

BRIDGE AT THE CLOSE

A show by
Nate Sheehan

Cast of Characters:

Rosa—

A smart, sharp wit that sometimes can be a mask, Latina, Early 20s. Also plays

Renata – A scared teenager, Late Teens

Malcolm—

A lost soul, White, early 30s.

Asif—

A Persian-American officer, A mix of hard and soft, Mid 50s

Leo—

The artist of the bunch, temperamentally, Latino, 18

Lilly—

A mature kid who feels weird showing it, Latina, 17

Note —

*When a prop enters the set or 'play' area, if it's not notated to exit it, it never has to. These shoes, chairs, flowers etc. and anything added production to production can unobtrusively leave memories of what came before.

LIGHTS UP ON:

Prologue

A moving bus. In which a teenage girl (LILLY) sits and teenage boy (LEO) stand. There's chatter around them.

But the boy and the girl don't speak. They just stare at one another. Not so much that it becomes overtly noticeable. Both might look one direction or another. But for the most part, their eyes stay on each other. For the most part, their gazes find one another and stay there. There should be no sense of awkwardness in this—

An offstage voice calls out

JOSH (O.S.)

Yo, Leo - Leo!

LEO looks away from LILLY.

JOSH (O.S.)

What was the name of that girl that Rafa was seeing? Caroline thinks she might know her.

LEO

Um... um fuck I don't think I remember.

JOSH (O.S.)

(to someone else)

Well, I guess we'll never know.

LEO looks back at LILLY and shrugs. She smirks in response.

LEO

Why are you looking at me like that?

LILLY

Why am I looking at you like what?

LEO

... I don't know.

The bus slows to a stop. The doors open. LEO and LILLY's faces immediately become panicked. The sound of screams.

LIGHTS UP ON:

Scene One

A separation in action, real or imagined, is drawn. This can also be referred to as a curtain. Behind this curtain, stretching from one exit to the other is a bridge lined with marigolds. The bridge might have a railing that may be slightly rusted, showing its age, its durability or its weaknesses. It is sunrise or sunset. A woman called ROSA makes her way up the bridge. Once she reaches the top, she looks out on us, and whatever view there may possibly be.

A man named MALCOLM enters from the same way and mounts the bridge. As he walks, he spots ROSA. He looks at her with curiosity and the slightest hint of confusion. He keeps his gaze on her as he continues walking until he is just a little ways past her, beginning to descend down the bridge. At that point, his head turned, still watching her, he stops.

MALCOLM

What are you doing?

ROSA

Excuse me!?

MALCOLM

What are you looking at?

ROSA

The sun – why are you talking to me?

MALCOLM

Oh no. Don't do that.

ROSA

What?

MALCOLM

Don't look at the sun. It's bad for your eyes.

ROSA

Wha-- don't tell me what to-- Did you follow me here?

MALCOLM

No, I –

ROSA

This is my bridge. It has nothing to do with you. So why don't you skiddle-a-daddle your ass down the other side. Oh and looking straight ahead, and not staring at me like the per--

MALCOLM

Hey. You never gave me a chance to answer your first question.

ROSA

Which was?

MALCOLM

Why I am talking to you.

ROSA

Why do you want to talk to me?

Beat. MALCOLM says nothing. ROSA, beginning to lose interest, starts to look back over the bridge.

MALCOLM

Don't look at the sun!

ROSA

I think I'm fine with the sun. Maybe...

She trails off.

MALCOLM

Know anything about theatre?

ROSA

Why would I know anything about theatre?

MALCOLM

I don't know. I know nothing about it. I was hoping to meet someone that would know something about it.

ROSA

Oh. Well sorry I guess.

ROSA looks back out onto us or past us.

MALCOLM

You know, you have pretty eyes.

ROSA

So you are tryin to hit on me.

MALCOLM

What no? I'm gay.

ROSA

No you're not. You're straight as you are awkward.

MALCOLM

You're right. I was lying.

ROSA

Wait, really?

MALCOLM

I like girls too. Have you seen Hamilton?

ROSA

No.

MALCOLM

Me neither.

ROSA

I'm not gonna talk theater with you. I'm gonna keep staring at the sun—

MALCOLM

That's just so stupid. Why would you want to stare at the—

ROSA

I MEAN THE SUNSET.

MALCOLM

Oh. I guess that's... fine.

ROSA

Does it look different to you?

MALCOLM

What?

ROSA

The sun. Or the sunset.

MALCOLM considers for a moment.

ROSA

I just feel like it's so much redder. I was wondering if we're about to have like an eclipse or something. Or something's in the atmosphere.

MALCOLM

I–

ROSA

I get it. I'm sorry. I'm weird. The sun looks a little different or maybe looks a little different and I of course start obsessing over it. It's just I haven't seen anybody for a really long time. And this is my bridge– You can leave. I'm sorry.

MALCOLM

Can?

ROSA

(considering)

Yes. Can.

MALCOLM

Is that the same thing as an invitation to stay?

ROSA

Definitely not.

MALCOLM

What?

ROSA

I just won't yell at you if you do.

MALCOLM

Got it--

ROSA

But don't talk to me. I want some quiet.

MALCOLM

Got it.

(awkwardly.)

I'm uhh. actually gonna-- I'm gonna leave now.

ROSA

(anxiously)

What?! Why??

MALCOLM

What?

ROSA

Now you should stay.

MALCOLM

Why should I stay?

ROSA

To berate me about staring into the sun, to talk about theater --

MALCOLM

You haven't even seen Hamilton!

ROSA

You know how hard it was to get tickets!

MALCOLM

Well maybe make a sacrifice for once in your life. Sure you'll have to buy the bad pasta for a couple months, but for a magical two and a half hour experience.

Beat.

ROSA

Wait! You didn't see it either!

MALCOLM

No, I didn't!

ROSA

And do you regret it?

MALCOLM

I have no idea! I haven't seen it!

ROSA

Have we met? Have we talked before?

MALCOLM

This is our first conversation.

ROSA

I don't usually forget a face.

MALCOLM

Sure.

ROSA

Did you follow me? How did you get here?

MALCOLM

No. I was just walking.

ROSA

Just walking? – Nobody walks through here. That’s the whole fucking point–

MALCOLM

Do you know if this bridge has a name?

ROSA

Why would I know--

MALCOLM

You called it yours.

ROSA

I don’t know if it has a name. It’s just my spot. My place to collect myself.

MALCOLM

Hm.

ROSA

Is there something wrong with that?

MALCOLM

No, it’s just not what I really expected.

ROSA

That the woman alone looking at the sunset is having some time to herself? – And I know, don’t look at the sun.

MALCOLM

That’s not what I was going to say.

ROSA

What were you going to say?

MALCOLM

I was going to say that ‘I mean, it’s lower now, so maybe it’s alright to look at it. And the moon is beginning to peak out from behind the light. And that’s kinda nice. I like to think of colors like dust, but not like my allergies, like in a magical way.’

Beat. ROSA sneezes.

ROSA

Achoo! Sorry, the sun, at a certain angle makes me sneeze sometimes.

MALCOLM

Is that an actual thing? I feel like that's not an actual thing.

ROSA

Achoo!

MALCOLM

Was that a real sneeze? That was a bit—

ROSA

Of course it was a real sneeze! Why the fuck would I fake a sneeze?

MALCOLM

I don't know, theres'---

ROSA

Achoo!

MALCOLM

It can't be the sun.

ROSA

The light prickles my nose.

MALCOLM

So you're allergic to light?

ROSA

I don't like people like you.

MALCOLM

You've barely met me.

ROSA

Maybe we've met before. Or maybe I had a friend like you.

MALCOLM

which of those is it, we've met or you had a friend like me?

ROSA

Neither really. At least off the top of my head. I don't usually forget a face.

MALCOLM

Sure.

ROSA

You headed anywhere in particular?

MALCOLM

Nowhere. Otherwise I wouldn't have stopped.

ROSA

What type of person has no place to be?

MALCOLM

I like to walk. You like to stare at the sun. Where are you supposed to be?

ROSA

I don't know.

MALCOLM

I was just thinking that maybe I could clear my head.

ROSA

Really?

MALCOLM

And then along the way I forgot what I meant to think about.

ROSA

That's me. I forget everything.

(Beat.)

Do you know what I did today?

I went to my funeral.

Silence.

ROSA

Everyone I knew and some people I didn't really know were there, and then there were some people who I'm gonna assume must of had a really good excuse, or maybe, maybe it was too painful to see them put a little girl's coffin into the ground. And the priest was nothing but a drone, was nothing but static because I was dead and I couldn't hear him. I tried eating, but I obviously couldn't taste anything cause I'm a ghost. My little girl is somewhere else now.

ROSA picks up one of the marigolds and fiddles with it.

MALCOLM

I'm so sorry. You've been keeping it awfully well together for your child just dying-- sorry, that's the wrong thing to say, I didn't mean it--

ROSA

She's not mine. She's my step-sister.

MALCOLM

Ah. Now it would be mean to leave, wouldn't it.

ROSA

Yes it would. So I told you about me, now tell me about you.

MALCOLM

I don't have anything to say. I'm from Pittsburgh. I work at Eagle Bank. I'm really sorry. What you said about your step-sister really threw me. I'm--I'm having trouble talking to you.

ROSA

Forget it. It actually never happened. I was being cruel.

MALCOLM

Forget it? It neve--

ROSA

It never happened. Just talk to me.

MALCOLM

Forget it?

ROSA

Forget it.

MALCOLM

I'm confused.

ROSA

Then just don't say anything.

MALCOLM

I--

ROSA

Don't--

MALCOLM

But I like my voice.

ROSA

Well that doesn't mean I have to like it.

MALCOLM

Like what?

ROSA

You speaking.

MALCOLM

That's rude.

ROSA

Life's rude.

MALCOLM

I can't tell if you actually went to a funeral—

ROSA

To hell with funerals.

MALCOLM

Whatever it is... Life's a bitch and then you die. That's kinda just how it goes.

ROSA

Oh my god! Look!

ROSA points out over the bridge. By now the sky is dark orange and purple.

ROSA

There's some sort of... something in the sky. Like a shooting star or.. even though it isn't quite dark yet.

MALCOLM

That's not a shooting star. It was in the sky way too long to be a shooting star.

ROSA

Well I don't know, maybe the shooting star just woke up and was hungover, so it moved slower.

MALCOLM

That would be... interesting.

ROSA

Then what is it?

MALCOLM

I think that shooting star is really part of a meteor headed towards the Earth at billions of miles an hour destroying our atmosphere and our lives as we know it.

ROSA

What?

MALCOLM

But I came here to talk to you about theater, how did we get so far off that?

ROSA

I think you can blame yourself – so there's this meteor headed towards us – so we're going to, we get to have our last few moments on my bridge. That's nice. I like that. I should've made a bucket list so I'd know what to do right now.

