch baroque scene-- Rembrandt, "Christ In The Storm On The Sea Of Galilee". JOCELYN grabs the painting back. She becomes immersed in the lighting on it.

DEXTER

No it's not. Whatever you think you're looking at. Please just close my briefcase.

JOCELYN / TOM

Oh my god, this is Rembrandt.

ERIN / JOHN B

Take the briefcase then. Lets go.

DEXTER

Please just--

TOM

(to DEXTER)

Who do you think you are?

JOHN B

Lets take it. Lets go.

JOHN B (ERIN) moves to pick up the briefcase. He struggles greatly. He groans and grumbles.

JOHN B

Stop looking at that.... Help me with this thing....

DEXTER

What was I telling you.

JOHN B falls over in the process of attempting to pull the suitcase up.

JOHN B

Christ! My shoulder!

Music cues. From where he was cut off before, writhing in pain.

JOHN B

(singing in pain)

[Outro]

Yes, it was my way.

After the final note...

TOM

Who's way?

JOHN B

Music soothes me. It's not something you'd understand.

TOM

Why do you think he shot the devil, John?

JOHN B

Same reason I shot him probably.

TOM

This museum really will be an acquisition. Look at this painting.

JOHN B

I think I'm dying.

TOM

Shut up you probably just pulled a muscle.

JOHN B

Get me help.

TOM

For what?

JOHN B responds by taking a swipe at TOM's ankles with his good arm and tries to pull him down.

JOHN B

AHHH!

TOM

Ahhh!

TOM falls flat on his face, dropping the painting in the process...

DEXTER

Sir, um... are you ok?

JOCELYN stands and admires the painting.

JOCELYN

This is genius. Jesus as the quiet center of the storm. His disciples flung into every different mental state across the waves. He could of put Christ on the light side of the painting, but no-- that was too obvious--

JOHN B

Help me... Stop-- ...

JOCELYN

In a minute-- That was too obvious. Instead he gives light to the chaos of the ocean and those frantically working against it because who doesn't become consumed by the stress of our survival. And then there's the painter himself, staring at us, almost hidden, as if to say--

DEXTER

I would say hell is other people but I don't think they even know who they are.

To make the point, ERIN rises and begins inspecting where the suitcase meets the ground.

ERIN

And who the fuck are you?

DEXTER

Do you still plan on buying this place?

JOCELYN

No-- we're robbing the Isabella Stewart Gardner.

DEXTER

Isabella Stewart Gardner doesn't exist! I made her up!

ERIN

Who are you?

DEXTER

Lawyer, water assistant, Sunday basketball league player, conman, father–

A look from the girls.

DEXTER

What left is there to say?

Silence.

The characters exchange glances. Lights begin to go down, but then...

JOCELYN

Wait!

Everyone waits. JOCELYN hands the Rembrandt to ERIN. Then she closes the briefcase and picks it up with ease.

JOCELYN

We can still make it away.

ERIN

What do you mean?

JOCELYN

I'm saying we can still make it. We can still get away.

ERIN

Ok?

JOCELYN

Let's change!

ERIN

Change? ... Change!

ERIN grabs one of the black bags for their heist. From it, she takes out police hats and mustaches which JOCELYN and ERIN put on.

DEXTER

Oh god.

From another bag ERIN produces a fold-up chair, rope and duct tape. The two women grab a now yelling DEXTER, tie him to the chair and duct tape his mouth.

ERIN

Now where do we climb?

JOCELYN

What about the guy we just tied up?

ERIN

Just leave him.

JOCELYN

It feels risky.

ERIN

They'll find him in the morning. He'll be fine.

JOCELYN

Yeah and he'll know what we look like.

ERIN punches DEXTER. He's out cold.

ERIN

Now he won't.

JOCELYN

Climbing gear.

From yet another bag JOCELYN produces what looks rock climbing helmets. They ditch the mustaches and exchange headwear, They place all their stolen goods into a trash bag. ERIN attaches the bag to her waist. JOCELYN looks about, searching for something.

JOCELYN

Ok. Here it is.

ERIN

Takes us to the street?

JOCELYN

I think so.

ERIN

How far is it?

JOCELYN

A ways.

*The two women begin to climb.
In a few moments, they climb out of the hole and now find themselves on the porch of
JOHN A's Montana ranch. They strip off their climbing gear clunkily, exhausted. They
take in their surroundings.*

ERIN

It's beautiful.

JOCELYN

It is.

ERIN

It's somehow not right.

JOCELYN

Somewhere out there, those broken Russian dolls are still in my backpack.

ERIN

Why do you bring that up?

JOCELYN

We've just come so far.

ERIN

We got away.

JOCELYN

And the sky extends forever.

ERIN

On and on.

JOCELYN

If I was a Russian doll, how many layers do I have before you get to the last one?

LIGHTS DOWN.

LIGHTS UP:

EPILOGUE

JOCELYN and ERIN as they were. They're sitting. JOCELYN holds a steering wheel. Music comes on. Church organs for a few bars, both girls put their hands together for prayer.

Before a sudden transition into a rhythmic guitar. It's George Michael's "Faith". JOCELYN and ERIN dance like two best friends would, with little moments of choreo. Singing to and with one another.

JOCELYN

Well, I guess it would be nice if I could touch your body
I know not everybody has got a body like you

ERIN

Oh, but I gotta think twice before I give my heart away
And I know all the games you play because I play them too
Oh, but I need some time off from that emotion

JOCELYN

Time to pick my heart up off the floor
Oh, when that love comes down without devotion

ERIN

Well, it takes a strong man, baby
But I'm showin' you the door

JOCELYN

'Cause I gotta have faith

ERIN

I gotta have faith

JOCELYN

Because I got to have faith, faith, f-

ERIN

I got to have faith, faith, faith

JOCELYN

Baby!

ERIN

I know you're askin' me to stay
Say, "Please, please, please don't go away"
You say I'm givin' you the blues
Maybe!

JOCELYN

huh, you mean every word you say
Can't help but think of yesterday
And another who tied me down to loverboy rules

JOCELYN AND ERIN

Before this river becomes an ocean
Before you throw my heart back on the floor

JOCELYN

Oh, oh baby,

JOCELYN AND ERIN

I reconsider my foolish notion
Well, I need someone to hold me
But I'll wait for somethin' more

ERIN

Yes, I gotta have faith

JOCELYN AND ERIN

Ooh, I gotta have faith
Because I gotta have faith, faith, faith
I gotta have faith, faith, faith

Instrumental break. ERIN mimes playing the guitar. While JOCELYN does the humming and adlibs during it.

JOCELYN

...
I'll just have to wait

...
Because I've got to have faith

...
I gotta have faith
I've got to, got to, got to have faith

JOCELYN AND ERIN

Before this river becomes an ocean
Before you throw my heart back on the floor

JOCELYN

(I just got to have faith)

ERIN

Oh, oh baby

JOCELYN AND ERIN

I reconsider my foolish notion

JOCELYN

Well, I need someone to hold me

But I'll wait for somethin' more

'Cause I gotta have faith

JOCELYN AND ERIN

Ooh, I gotta have faith

Because I gotta have faith, faith, faith

I gotta have faith, faith, faith.

END OF PLAY.