MALCOLM

Remember how there were all these disaster movies coming out when we were kids. Like the late 90s. Well I don't know how old you are–

ROSA

I wasn't around but I watched a lot of movies growing up.

MALCOLM

Ok so like Armageddon or..

ROSA

Deep Impact!

MALCOLM

Or even the Die Hard movies, like on a smaller scale, a disaster. All of them have Bruce Willis--

ROSA

And his smolder!

MALCOLM

Literally through the entire film, smoldering. And that was just part of the psyche. Disaster movies, earthquakes and meteors, and Bruce Willis smoldering. And now here we are with a meteor headed towards us. I guess – I guess what I'm trying to say is – What I'm trying to say is I wonder what Bruce Willis is doing right now.

ROSA

Waiting till the last possible second before we perish. Does it look different to you?

MALCOLM

What?

ROSA

The sun.

MALCOLM

No.

ROSA

I don't think I ever got your name.

MALCOLM

Malcolm.

ROSA

You're not a ghost, are you?

MALCOLM

As far as I know. And what's your name?

A pause.

ROSA

(uncertain.)

Rosa?

MALCOLM

Rosa, like uhhhh no one I know or heard of. You're thorny and you smell good.

ROSA

You know it wasn't actually my step-sister's funeral. It was mine. I was trying to spare you from knowing that. I was trying to be kind, but I guess I couldn't do it.

MALCOLM

I-- do you have a step-sister?

ROSA

Yeah. *(to herself)* I wonder how she's doing.

MALCOLM

Have we met before?

ROSA

No. This is our first conversation.

MALCOLM

Are you dead?

ROSA

I don't know.

Streetlights on the bridge turn on, illuminating ROSA and MALCOLM just as they were becoming difficult to see.

MALCOLM

I was just about to say I should get going cus it's getting dark.

ROSA

And I'm so tired.

MALCOLM

But of course now we have to stay, right?

ROSA

You're probably right.

Streetlights flicker; then dark.

ROSA

Or maybe fate wants to keep us apart. This fucking city.

MALCOLM goes to inspect the closest lamp.

MALCOLM

Well, what's this about?

ROSA

(half-jokingly)

I'd say it's probably the meteorite.

MALCOLM

No, really- wait, you don't think—

ROSA

Why not? The rest of my day has been hell.

MALCOLM

... Because you went to your funeral?

ROSA

Yes, we've been over this.

MALCOLM

Did you die today?

ROSA

Yes, we've been over this.

MALCOLM

You're- you're serious, aren't you?

ROSA

Maybe. Are you?

MALCOLM

... Maybe I can fix it.

ROSA

Don't be stupid.

MALCOLM jumps on the bridge's railing and inspects the lamp closest to them.

ROSA

Hey just warning you if you break you fall and break your neck, I won't call for nobody. I don't want to deal with all that hassle.

MALCOLM

(not taking her seriously)

Yeah, yeah, yeah—

ROSA

I'll just leave you. To die. Possibly a second time – I don't know.

MALCOLM

I did gymnastics in high school. I'll be fine.

ROSA

Shit you are kinda gay.

The light MALCOLM seems to be fiddling with turns back on.

MALCOLM

The bulb just wasn't screwed in all the way, that's all.

ROSA

What?

MALCOLM hops down now that they have minimal light.

MALCOLM

The bulb. It wasn't screwed in all the way.

ROSA

Oh. Seriously?

MALCOLM

You're welcome?

ROSA

There's no need for that.

Quietly, the sound of meteor booms ease into the atmosphere.

ROSA

Is that... is that coming from the light?

MALCOLM

No, much farther away.

Both look out over the bridge.

ROSA

Maybe you weren't lying about the meteor.

MALCOLM

(laughs)

That'll be something.

A slightly louder boom.

MALCOLM

(slightly concerned)

That'll be something.

ROSA

It's a perfect night.

MALCOLM

A perfect night for the world to end?

ROSA

As good as any.

ROSA pulls out a pack of cigarettes and a lighter. She lights one and begins smoking. She then holds out the pack to MALCOLM.

ROSA

Do you?

MALCOLM

No, thanks though.

ROSA

You don't mind?

MALCOLM

No. My Dad needed his Newports as much as my mother.

ROSA

Much prefer a night alone on my bridge.

MALCOLM

The city doesn't own it then?

ROSA

Of course not.

MALCOLM

But the rest of the park?

ROSA

I don't know about the rest of the park.

MALCOLM

I don't know if it's just a hunch, but I think this is your first time here.

Beat.

ROSA

Yeah, you're right I've never been here before.

MALCOLM

I knew it.

ROSA

Ok you don't need to be like that.

MALCOLM

Like what?

ROSA

A child.

MALCOLM

You're the one that lied to me for some reason!

ROSA

When I found this bridge I thought no one else had seemed to claim it. So it might as well be mine.

MALCOLM

I had that exact same thought when I first walked by here, but then I saw you and--

ROSA

I beat you to it. What's your biggest regret?

MALCOLM

Because the world is ending?

ROSA

Naturally.

MALCOLM

Get me a fishing pole. I need to think about this.

ROSA retrieves a fishing pole. She hands it to MALCOLM. He lowers the line.

MALCOLM

This is how my Dad thought about things. Probably. No one's really asked me that. Probably meeting all the right people at the wrong times. Not taking advantage of my relationships when I had them. Like I wish I was closer to my brother when I was a teen. I wish I met this person at a different stage of life. It's always felt out of order. You?

ROSA

No I'm not gonna answer that.

MALCOLM

We don't have all night. There's, you know, the apocalypse.

ROSA

Well then how about you save it. You're not Bruce Willis. He's probably out there working his ass off to keep us from obliv--

MALCOLM

I. Turned On. That. Streetlight. I stood on the edge of the bridge at my own risk – I could've fallen-- and turned it on!

ROSA is suddenly very still. She looks down at the water. She looks a little pale. She sways a little bit.

MALCOLM

Does that count for anything?

ROSA begins to look as if she'll umble over the bridge railing. MALCOLM notices.

MALCOLM

Rosa? Hey, Rosa! ROSA!

ROSA seems to come out of her trance.

ROSA

What?

MALCOLM

You were rocking back and forth. I thought you were gonna fall.

ROSA

I was?

MALCOLM

Yeah, you just started swaying. I was yelling your name.

ROSA

Oh. I heard you say it, but, um.

MALCOLM

But, um - what?

ROSA

Um- I- ...

ROSA struggles for words.

MALCOLM

Where did you go?

ROSA

Um nowhere. I haven't moved.

MALCOLM

Yes physically, but-

ROSA

I've had a rough day. I was lost in space.

MALCOLM

... I just think about how people try to persevere and put themselves through the weirdest shit sometimes, you know?

ROSA

No I don't but also yeah I think I know what you mean. To be clear, that's not me though, I just—I don't know what you thought I was doing.

MALCOLM

No, I think about that with myself sometimes. You get drained. And you keep pushing. And when you froze there, I just saw all the color go out of your face. It felt like me being drained.

ROSA

I push however much I need to.

MALCOLM

(dismissively)

Fine, be like that, but that's not a thing.

ROSA grows anxious, somewhat suddenly.

The streetlight flickers dramatically. MALCOLM seems to become not himself, his energy shifting ever so slightly. He stands his fishing pole up on its own.

MALCOLM

Dumb bitch.

ROSA

What?

MALCOLM

What?

ROSA

What did you just say to me?

MALCOLM

I didn't say anything!

ROSA

No, you--

MALCOLM

Sheesh first the freezing thing and now you're hearing things? You sure you're alright?

ROSA

I-- I had a rough day.

MALCOLM

Yeah I guess you must've.

The streetlight flickers dramatically.

ROSA

Get away from me.

MALCOLM

I-- I don't understand what happened. One moment we were trying to think of if we've met and the next you're really upset -- what-- what--

ROSA

Something-- you reminded me-- Just let me be alone for a moment.

MALCOLM

Ok. I'll just be towards that end of the bridge. If you need me, just come over or give me a shout or whatever.

ROSA nods and begins to control her breathing as MALCOLM exits. She looks up towards the sky.

ROSA

Why-- every single--

LEO enters from downstage, walking through the house looking very lost. The sound of running water eases into the soundscape. He mimes wading through a river of sorts until he is a little bit underneath ROSA.

LEO

Do you know where I am?

ROSA

Not really actually.

LEO

I was trying to get off at Union Station but I lost track of the boys and now I'm in a river.

ROSA

Yes, I can see that. Not that you were at Union Station or that you lost the boys, but uh you are definitely in a river.

LEO

Yeah, uh did you come from the bus?

ROSA

Um no I did not.

LEO

Huh. I thought I might've-- nevermind.

ROSA

What?

LEO

I thought I saw you on the bus.

ROSA

Haven't been on any buses today.

LEO

Weird.

ROSA

Uh where you from?

LEO

South Park.

ROSA

L.A.?

LEO

Yes, is that-- is that not where I-- oh. um. I'm going to keep going up this river and see if I can get back to my stop. My friends are probably wondering where I am.

ROSA

Ok. Well good luck!

A boom reverberates in the background.

ROSA

Jesus well that's still going.

LEO

What is that?

ROSA

A meteor. Me and a friend of mine who you'll probably pass by-- he's somewhere round here--- we saw it.

LEO looks at ROSA like she's crazy.

LEO

Oh well ok. Have a good night.

LEO continues wading, heading upstage, going under the bridge before exiting.

ROSA

You too.

LEO

Don't do anything I wouldn't do.

ROSA

I- I won't. You don't have to worry.

ROSA exhales loudly. She looks back up to the sky.

ROSA

Why is it-- why do they always say women are always imagining things?

MALCOLM reenters.

MALCOLM

Did you see that kid wading through the river? What the actual frickin-- what?

ROSA

Yeah I talked to him for a little bit. He said he came from the bus. I think he might've hit his head on something.

MALCOLM

I mean, it is the apocalypse. I imagine people are coming from all over.

ROSA

Yeah but wading through a small river. Tengo bastante de los hombres. Ayyy I sound like one my aunts or grandmas. Bastante. Bastante. Bastante. It gets passed down I guess. I had this one older cousin, we'd always make fun of our older relatives and now I sound like them. I wonder if she sounds like--

MALCOLM

Do you want to talk about whatever happened a little earlier?

ROSA

No.

MALCOLM

Ok.

A pause.

ROSA

Back there, you made a gesture or it was something you said about ‘not a thing’ and you just suddenly you started to become completely different in my-- my head. I know it sounds dumb. it’s just what occurs since – well
None of that’s really important now.

MALCOLM

No I guess not... but also... everything’s important.

ROSA

That’s just not true.

MALCOLM

Is it? Sure, I guess you could take the expansive view and say if the world is ending and you went to your own funeral – nothing much at all really matters. But nothing matters, then everything is just what we give meaning to. And then everything can be important. We can make it all matter.

Silence. It lasts for a little while, long enough so both ROSA and MALCOLM begin looking in other directions. ROSA eventually puts her gaze on the sky. MALCOLM’s rests his on the water below.

MALCOLM

There are entire worlds we don’t even know about. There are these places that’ll we’ll never see, that’ll we’ll never even hear of. I know people tell us to look at the stars and the universe is so expansive, but what about this rock. There are places we’ll never see. I-- I don’t even know what’s on the other side of that bridge. I don’t even know who in my life is alive right now or if they’re astroid dust.

ROSA

I keep everything so close to my heart. My heart floods my mind. It’s too often misty and cloudy. My neck is always stiff cause my eyes are tunnels so I can’t move side to side. I can’t see what else is out there. Except a light somewhere towards the end, maybe it’s in the middle, there’s no way for me to know when the light is coming from. I heard there was a ladder along here for me to climb out of this cell, but I don’t even know what’s on this side of the bridge.

MALCOLM

Where was that boy going again?

ROSA

Up the river somewhere. To find his friends.

MALCOLM

He thinks that'll work?

ROSA

He seemed to think it made sense.

MALCOLM

I don't know how much sense that makes.

ROSA

Kids don't make a lot of sense.

MALCOLM

No, I never did.

ROSA

I didn't either.

MALCOLM stands. He heads over to his fishing line. He exhales loudly.

MALCOLM

Do you know what I did today?

ROSA

What?

A long beat.

MALCOLM

... I can't remember all the facts. It's muddled.

ROSA

Did it matter? You said everything did.

MALCOLM

It might've mattered. I don't really know what to say about it. Or if there's anything to say. I've never made it past half-truths.

A loud boom reverberates. The bridge rattles. The singular street light flickers then goes dark. A roar returns to MALCOLM's voice.

MALCOLM

God Damn't!! I just fixed that!

ROSA

It's fine. Was bound to go out again.

MALCOLM

Oh really? And how do you know this?

ROSA

Because you fixed it by screwing the bulb tighter.

MALCOLM

A tried and true method. Fuck this shit. I thought I did something good today. I fixed a fucking light. No actually I did not fix a fucking light.

ROSA

You're prettier in the dark.

MALCOLM

When you can't see me as well? Thanks bit—

ROSA

No, it's just you look interesting all shadowy.

MALCOLM

Oh, do I?

ROSA

You do. Do you want to fuck a ghost?

MALCOLM

You don't know the type of shit I'm capable of doing.

ROSA

I can imagine.

MALCOLM

You really don't. You know what, I'm going to see what's on the other side of this shit. I don't care if I die. I don't care if I kill somebody. I'm tired of being half-way—

MALCOLM walks off the other side of the bridge. His voice cuts off as he exits. ROSA considers for a moment and then chases after him.

ROSA

Malcolm!

There are a few moments of silence and then a few more.

LIGHTS DIM.

Scene Two

Let's go to a beach. It's early morning. The sound of waves can be heard. Stage right brightens. ROSA, stands stage right facing audience, who are the ocean. She gazes out at the waves solemnly. There are two chairs spaced about a foot apart behind her. She abruptly sits on the "driver's seat" chair, the chair on the left. She curls up into a ball on the chair. She is now named RENATA.

Stage left brightens. There are an additional two chairs spaced a foot apart stage left. ASIF, a middle-aged Persian officer, sits in the driver's seat chair on the left. ASIF rises from his chair, does a motion suggestive of opening a car door, and walks around in front of the chairs over to RENATA.

ASIF

Madam?

She is unresponsive.

ASIF

Madam, I've been told you have been parked here for quite some time.

RENATA

(quietly)

What do you want?

ASIF

I was called. I've been told you've been here for quite some time.

RENATA

I want to go home.

ASIF

If you step out the car, I'm here to make sure—

RENATA

(abruptly, quickly, panicked)

I DIDN'T SAY THAT.

ASIF

I--

RENATA

(turns head towards ASIF for first time)

I'm waiting. Do you want to sit?

ASIF
(surprised)

Sit?

RENATA
(pleadingly)

Sit.

ASIF stands a moment, thinking about what RENATA just asked, then walks around in front of the chairs and RENATA. He stands for a moment, does a motion suggestive of opening a car door then sits down in the chair next to her. As he does this, RENATA takes a container of pills from her jacket pocket and swallows a couple. She quickly hides them as ASIF sits down, and does a motion suggestive of closing a car door. ASIF does not notice the pills, rather, he looks about what could be a mess of a car – visibly uncomfortable.

ASIF

You left it unlocked.

RENATA

I'm waiting.

ASIF

For what?

RENATA

My sun.

ASIF
(surprised)

You have a child? How old are you?

RENATA

No, I'm waiting for the sun. My sunrise.

ASIF
(hesitating)

Sunrise won't be for a couple of hours.

How about we get out of--

RENATA
(forcefully, panicked)

NOOO!

ASIF studies RENATA, for one moment and then another.

ASIF

If you don't comply, I will have to use force.

RENATA

Fuck you.

ASIF does a motion suggestion of opening the car door and his side. Then, he grabs RENATA by her wrists.

RENATA

AHHH. HEEEEELP. HEEEEELLPPP. You have to let me wait. YOU HAVE TO LET ME WAIT.

Very suddenly, ASIF lets RENATA go. He does a motion suggesting he closes the car door he opened.

ASIF

Ok.

RENATA

I'm waiting.

ASIF

For the sun?

RENATA nods.

ASIF

What will you do when the sun does come up?

RENATA

(quietly again)

I don't know.

Brief silence.

RENATA

What's your name?

ASIF

... Asif.

RENATA

What's that from?

ASIF

It's an Arab name, but I'm Persian.

Do you know what it means?
RENATA

I was told it translates as forgiveness.
ASIF

My name is Renata. I don't know what it means.
RENATA

How old are you?
ASIF

17.
RENATA

17? What are you doing here at *this* time?
ASIF

I already said. I'm waiting for the sun.
RENATA
(slight irritation)

Right. Where's home?
ASIF

-- the sun.
RENATA
(stressed in response)

What will you do when the sun comes?
ASIF

Tell it to go away. It burns me.
RENATA
(continued stress)

Then why are you waiting for it?
ASIF

No more questions ... I need to get out. I need to touch the waves. I need ...
RENATA
(emotionally, then panicked)

RENATA stands, does the motion of opening the car door, then stumbles out. The sound of ocean waves fades into the sound of traffic.

ASIF opens his car door, realizing she is headed towards the street and a car is coming her way. Car noises fade into one distinct car noise, which becomes louder as RENATA wanders downstage. ASIF runs after her.

ASIF

RENATA!!!

Car noise reaches its loudest volume just as ASIF pulls RENATA upstage out of the car's path. Car noise fades away.

ASIF

(soothingly)

Let's get you to the car. Let's get you to the car.

ASIF walks RENATA to the two chairs where he started the scene.

ASIF

Do you want to sit?

The sound of ocean waves return.

RENATA

Yes. The ocean is better sitting.

RENATA mindlessly takes the bottle of pills from her pocket. ASIF notices.

ASIF

Turn over the bottle, please.

She is unresponsive.

ASIF

Madam, turn over the bottle.

She is unresponsive. ASIF pries the bottle from her hand.

ASIF

Let's get you to the car.

ASIF walks RENATA stage left to his car. He opens the door, on the right side and helps RENATA into the car. Then, he closes the door. ASIF picks up his radio. Somewhere, LEO appears from upstage. He wades until he is just past the bridge. He looks out upon us. ASIF then walks around the car to the left side, opens the door. He picks up a radio from his belt, and holds it up to his mouth.

ASIF

Requesting assistance at the corner of Beacon and Tyler. I found the car. There was a female minor in it. I have her now. I think she is going to need an evaluation.

ASIF puts the radio back on belt. He sits and then closes the door behind him. LEO wanders elsewhere offstage.

RENATA

(surprisingly calm)

I don't want to go in an ambulance or anything.

ASIF

I'm doing protocol. I'm ensuring everyone is--

RENATA

Safe, ok.

Beat.

ASIF

You're not going in an ambulance.

RENATA

Ok?

Silence.

RENATA

You were told your name means 'forgiveness'. When did that happen?

ASIF

When I was just a little younger than you.

RENATA

What brought it up?

ASIF

It'll take a while.

RENATA

Ok.

ASIF

(sighs, takes some time before speaking)

When I was a teenager, my country was going through many changes. I lived in Kolah... It's a village on the coast of the Persian Gulf. We lived on a hill and our houses were made out of clay, almost blending into the countryside. Every day I would go down to the water.

ASIF stands up from chair wanderers center stage. Distinctly different ocean noises begin. Seabirds can be heard. The sound a car makes when its door is open can be heard.

ASIF

We fished a lot where I lived. The sand always burned your feet. Every summer, you had to tiptoe as fast as you could across the sand. I made a game out of it.

(ASIF hops a little as he says 'tiptoe', mimicking his response to the sand'.)

It was at the beginning of one summer that rumors began, that an opposition leader of some sort was hiding in our village. By late summer authorities came, threatening the whole town if we didn't turn in or find Omid Taleghani. Everybody was at each other's throats. I heard occurrences of people who searched their neighbors' homes more vigorously than the police. We were scared ... One night, one neighbor we didn't get along with, his name was Hamid, led the police to our doorstep. He claimed he found Omid Teleghani. My older brother who lived in the city was staying in town with us at the time, and Hamid pointed them to him.

They took him. My parents had me sleeping in a corner of the closet that night. They said for now just in case. They said they'd be fine ... The next day I woke up and my parents were gone ... the house was wrecked ... I slept *through* it ... I feared that when they realized our family had a second son, they would look for me too. A refugee boat was leaving that night, only half a mile from the ocean side of my town. The waves ran through my toes as I ran through the darkness. The waves were wild with rage and fear and sorrow. I was one of the first ones to find the boat. We departed at 12:30. It was not just 10 minutes later, when we had settled into the ocean, that I remember seeing a red-orange reflection on the water. I knew we were looking at my village. When I looked up I saw the mountain side aflame, the clay crackening, becoming blackened rock. A man was sitting behind me, I didn't know he was there until he spoke. Shadows ran across his face. He was old. I think he could tell I was affected by the fire. He asked my name. He spoke in the language of the Book. I told him. "ASIF" he said. "That means forgiveness where I come from". I looked back at the flames. The firelight now glowed on the boat. I looked back to where the man was, but he wasn't there. I was talking to a lifejacket.

Ocean noises stop. ASIF returns to the driver's seat in the car. Doesn't mimic opening door. Car noise stops. Both ASIF and RENATA sit silently for a while. After sufficient silence, the sound of raindrops begin. First softly, then slightly louder-- should still be soft enough for characters to speak.

ASIF

It rained later that night. It never rained in Kolah.

Silence.

ASIF

Renata, what will you do when the sun comes up?

RENATA

(quickly, panicky)

I'll wake up and everything will be better.

ASIF

Renata.

RENATA

(breathes)

I'm in a car.

(inhales again)

I always knew I was in a car. I must have, right?

ASIF

I don't know.

RENATA

I'm in a car. This isn't my car, this is your car. I parked here at around 12:30. I was listening to music to try to calm myself. I was trying to calm myself. I can't remember why I was anxious. I wanted his brightness, his color, his heat. I thought he was going to burn me into a million ashes. I thought I was going to die. I'm waiting for the sun.

ASIF

The sun is a person?

RENATA

(ignores question)

I love the rain though.

ASIF

Do you?

RENATA

Yes, it has so many emotions. It can represent anything, and I am anything. He is the sun and I am the rain and sometimes we make a rainbow. The problem is that he kills me.

ASIF

Does he hurt you?

RENATA

Are you asking about the sun?

ASIF

-Yes.

RENATA

He burns me because he is my sun. He can't do anything but give me light, color and blisters. Not physically though, he burns me on the inside and it's worse.

ASIF

Where are you right now?

RENATA

I'm floating.

ASIF

In the ocean?

RENATA

Yes.

ASIF

Do you know where you really are?

RENATA

In your car.

ASIF

Is it raining on the ocean right now?

RENATA

Yes, but it doesn't bother me.

ASIF

Do you like it?

RENATA

The droplets are soft on my skin.

Rain noises cease.

ASIF

What will you do when the sun comes up?

RENATA

What did you do ... when you were in that boat the next morning?

ASIF

I laughed. Just as the sun came up, a pod of dolphins began porpoising, diving in and out and in and out of the water. One particular dolphin, had a certain character to him which amused me. All of us on that boat were so tired. We all had stories. I think all of us on that boat, if we are still alive, have a special place for the memory of that morning.

RENATA

Will I have a morning like that?

ASIF

Maybe...

(humorously)

Tell me if you see any dolphins.

RENATA

(humorously)

I mean, It's still raining, so just maybe...

ASIF

It's not that cloudy. When the sun comes, we might see a rainbow.

RENATA

We just might.

ASIF

We just might.

The sound waves meditate on ASIF's and RENATA's unspoken thoughts for a moment or two. LEO reenters, still wading through water.

LEO

I think I'm pretty lost. Like dawg – I was on the bus – then I was off the bus – then I was here. Then I met this weird lady and this weird man. I thought both couldn't of been real, but like none of that ghost shit. Or I'm the ghost. There's this girl that died.... She's not here. She's not back at the station. She's not anywhere. I can feel it in myself I don't really know what that means. That's honestly really frightening. And now I feel like I'm just waiting to make sense of it. I'll look around here and say to myself "Well, went to Narnia?" or I'll get a little higher than I usually do, a little more trashed cause I don't understand something. Why don't stuff make sense no more? If it did all make sense or at least mostly make sense or even half make sense – I was wading up that way as if I was crawling up a mountain. The sky, the air slowly turned a pinkish orange. With anything and everything else crumbling, the trees suddenly became, like, more alive. They were the new us. I saw only two people the whole time, both around this bridge.

So I kept going, after a while I realized I was significantly gaining height. I was wading up a mountain. The trees became shorter and for some strange shit, air traffic was off the rocker. Big, commercial planes passing by me. A few at a time, sometimes right over my head. It was fucking

deafening. Just ringing and ringing and ringing in my ears. I had no reception this whole time. I got to the summit and it was pitch black everywhere around me. I see no lights of anything, but it's foggy by the water.

The stars were brighter than I ever seen them before. Just kinda dotted across the entire sky in this mystical, almost protective way. But uh that wasn't it though, the air was that pink for a reason I guess, 'cause as soon as I was about to call it quits and head back down the wind picked up and these thundering firecracker bangs and all these little, or probably not so little flames began popping up around the hills. I heard some bangs in the distance a little earlier, but this shit was like close. I was probably in danger. We was at a pitch dark midnight black blue star covered sky and it just exploded. The air became really dense. But that's not important, cause those fires let me see where I was. Or kinda where I was. I wasn't in Narnia. I wasn't in heaven or hell – I was in Los Angeles. And all the stars disappeared in the light of the blazes. The city sprawled out to my right. The city lights blinking in some sort of confused pattern of morse code. All synchronously. And that was wack, but it was L.A. Those little fires burning across the landscape lit the water in a really wonderful way. I kept asking myself if I was dead. Instead I sat somewhere comfy and said to myself this must be one hell of a bender. But I don't remember drinking. I feel like this is the weekend I like to think I have. As I was hiking and wading, I just kept thinking I don't know who the fucks I am. Who is in this body that I seem to inhabit? No matter what I do with myself, how I build myself or how I spend my time, who I spend that time with or shit, I feel like I'm inscrutable to myself. I don't have an identity. I'm just the opposite's perception of me. Pulled off to every direction, I can't tell what days they fence me out and what days they fence me in.

I hiked some Hollywood hill today. I saw air traffic moving in the way of an apocalypse and all these hills catch on sky fire. I was haunted on a bus that might not exist. I waded through a long ass river and I contemplated whether I was still alive or not. And so what? Who gives a fuck?

Who gives a fuck what I'm saying? I'm all fucking wet.

There was this girl and she died. Inscrutable. She's technically my cousin, biologically. That side of the family isn't involved with us. My dad didn't grow up with all his siblings. But my family was invited to the service, but I never met her and we didn't know the family really that well so I went to a soccer tourney I had that weekend instead. We were knocked out in the group stage. We played like shit. It was a waste of a weekend. I hit my head on a beam in the bathroom earlier tonight. The ceilings were low.

There are people like me who'd be happy just to be alive, especially now, and we, the people around me just be slowly or quickly killing ourselves. I mean, you're rich then you're a nihilist. But I always feel stuck in the middle of that cause I live with like more fear. It's like I'm always sitting, waiting to get murdered even when I prolly ain't. But at the same time, I always seem to sneak out alive. No matter what I do. No matter how we try to self-fulfill our narcissistic prophecies. And she crashed her car I think, one way or another, cause she was really, really genuinely sad. But like, who decided she'd be feeling that way? Why do I feel so much empathy? Why do I feel like I'm behind her eyes? That I saw it all happen. That I was in her head that night she went into that ditch. But if I was that little voice, what did I say? To someone I never met in her last moments. The air's become so hot and dense. Like the inside of a burning car. Maybe, somehow, I'm there right now. Maybe I'm really actually there right now. But I found water. I get to live.

LILLY enters with a bag of popcorn, munching away. She seems to be looking for

something or someone...

LILLY

Leo!!

Silence.

LILLY

Fucking hell. LEO!!

LEO hears her, but can't see her. He begins wading in LILLY's direction, but then enters into the house

LEO

Lilly!

Looping back around, LEO returns to the stage with a stumble and a crash. LILLY rushes over to him, finding him drenching wet head to toe. He looks maniacal.

LILLY

Bro, Jesus! Where the fuck were you?? You're drenching wet! We've been waiting on you all night and you have my joint!

LEO

You left me on the platform! // With that I.C.E. pig. You know I always forget my papers.

LILLY sets down her popcorn and approaches him.

LILLY

What've you done // with my joint?!

LEO

Lilly, I been to fucking hell and back // and you tell me--

LILLY

Where's my joint? What the fuck have you done with my // joint? You can't stay in one place bro, huh? You always have to go off--

LEO

Are. You. Hearing. A. Word I'm Saying!?

LILLY

on your own little adventure! Why do you never stay with the group!?

LEO

You separated from me. I lost y'all--

LILLY

Give me my fucking weed!

LILLY pushes LEO and he pushes back. LILLY falls to the sand.

LEO

I never had it. I could've been so screwed if I did.

LILLY checks her pockets. She pulls out a pill container enclosed with a small joint.

LEO

There you go. There's your fucking weed. Fuck you.

LILLY

Do you still want to smoke?

LEO

Honestly - No, not really. I don't know if they're still looking for me. How is this not registering in your head?

LILLY

I'm already high off Caroline's stuff... I thought you were gone gone. I couldn't fucking cope...

LEO

I need you to fucking cope.

LILLY

Ok then. I'm coping.

LEO

You're coping?

LILLY

Yeah. Do you need somewhere safe to go?

LEO

Are you suggesting somewhere?

LILLY

No, I just need to know if you don't already have someplace.

LEO

Where's everyone else?

LILLY

I don't know. I think they might've left me too.

LEO

What are friends for?

LILLY

How did they know you'd be getting off the bus?

LEO

They know where everyone is. Someone tips them off. I don't know.

LILLY

If it's fucking Josh-

LEO

Josh would never do that.

LILLY

He's been going down this red pill shit. He started following Nick Feuntes.

LEO

I know all that. He still wouldn't do that.

LILLY

You might be ok. They arrested someone else on the bus behind us.

LEO

You for real?

LILLY

Yeah.

LEO

Fuck yes. Thank God.

LILLY

Let's think of where to go. While we do, I'm going to light this up for myself.

LEO

You're fucking ridiculous. Crazy.

LILLY

Huh. Love ya.

LEO

Fuck ya.

LILLY

You don't mean that.

LEO

Oh I so do.

LILLY

I went looking for you alone, bro, high as shit, in the middle of the night. The amount of times I— you fucking owe me so much. And I found you. In my current state. No - so I'm gonna keep smoking. You're gonna protect me now. And I'm with you now, so that protects you.

LEO

It don't do shit.

LILLY

Don't say that.

LEO

... I'm grateful you found me.

LILLY lights her joint. Then begin walking along the beach.

LILLY

There you go - gratitude. Not that hard.

LEO

And I get to copy off your Bio homework tomorrow morning.

LILLY

I haven't done it yet.

LEO

Stop lying.

LILLY

I haven't! I was going to do it in a study hall before.

LEO

Bro, c'mon. Please. If there's any point in time I'm more deserving. I—

LILLY

Ok, fine - you can copy it tomorrow morning.

LEO

So you've already done it?

LILLY

Yeah.

LEO

This is why I hate you.

LILLY

Don't say stuff like that. You don't hate me. You hate yourself.

LEO

(offended)

Hey.

LILLY

It's true.

LEO

No it's not.

LILLY

You love literally everything else though. That's what's great about you. Like look at the ocean right now. Somehow the waves are more calming at night even though they're more aggressive. There's so much to love in that. Or the beach. The sound is so soft. I would take off my shoes if it weren't cold right now and I'm pretty sure I'd lose track of them— Do you want to carry my shoes?

LEO

No.

LILLY

Why?

LEO

Because I don't want to. And if anyone loves the waves at night, it sounds like it's you.

LILLY

You might be right.

LEO

You love literally everything else but me.

LILLY

That's not true! I hate everything.

LEO

I think you got us mixed up.

LILLY shakes her head. ASIF squints in their direction.

ASIF

Do you see smoke?

RENATA

What? I think that's just the fog coming in.

ASIF

I think that's him -- fuck.

ASIF turns on his high beams, which shine towards LEO and LILLY. He spots LILLY with her weed and LEO with her. He moves to get out of the car.

ASIF

Stay here. Don't go anywhere.

RENATA

Where are you going?

ASIF gets out of the car and locks it behind him. He slowly approaches the kids. He removes his gun from his holster.

ASIF

Police! Hands where I can see them!

LILLY

Fuck!

LEO

Mierda! Follow me.

LEO starts running into the waves.

LILLY

Into the ocean??

LEO

Trust me.

ASIF

Freeze or I'll shoot!

RENATA unlocks her door and gets out the car. She begins waving her arms.

RENATA

Hey!! Hey!! Hey!! Hey!!

This distracts ASIF for a second as he looks towards her. LEO and LILLY disappear into the waves. There's a silence.

ASIF

What the fuck are you doing?

RENATA

What the fuck are *you* doing?

ASIF

I'm pretty sure I just lost the person I was supposed to find tonight.

RENATA

I wasn't the person you were supposed to find?

ASIF

... No, we thought you might've been someone else.

RENATA

Who were you looking for?

ASIF

That's not your business.

RENATA

Why'd you start pointing your gun?

ASIF

They could've been dangerous.

RENATA

They were kids.

ASIF

At least one of them is 18.

RENATA

So?

ASIF

He could be dangerous.

RENATA
I'm 18. Am I dangerous?

ASIF
So you lied to me?

RENATA
I—

ASIF
You just lied to a federal agent. Do you know how much trouble that could get you in?

RENATA
What?

ASIF
You're lucky you're with me. You're lucky I like you.

RENATA
Are you fucking I.C.E.??

ASIF
Is this car you're in. Is this your car?

RENATA
Yes.

ASIF
It don't belong to anyone else?

RENATA
N-no.

ASIF
There you go. Lying again.

RENATA
I'm not.

ASIF
We'll see about that.

RENATA sighs.

ASIF

Look. One of those kids may be an illegal alien. We have to take precautions when dealing with those sorts of cases-

RENATA

You're actually la migra? I thought you were a regular cop.

ASIF

I'm not dressed like a regular cop.

RENATA

That don't mean shit anymore. I didn't... what the fuck - You're an immigrant!

ASIF

Exactly.

RENATA

Exactly? How could you-

ASIF

My job is my job. It's not your concern.

RENATA

I now know why they named you forgiveness.

ASIF

Hey, my case is getting colder by the minute because of you. But I'm not worrying because... there's more important things.

RENATA

I'm leaving.

ASIF

I can't have you do that. I can't let you drive.

RENATA

That's ok. I'm not dangerous.

RENATA heads for her car. ASIF intercepts her.

RENATA

Let me go.

ASIF

You're under arrest.

RENATA

For what??

ASIF

For obstructing police action. For driving under the influence.

RENATA

The pills are for my head. They aren't recreational.

ASIF

We'll see about that.

RENATA

Let me go!

LIGHTS DOWN.

LIGHTS UP ON:

Scene Three

The fog has now completely settled in. MALCOLM enters and wanders for a bit. ROSA does the same. They each find a spot distinct from one another and face away from each other.

MALCOLM

No, I don't go to grad school here.... I'm not from here either.... I came with Derek.... yeah, he brought me... We went to high school... yeah.

ROSA

No, it's not like that. No, he's never--

MALCOLM

I'm here for the weekend. Passing through.... Could be moving.... No, I don't know that yet.

ROSA

Like the other day, we went to the cider mill and the sweetest thing... No let me tell you, the sweetest thing, he put me in this little wooden cart and drove me around the orchard... it was so much fun.... yeah, but it's not just that one...

MALCOLM

I've looked at places... could be an upgrade... maybe not... ... yeah maybe I'm just jealous of him-- no, for real... shit it's starting to rain, we need to move. Everyone else is inside anyway, what the fuck we doing... Right?

ROSA

Ok, so what I've told that one before... I told you I hit myself on the dishwasher at work! No, it's not him. It's not him. It's not him. It's--

MALCOLM

It is so much warmer in here, what were we doing?... *(to someone else)* Heyyy. Hey! Yeah, I met --uh what's your name?...

ROSA

Do we really need to have this conversation now? Is that necessary? Is that really what we need to--

MALCOLM

Oh, ay -- just passing by me there. I come to this shit with him, now he's just ignoring me?... But you live in Columbus, right?... Yeah I got a few places in mind, if you know anything about the area.

ROSA

This isn't your place to judge.... No, you're not concerned. You're just--- I don't even know what you are. This is the choice I've made, ok? This is my choice. You don't be telling me who I date. I don't tell you-- I don't tell you--

MALCOLM

Oh, my name's Malcolm.... Yeah, from Pittsburgh... No, I'm pretty sure I'm the only Malcolm he knows... What do you mean "I'm dead"? uhh Did I do something?

ROSA looks down.

ROSA

Oh shit, he's been texting me. I've-- I've got to go. He's really sensitive about this stuff. I need to go see him.... Uhhh-- bye!.... I don't have time for this. I've got to go.... No, bye. ... Fine. I agree to talk to you later... ... Get the fuck out of my life!

MALCOLM

Dead? Literally dead?... Who are you? Uh, I mean, um, what now?

ROSA

What now?

After a bit, MALCOLM slowly approaches ROSA.

MALCOLM

Have we met before? I mean, before this night.

ROSA

I don't think so.

A beat.

MALCOLM

(still not processing it)

I died.

ROSA

Yeah, I figured. I died too. A few years ago. Time's different here somehow. Sometimes I see little glimpses of the other side in the river. For my friends and family it hasn't been that long.

MALCOLM

When did I die?

ROSA

I don't know. Do you remember how?

MALCOLM

No.

ROSA

It took me a while.

MALCOLM

What?

ROSA

It took me a while to remember how I... how I went.

MALCOLM

Ok. I guess, if I am, I'll remember in a little while.

ROSA

(quietly)

Yeah.

MALCOLM

How did you-- you don't have to say it actually. You're young. Where you this young?

ROSA

I think I was a little bit younger. I feel... older somehow. I feel like time has passed, but I also know it hasn't. I don't know. I should say it. Somebody should know. I... I killed myself. I think something with my car. But it's hazy.

Silence.

MALCOLM

Why didn't you mention any of this before?

ROSA

I said it's hazy! And I didn't know who you were or what you were doing here. I didn't know if I could trust you or if you were sent to punish me or--

MALCOLM

Yeah, ok. Slow down, I get it. The world didn't end. We just did.

ROSA

I don't know maybe it is? I don't-- it's confusing.

MALCOLM

Confusing as fuck.

(beat.)

Is this real?

Silence.

MALCOLM

This can't be real, right. Like how can this be real? I haven't died. And if I did, I'd definitely remember how. That's not something you forget. And I definitely – I don't know if there's any after life, I feel like there isn't, but if there is – It definitely doesn't kind of remind me of Griffith Park.

ROSA

I think San Gabriel Mountains.

MALCOLM

You know where we are??

ROSA

I'm just saying what it reminds me of.

MALCOLM

Did you bring me here? What the fuck did you do to me?

ROSA

I didn't do anything! You found me!

MALCOLM

Yeah, I was going for a walk...

ROSA

You were. And?

MALCOLM

When the fuck did I start walking?

ROSA

I don't know I guess you must've walked all the way from Pittsburgh.

MALCOLM

FUCK. Who the fuck are you?

ROSA

I've told you– I've told you things no one else will ever know about me.

MALCOLM

Bullshit. Bullshit. This is fucking bullshit. Do you have a phone?

ROSA

No.

MALCOLM grabs ROSA. Begins searching through her pockets.

MALCOLM

Bullshit. This is fucking bullshit.

He finds nothing. He lets her go.

MALCOLM

You're... you're— I need some time to think.

(beat.)

Was that kid we saw dead too?

ROSA

I assume so.

MALCOLM

He was – he was looking for his friends. We should find him. We should tell him he's dead, right?

ROSA

I guess. I mean, do you think he's dead?

MALCOLM

How am I supposed to know? I mean, if we are apparently?

ROSA

He came here on a bus.

MALCOLM

What?! Where is this bus?

ROSA

I don't know. He was looking for it—

MALCOLM

Am I dead or not?

ROSA

I just said—

MALCOLM

Who are you, huh?!?!?

ROSA

I don't know, ok?!? I don't know!!

MALCOLM

You don't know.

ROSA

I don't know. I'm just guessing. I just got here and – and – I'm not even that sure I know how I died. When you asked me-- and my memory comes and goes and I can't tell you what half my life looked like before this. It's just in and out and in and out, coming and going, coming and going –I'm just guessing, Malcolm. My last memory is being upside down surrounded by fire in the driver's seat and took me forever to get there, ok? Ok?!

MALCOLM

Alright.

MALCOLM re-mounts the bridge to check on his fishing pole, stood up. He stares at it.

MALCOLM

It's not picking up anything.

ROSA

I don't know if there's any fish.

MALCOLM

Know-it-all, Rosa. Come up here.

Rosa obliges.

MALCOLM

There's nothing everywhere. Every direction. Just the trees and the shrubs. I spotted a beetle. But in the midst of it all, for no particularly obvious reason, lies a bridge. With a fucking lamppost. And it's your bridge, right?

ROSA

Not actually, that's just something I said–

MALCOLM

And apparently there's also a bus. But for there to be a bus, there needs to be more people. There needs to be a society, right–

ROSA

I don't think there's actually a bus–

MALCOLM

Did you kidnap me?

ROSA

What? How would've I–

MALCOLM

Did you kill me?

ROSA

No! Jesus—

MALCOLM

Well, you at least half convinced me I'm dead. The world is ending. A kid walks in a river. Sometimes we have light. Sometimes we don't. And the only constant thing is you. So what are you hiding?

ROSA

I could say the same thing to you. There were no meteors or explosions until you showed up. But I eventually decided to trust you, but maybe that's misplaced. I don't know.

MALCOLM

Stop trying to flip it!! This isn't about me! I'm not the one who has all these theories. I'm just trying to figure shit out. I just realized five minutes ago that I don't remember starting walking. I don't remember how I got here. So either you drugged me or killed me or I'm dead or some wack shit is going on.

ROSA

What the fuck do you want me to say?!?!

MALCOLM

The truth!!

ROSA

I don't know shit!!

MALCOLM

Gah!

LILLY enters onto the scene with a yoga mat. She lays it down, sits and begins meditating.

ROSA

Lilly?

MALCOLM

Wait, you know that person??

ROSA

Not really—

MALCOLM

You need to start giving me answers, Rosa. What did you do? You need to start giving me-- none of this doesn't add up here--

ROSA

Mac--

MALCOLM

I don't even know who you are. What are doing with me? You know this is your fault and you aren't even sorry. Do you want me to tell the world what you've done to me? How'd you like that? You're lucky I've been so nice to you bitch. I'm fucking dead!

MALCOLM pushes ROSA to the edge of the bridge. She almost falls off but recovers, clearly shaken. MALCOLM has a quiet look about him.

ROSA

Malcolm, calm down.

MALCOLM

You aren't real.

MALCOLM pushes ROSA again but this time off the bridge. By the side of the river, she lands and dies.

The action freezes, as if painted.

A long moment. LEO enters, working through a joint. He meets LILLY at her yoga mat.

LEO

There the fuck you are.

LILLY

(half-there)

What-- oh... hey.

LEO

Hey.

LILLY

Why did you find me?

LEO

Because I always do.

LILLY

Yes, but why?

LEO

Because we grew up together. And somebody has to and...

LILLY begins looking around.

LILLY

I don't know where we are or how we got here or how we get back or—

LEO

Ok, calm down.

LILLY

(absence of any calm)

I am calm! I'm perfectly calm!

LEO

This is just a place where I collect myself.

LILLY

I'm so high. I actually might be so high right now.

LEO

No you're not—

(beat.)

Well, yes you are. But this... this is just some place you followed me. And you can follow me back. And we're fine. This is where I come when I need to think about something.

LILLY

Think about what?

LEO

Just... stuff.

LILLY

You bring me here, but you still don't want to talk about shit.

LEO

Lately, I've been thinking about Renata. I mean I don't think about her as much as you but - sometimes.

LILLY

You think about me?

LEO

No, I mean, I don't think about Renata as much as you do.

LILLY
Oh, duh.

LEO
But I also think about you sometimes.

LILLY
Pervert. That's weird.

LEO
Yeah, sometimes.

LILLY
I think about you too sometimes... Why do you have my joint? Where did I get a yoga mat?

LEO
When I last came here, it was the same. You end up in some situation that you just... you just can't explain how you got there.

A slightly awkward beat.

LEO
How was the funeral?

LILLY
Why weren't you there?

LEO
I mean, I didn't know her that well—

LILLY
It would've been nice if you were there.

LEO
I had this soccer tournament. I probably could've skipped it. It wasn't really that important. I know you were close with her—

LILLY
Not that close.

LEO
Really?

LILLY
Well... With Renata... I knew her better when we were younger.

LEO

Weren't you like best friends?

LILLY

In 5th grade, but yeah - we use to be neighbors and we'd go to school together and we both liked horses. She was a good person. I hate saying 'was'. Even for someone that was a bit more, like, by high school, not someone I'd see too often. Like the second ring of my circle. One moment they're around. And they'll never be around again.

I mean, our family's are still close and it's just bad. Everyone's devastated. We all obviously devastated. You know, they still don't know if she intended it – We don't know what she intended – If I somehow found out what she wanted, then there'd just be something else – then another question, then another question. Even at the funeral, I snuck out early. I felt like shit. I'm worse than you. It didn't feel real. I remember seeing everything and everyone but not seeing them at all.

LEO

That doesn't make you bad.

LILLY

Doesn't it? What type of person leaves a funeral like that?

LEO

Probably more people than you think.

LILLY breaks down, begins sobbing. LEO puts his arm around her.

LILLY

What's so fucked up – what's so fucked up is I wouldn't even be telling you any of this without the weed. I can't tell anyone shit.

(beat.)

You almost got deported! What the actual fuck??

LEO

I just need to get home and get my papers. I'll be ok.

LILLY

What if they're already at your home?

LEO

Even better. Then my Uncle can show them.

LILLY

What if they like don't recognize them or something? Wasn't there an issue–

LEO

(unconvincingly)

They'll recognize them. I'll be fine. Enough about that. I don't do that shit here.

LILLY

(taking a moment to understand)

In your collecting place?

LEO

Fuck no.

LILLY

How long have you had this...

LEO

I just do.

LILLY

You can't just stay in your collecting place all night. It's kinda creepy, not gonna lie.

LEO

I know.

LILLY

Not bad creepy necessarily, just a lot to take in.

LEO

It's easy to get lost. I do sometimes.

LILLY

I don't want to get lost. I'm too high.

LEO

Then let's get going.

LEO offers his hand to LILLY. Ocean noises ease back into the atmosphere.

LILLY

Yes, good – we should be going.

LEO turns in the direction of the fallen ROSA, pauses.

LEO

I don't want to go just yet.

LILLY

Is that a good idea?

LEO

Who cares anymore? Let's just...

LEO sighs. The ocean noises have fully returned.

LEO

Ok. Want to go walking along the beach? The guy is gone.

LILLY

Are you sure?

LEO looks behind himself again.

LEO

Yeah, he's gone.

LILLY

You can tell there's no car? What do you have, like laservision? Are you secretly Superman?

LEO

No but some people call me Clark Kent Rodriguez. Beach walk?

LILLY

I can't really in these shoes. But I can take them off.

LILLY begins taking off her shoes and socks. LEO does the same.

LILLY

Are you ever going to be ok?

LEO

I don't know what you mean.

LILLY

Time doesn't really have a plan...

LEO and LILLY amble on with no socks or shoes.

LILLY

I've known you forever, but sometimes I like barely know you. Sorry, that sounds weird to say--

LEO

No, I know what you mean. I don't really know you either. But yeah, I've been aware of you.

LILLY laughs.

LILLY
You gotta go home.

LEO
So do you.

LILLY
No I don't. My mom doesn't care.

LEO
Right.

LILLY
What were your expectations for this?

LEO
For this walk? I don't know. I thought it'd be a little warmer.

LILLY
Ok. I thought we were going to have that conversation.

LEO
When you're high?

LILLY
I'm not even that high. I'm just crazy. When are you going to tell the difference?

LEO
Yeah let's have it. Do you wanna sit? It's not too windy here.

LILLY
Yeah, sure.

They sit. LILLY sighs.

LILLY
You know what, maybe it's easier just not to have any particular conversation. Let's just talk – like--

LEO
I don't know. Don't we kinda need to have it though?

LILLY
No.

LEO

What do you mean?

LILLY

Why can't we just talk?

LEO

Cause it's like bad not to be specific I feel like.

LILLY

Why's that?

LEO

Cause I never know what the fuck is going on.

LILLY

Me neither. But what is there to say about it?

LEO

I don't know, I guess that...

Silence. Both bite their lip. Until...

LILLY

I guess that there is something frightening about a relationship being put on you rather than really naturally allowing it to build. Sometimes someone tells us what we are rather than us just growing into it. Sometimes those people are ourselves. We put these expectations of this label or that label onto something that isn't really this label or that label. Instead, we think it's going to be or we want it to be. We become so caught up in that prediction or fantasy that we stop seeing ourselves and after that anyone else enclosed in that unreality. We're so small out here. The water and the sky. You can't dream up someone else without dreaming up yourself first. I don't really wanna call you my boyfriend.

LEO

I don't really wanna call you my girlfriend.

LILLY

But in my head.

LEO

In my head.

LEO AND LILLY

Of course I do.

LEO

In my head.

LILLY

In my head.

LEO

If we try to get too close, too comfortable, we're going to fall apart. We'll be fated to never be. Cause if we try, we could fail. So all I do is try to avoid failure. Avoid hurt, cause what am I living for if I'm putting my heart in harms way? So I live recklessly everywhere else.

LILLY

What am I living for if I don't try, but try with someone I judge is safe, where I think I have an out to spare myself, to not sink when he realizes those stars don't want us. So in my head.

LEO

In my head.

LILLY

These anxieties

LEO

pile on

LILLY

until

LEO

the fantasy is easier. Let's get married.

LILLY

Let's get married--

LEO AND LILLY

--As a joke.

LEO

Or maybe as a final resort

LILLY

to boredom. For your green card. Or maybe to self-

LEO

sabotage. Or in an unrealistic play!

Or in Vegas!

LILLY

Maybe just give up on it all together.

LEO

The whole charade.

LILLY

Or just be ok with failure. A girl died.

LEO

She did.

LILLY

I thought I saw her ghost earlier tonight but we won't talk about that.

LEO

We never will.

LILLY

No. Think she's really out there

LEO

somewhere? Why would I know? I hope that she is.

LILLY

Sometimes I

LEO

Just think

LILLY

That

LEO

The universe is

LILLY

Just strands of missing

LEO

Pieces

LILLY

From someplace else

LEO

And really we're all accidents

LILLY

And someone else is saying

LEO

"Ah FUCK"

LILLY

About us

LEO

Somewhere else.

LILLY

A silence.
Then, the ocean takes LEO and LILLY away.

LIGHTS DIM

LIGHTS UP:

Scene Four

*RENATA sits in a chair next to a desk. Wearing handcuffs.
ASIF enters onto the scene, carrying a clipboard.*

RENATA

Where the fuck am I?

ASIF looks up from his clipboard.

ASIF

What do you mean?

RENATA

Why am I here? I don't want to be here.

ASIF

Well you have to be.

RENATA

Why?

ASIF

You might have some information for us.

RENATA turns herself towards ASIF, searching for his gaze. He won't return it.

ASIF

... And because we don't want you to hurt yourself. And you're under suspicion of driving under the influence.

RENATA

I was parked!

ASIF

I know.

RENATA

I was parked. My car was parked.

ASIF

I know. Parked at the edge of a cliff.

Silence.

RENATA

You're so fucking fake. Who the fuck even are you?

ASIF

Renata, you're not making sense.

RENATA

Is that little story with the dolphins and your dead family – is that even real?

ASIF

My family's not dead.

RENATA

What do you mean?

ASIF

They were prisoners. My mom and brother were able to join me in California.

(beat.)

My dad and brother weren't given enough food when they were in jail. My dad gave my brother his food. He got sick and died while he was in there.

(beat.)

My brother, he wasn't Omid Teleghani but he was a radical. They found the wrong flyers and the wrong books in our home. My father convinced the soldiers that they were his before he died. Or he must have made some sort of deal. I don't think Radin has ever been fully honest with us about what happened, but I know he is the reason baba died. He's never deserved our bloodline. A rotting branch on a perfectly good tree.

(beat.)

I think you're innocent. I really think you are. But if you're not, you will end up where I put him. So be smart about how you speak to me.

RENATA

For a former refugee, you're kind of fat.

An awkward silence. Then ASIF starts laughing.

ASIF

That was actually pretty good. I'll give you that one.

RENATA

Where are we?

ASIF

Do you seriously not know?

RENATA makes eye contact with ASIF. She shakes her head.

ASIF

We're in my car.

RENATA

What?

ASIF

I said we're in my car.

The desk rolls away. ASIF crouches into the chair behind it to sit. As he does, we hear him close the door behind him. The sound of an ocean returns.

RENATA

Oh, we are. I thought...

ASIF

Thought what?

RENATA

Nothing... do you have an office?

ASIF

No.

RENATA

So this is your office?

ASIF

... No. This is my car. We haven't moved...

Silence.

ASIF

Are you listening to me?

RENATA

A little bit.

ASIF sighs.

ASIF

I understand it's easy to get lost. To go down the wrong path.

RENATA

I know.

ASIF

I've done bad things. I've done many bad things, Renata.

RENATA

I understand.

ASIF

So I need you do the right thing and tell me how you got that car.

RENATA

It's my car.

ASIF

It's not your car. Either someone gave it to you, you stole it or it's abandoned and you're sleeping in it. I'm guessing it's the first one because we know that the car is registered to—

RENATA

It's MY car.

ASIF

You've been difficult enough!

RENATA

Don't worry. I've always been a bit of a difficult person. You're not the first. It goes back to like second grade. I had strep throat for almost the entire school year. I was a little too quiet. I mean - I needed to be because of my scratchy throat. Or maybe it goes back further. I think I was dropped a lot as a baby. Or maybe it was when I was 13 and... Or maybe it was when I was conceived but it honestly doesn't even really matter. Because I'm going to be—

ASIF

Oh my god—

A bright light shines onto RENATA and ASIF.

RENATA

free soon. My sun will be here.

ASIF

What is this? What's going on?

RENATA

It's my sun.

ASIF

I don't understand.

RENATA

Yes you do. You saw it the day you left home.

ASIF

(fearful)

I never saw anything.

RENATA

You told me you did.

ASIF

Yes, I told you I did. And I did. But it didn't feel like this!

RENATA

It'll hurt you. But it doesn't... it doesn't want to.

ASIF

What the fuck is this? Why are you so calm?

RENATA

(takes a breath)

I don't know.

(beat)

Maybe it's just my imagination again.

ASIF

No I feel it right now. Something's here. What the...

The light fades.

RENATA

I guess it's taking its time.

ASIF

... You need to go to the hospital.

RENATA

He's shown himself. Nothing's going to help me now.

ASIF

Your son?

RENATA

My sun.

ASIF
Is it— is that light going to come back?

RENATA
Yes.

RENATA begins to slump over.

ASIF
Hey, hey, stay with me.

RENATA gasps for breath.

ASIF
Hey, stay with me. What's your name?

RENATA
Renata.

ASIF
Your full name.

RENATA
Renata.

ASIF
Your name isn't just Renata.

RENATA
You say your full name first.

ASIF
Asif Shahidi.

RENATA
Renata Ramírez de Santillana.

ASIF
Renata Ramirez de Santillana, where are you?

RENATA
I'm in your car.

ASIF
And where were you earlier tonight?

My car. RENATA

How old are you? ASIF

18. RENATA

When did you get to Beacon street tonight? ASIF

I think I'm drifting away now. RENATA

No, you're not. You're going to answer my questions. You're going to be right here with me. ASIF

I'm going out to sea. RENATA

The light returns, significantly brighter than before.

What the fuck, no - Renata.,. ASIF

He's getting closer. Ask your questions. I've been like a wave for so long now. I'm in and out. RENATA
As long as I remember. Keep asking your questions. Do whatever you think you need to do.

I need you to stick this out for me. ASIF

I feel him on me. RENATA

RENATA hesitates.

What happened to the people that you radioed? RENATA

They're coming. ASIF

But it's been hours. RENATA

ASIF

No, it's not been that long. They're on their way.

RENATA

But it's been hours. I thought we were at the detention center.

ASIF

I assure you it's not been hours.

RENATA

What time did you find me?

ASIF

A little after 3.

RENATA

What time is it now?

ASIF checks his phone.

ASIF

Oh my god, it's almost 5:30.

RENATA

See.

ASIF

This has... just taken longer than I thought it would. I'm very tired. The two of us should get going soon.

RENATA

I'm burning up.

ASIF goes to touch RENATA's temple, but then retracts his hand suddenly and yelps.

ASIF

Ouch!

ASIF tries a second time, seething in pain as he moves his hand through the light before placing his palm on RENATA's forehead.

ASIF

Yeah, you're burning up. We need to get you ice or something.

RENATA

Well good thing you're here— being I.C.E. and all.

ASIF

Yeah, yeah, I've heard that one.

RENATA snickers.

RENATA

Why are you being so cold to me?

ASIF

I'm not being cold to you.

RENATA

Yes you are. You told me all about yourself and now you're going to act like we never talked.

ASIF

I'm not your friend. I'm an agent who was called to this location. I was affected by... things... You reach a certain age and you either realize how stupid you are or that you knew everything all along.

(beat.)

I knew everything all along.

(beat.)

That morning, leaving everything I knew then forever, that was a lesson that's stuck to me. It taught me everything I needed to know. It's what's helped me survive this world. And you're going to survive too.

RENATA

I'm nothing like you.

ASIF

Yes you are. You're a survivor. And my colleagues are going to be here soon and we'll get you a proper evaluation. I'm going to step out and radio them again real quick.

ASIF opens his car door. He steps out of the car and stands. He shuts the door behind him and takes out his radio.

ASIF

Update on that evaluation needed at Beacon Street.

(beat.)

This is Adam coming in. Update on that evaluation needed at Beacon Street.

A moment of silence. Then a moment's more.

RADIO (O.S.)

On our way.

ASIF

Thank you. It's urgent.

ASIF opens back up the car door and ducks in. Then, he shuts it behind him.

RENATA

So you just want to tell me what's wrong with me. That's why you're here.

ASIF

For you, I'm here to help.

RENATA

You're going to try to tell me what's wrong with me. I know it. And if I just let you fix me - that's how it always starts.

ASIF

Renata—

RENATA

You're going to tell me what's wrong with me and then send me somewhere. You can't do that.

ASIF

I'm not the type of person you think I am. I know what you must think.

RENATA sinks into her seat, disappearing into a hoodie.

RENATA

I want to see my baby.

Brief silence.

ASIF

The light you were talking about – What did you mean when you said I saw it the morning I left home?

RENATA

Sometimes... we see things that can't be real. We feel things that can't be felt. Like my family took a vacation to New England. When watching all the leaves fall from trees, in reds and yellow, oranges and browns, sometimes I think there's a glimmer of a hand guiding each and every one of them to the forest floor. Like a child with a toy spaceship. Or walking back from school, there's always this one field I walk through to get home. Just yesterday, as I was walking, I saw a lady standing at the top of its hill. The sun was already setting. She wore all red. A red puffer jacket and red jeans - but not a bright red, a dark maroonish shade. And her back was to me and her hair cascading down to her mid back. I could tell she must be beautiful. I wanted to see her face. And I had never seen someone wear a puffer jacket before. As I walked up the hill, she disappeared from my view. And when I got to the top, she was nowhere to be seen. It was

just me. On top of this hill. I could've just walked around the hill. That's what I usually do. But what I did find was a better view of the setting sky - deep red, almost maroon, but not quite. A messy, complicated color. The type of color that makes you think "oh, she's complicated. She's got some sort of story, doesn't she?" But she can't remember anything that's ever happened to her. Anyway, after that, I just went the rest of the way—

The light returns, shining onto RENATA. Much brighter than before.

RENATA

Home— Why does it hurt so much?

ASIF

What hurts? What's hurting right now?

RENATA

Everything! It burns. It burns so much.

ASIF

Do you need water?

RENATA

I want it to stop. Please make it stop. Make it stop.

ASIF

Just breathe with me, , ok. Just breathe.

RENATA

I can't.

ASIF

You have to try.

RENATA

I'm like a wave. I'm there and I'm back. I'm there and then I'm back again. But some waves don't come back. Some waves just...

RENATA trails off. She slumps over in her seat. ASIF begins to shake her.

ASIF

Renata! Ah—

ASIF moves into the light, and it burns him again. He recoils then resumes shaking RENATA.

ASIF

(through gritted teeth, pain)

Renata. Renata. What the fuck? Renata.

A moment. Then another.

RENATA

(exhales)

It's fine.

ASIF

No it's not fine. You're here.

RENATA

I'm not sure I am. Remember? I said I was floating?

ASIF

And I asked you if you knew where you really were.

RENATA

I lied.

ASIF

You said my car.

RENATA

Because it's what you wanted me to say. I think I'm...

RENATA squeezes her eyes shut.

RENATA

I see it. I see where I am. Or where I was. Or where I'm going. I'm not sure. But I'm there now. I'm going... I'm going to see him.

ASIF

To see your son?

RENATA

The sun.

ASIF

Well I think you have to stay right here.

RENATA

I'm not sure if I was ever here—

ASIF

You are.

RENATA

If I was never here...

ASIF

You're here. Right now.

RENATA

... do you think you would remember me?

ASIF

Where do you think you're going?

*RENATA looks as if she's seeing clearly for the first time. Or is seeing nothing at all.
Then, she's still.
The light fades.*

ASIF

Renata! ... Renata! Fuck.

ASIF shakes RENATA. She doesn't move. He puts his finger under nose. Then he checks her pulse.

ASIF

Fuck. Fuck. Fuck. Fuck. Fuck.

ASIF makes a motion to open his car door and then shuts it behind him. He walks around his car to RENATA's side. He opens her car door. He just looks at her for a beat or two.

ASIF takes another long look at RENATA. After a moment, he lifts her up out of her seat. He carries her to her own car, sets her down on the ground briefly to open the car door to the driver's seat.

With the driver's seat door open, he places her inside, at the wheel. He makes a motion as if fiddling with keys - he turns the car on. He makes a motion as if changing the car's gear (to neutral). ASIF closes the car door.

By projection or other means, we watch as RENATA's car slides down towards the cliff's edge before falling over.

As the car goes over, RENATA quietly exits from the stage.

ASIF looks over the cliff. Not down below, where the wreckage lays, but further out, into the ocean or the night sky.

After a few more beats, ASIF takes out his radio.

ASIF

Um false alarm on Beacon Street. No need for any assistance.

RADIO (O.S.)

Are you sure?

ASIF

Yes.

RADIO (O.S.)

Any luck with the lead? We thought we had something over here but it was bad intel.

ASIF

I don't think she has anything.

RADIO (O.S.)

Well fuck. Somebody's going to be unhappy with us.

ASIF

You know I already know.

RADIO (O.S.)

I'm not tryna get fired. Me and a few of the boys were thinking of still doing rounds in Maywood.

ASIF

I'm going to call it. I'm... tired.

RADIO (O.S.)

Copy. I'll let you know what we're doing on our end.

ASIF

Copy.

ASIF puts away his radio, then slowly walks back to his car. He opens the door and ducks down into the driver's seat. A few more beats. He starts the engine.

LIGHTS DIM.

LIGHTS UP:

Scene Five

RENATA, turning back to ROSA, lays at the base of the bridge.

LEO enters from upstage. From there, he wanders down the same river he's waded through before.

LEO

I was collecting myself, I guess you could call it meditating. Up the side of this hill.

LEO passes by ROSA. He notices her laying motionless. He looks up. There is no one he can see. He looks back at ROSA.

LEO

Do you ever think you're just reliving the same dream?

MALCOLM peaks his head out from over the edge of the bridge, where he seems to have been sitting or laying down. He observes LEO, cautiously.

LEO picks up ROSA's body and carries it offstage.

Then, LEO reenters with a rose. He places it where ROSA's motionless body lay.

LEO

(gestures to the rose.)

Your body lays there and it's so beat it looks like nothing more than something to donate.

ROSA enters. She observes the bridge, then mounts it. As she walks, she spots MALCOLM. She looks at him perplexed. She keeps her gaze on him as she continues walking until she is just a little ways past him, beginning to descend down the bridge. At that point, her head turned, still watching him, she stops. MALCOLM continues looking out onto us or past us or wherever his eyes wander.

ROSA

What are you doing?

LEO

It's dry and shriveled.

MALCOLM

Sorry, what?

ROSA

What are you looking at there?

MALCOLM

The moon. Um why are you talking to me?

ROSA

I don't really know. I was just walking and then you were just standing there doing nothing really. I'm not quite— Do I know you? Have we met before?

MALCOLM

I'm not sure.

ROSA

I don't think so. I don't usually—

MALCOLM

Forget a face.

ROSA

(as if remembering)

Yeah...

LEO

There's no sense to it. You wilt and you die. You burn and explode, barely conscious, not even awake enough to struggle with the seatbelt.

MALCOLM

You should leave.

ROSA

W-why?

MALCOLM

I don't want you here.

ROSA

Well who says where I should be.

MALCOLM

This is my bridge and I don't want you on it.

ROSA

Who made it yours?

MALCOLM

It's just my spot to-to recollect myself... Cause do you know what I did today?

(Beat.)

ROSA

Well don't leave me in suspense.

MALCOLM

I killed someone.

ROSA

What?

MALCOLM

I knew they'd die the moment I did it. I didn't really mean it, but I'm not sure. They're somewhere else now I guess.

LEO

And then you become dirt. Or ashes or-- and you rise up again as what you were. Dying over and over again. In my head, I can't see where there's any beauty in that.

ROSA

Who did you kill?

MALCOLM

... I can't remember.

ROSA

Oh.

ROSA

Is it, like, blocked out? When you killed someone? Um.

MALCOLM

Yeah, I guess... Did you follow me here? Not many people... just happen to wander into this place.

ROSA

No, I didn't even see you. I was just... walking.

(looking back from where she came)

I can't even remember when I started. How did you get here?

MALCOLM

I'm not sure.

ROSA

Where are we?

MALCOLM goes to check his fishing line. He rubs the pole, almost affectionately. Then, he turns, studying ROSA's face. LEO studies the rose.

MALCOLM

You gave me this. Didn't you?

ROSA

Sorry?

MALCOLM

You gave me this pole. How did you do that?

ROSA

(panicked)

I'm gonna... I'm gonna keep going on my walk. It was nice meeting you.

MALCOLM

Don't leave. Please don't leave.

ROSA

Sorry I got someplace to be.

MALCOLM

Where are you going? This is your bridge!

ROSA

My bridge?

Silence. MALCOLM picks up one of the marigolds and hands it to ROSA.

MALCOLM

Yeah, you came across it, no one else seemed to claim it, so you made it yours.

ROSA

This is my first time here.

MALCOLM

No, it isn't.

ROSA

How's that?

MALCOLM studies ROSA for a long moment. LEO looks about.

LEO

Lilly?!?!

MALCOLM

You're lying, aren't you?

ROSA

No.

MALCOLM

I couldn't place your face for a moment, it was bugging me, but I know who you are. We met at this exact place. I'm not sure how long ago. My name is Malcolm.

ROSA

Malcolm... this all is - yes I think I remember you – maybe. I'm not sure.

MALCOLM

I'm sure. Your name is Rosa.

ROSA

Is it? That might be right.

LEO

Lilly!!

LEO wanders further downstream, offstage.

MALCOLM

You don't know?

ROSA

There's not a lot I'm sure of... that's bad isn't it.

MALCOLM

Maybe I can help you remember.

ROSA

No. I don't like that idea. I can't tell you I know why.... I'm going to look off the other side. Don't talk to me.

MALCOLM

Ok...

MALCOLM hangs his head for a bit, then continues to look out on us, past us, on the infant sunrise or wherever his gaze may wander. A long beat.

ROSA

You killed me at least once.

MALCOLM

I– ...

ROSA

No, I remember it was you.

MALCOLM

Rosa—

ROSA

I guess you didn't do a very good job. And don't call me that. I'm not sure—

MALCOLM

I was freaking out. I pushed you. I was losing my head not sure what was going on. I still don't know what's going on.

ROSA

What the fuck are you talking about?

MALCOLM

How you... you know...

ROSA

How I died?

MALCOLM

Kind of. And about our predicament. On the bridge, in this place, however long we been here.
(beat.)

How was the funeral?

ROSA

So you know about that.

MALCOLM

You told me about it.

ROSA

I hated it.

MALCOLM

Yeah, tell me about it.

ROSA turns to stand next to MALCOLM on his side of the bridge, now facing the audience.

ROSA

How was yours?

MALCOLM

I didn't get one. Or I don't remember one.

ROSA

Oh. Was that hard?

MALCOLM

I don't know what would've been better.

ROSA

It's hard to know what would've been better when what's happened has already happened.

MALCOLM

Hm. Either way, it's a new day. Look at the sunrise—

ROSA

Don't look at the sun.

MALCOLM

What?

ROSA

(subtly teasingly)

Bad for your eyes.

MALCOLM

Of course. When you came by this bridge, where were you going?

ROSA

I was on a walk.

MALCOLM

Where to?

ROSA

Nowhere in particular. Otherwise, I wouldn't have stopped.

MALCOLM

Why did you stop?

LILLY enters from up the river, wading downstream. She comes across the rose, her whole body in heartbreak.

ROSA

When someone is doing nothing but leaning on a bridge railing, looking at the sunrise and looking somber, isn't there a part of you that always wants to stop?

MALCOLM

I don't think so.

ROSA

There's nothing romantic to that moment?

MALCOLM

No, it's not that it's not romantic, it's more I think everything we do, we do on impulse. Sometimes the biggest changes in our lives come from 5 second decisions, in fact, I'd go so far as to say we do so much more instinctively than we'd like to admit. That's why whenever you hear about that person you lost touch with, you're always surprised by what they're doing.

ROSA

So say I decided to talk to you on this bridge by impulse. Did I just change my life?

MALCOLM

Whatever's left of it. At least a little bit.

ROSA

What do you mean?

MALCOLM

You're here instead of wherever else.

ROSA

Do I know you? Have we met before?

MALCOLM

Um, didn't we just—

ROSA

Not on this bridge, like, before the bridge.

MALCOLM

I'm pretty sure I'd remember it.

ROSA

Oh.

MALCOLM

Maybe in another life.

ROSA

Or another world.

MALCOLM

I didn't mean for you to actually die. Really.

ROSA

Shut up.

MALCOLM

For what?

ROSA

I think I believe the entire universe reincarnates. Just one bitch decides to off herself. And then somehow, someday, she ends up dead. How shocking.

MALCOLM

The entire universe?

ROSA

We're on like our sixth or seventh one now.

MALCOLM

Wow.

MALCOLM goes to check his fishing line again, but this time gives it a good tug.

ROSA

Had any luck with that?

MALCOLM

No, but there's that kid down there.

ROSA looks over the bridge with MALCOLM.

ROSA

Oh fuck. That's me.

MALCOLM

The girl there?

ROSA

No.

(pointing at the rose)

No, my body.

MALCOLM

Where?

ROSA

To the left of her!

MALCOLM

There's nothing there.

LILLY

Hello?

ROSA

No my body. It's literally right there. Fuck.

LILLY

Hello!?

ROSA

Who are you? What are you doing with my body?

LILLY

Wait, you're... Renata—

ROSA

My name... how do you know me?

LILLY

We were childhood friends. You died.

ROSA

I know that.

LILLY

In a car accident.

ROSA

I know that.

LILLY

My family's friends with your family. We went to the funeral.

ROSA

I recognize your face, but it's fuzzy. I guess, uh, thank you?

LILLY

I stepped out early.

ROSA

Oh well fuck you then.

LILLY

You just said you don't even recognize me. What's it to you? I thought our friendship meant a lot more than that.

ROSA

Literally everything's fuzzy – I'm sorry. You're dead too?

LILLY

Not sure, but I really need to figure that out. I followed my friend Leo here.

ROSA

We might've met a Leo.

MALCOLM

He's probably somewhere around here.

ROSA

(to Malcolm)

That's my body. I'm dead.

LILLY

I know that.

ROSA

(to Malcolm)

I need to go too. I needed a way to cross. I needed a pocket of space cause I never had any. I need to go. Mac.

ROSA quickly descends the bridge and exits.

MALCOLM

Rosa, wait.

He's too late.

LILLY

She's just gone. She just...

MALCOLM

Is gone.

LILLY look at us, almost squinting as if trying to make us out.

LILLY

(Spoken or Thought.)

Wherever could you be, my love.

Saying nothing more. LILLY enters into the audience. She exits through the house doors. A few moments pass, then—
LEO mounts the bridge with a suitcase. He walks to the top. MALCOLM turns towards him. Suspension.

MALCOLM

What are you doing here?

LEO

I missed her, haven't I?

MALCOLM

You just did. Is that a suitcase? What are you - on vacation?

LEO kneels down to open the suitcase. From it, he removes the bag of popcorn LILLY was munching on earlier. He gives it to MALCOLM.

LEO

Here. So you have something to eat.

MALCOLM

I - thank you?

LEO

De nada.

LEO zips back up her suitcase and stands it back up.

LEO

I hope you do well.

LEO walks down the bridge with his suitcase.

MALCOLM

Where are you going?

LEO looks back at MALCOLM as ASIF enters from the wings.

LEO

I don't know.

LEO exits. ASIF begins to mount the bridge, looking very lost.

MALCOLM

Who are you?

ASIF points at MALCOLM.

ASIF

Lifejacket.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF PLAY