

Script V1
8.18.2013


Diana Xin
337 W Central Ave
Missoula, MT 59801
651.283.5871
dandan.xin@gmail.com

Cast of Characters

Evan Robertson	Age 29, a copywriter and poet
Olivia Holland-Pryce	Age 26, an opera singer/soprano
Beth Beaseley	Age 28, a baker and actress
Logan Blake, III	Age 28, an Internet wizard
Detective	Age 53, a private investigator
Constance/Candie	Age 24, a new age techno-therapist


ACT I

Scene 1



(Lights on over Logan's bathroom. He has a fish tank that houses a brightly colored snake named Zora, and a computer. The bathroom operates as his office. He is conferencing with someone over the computer. We can hear her, but we can't see her. Although the stage is only lit on the small bathroom, we can see slight shadows and stirrings on the rest of the stage.)

LOGAN:



So, it's not that there's something wrong with me. Or that I need help. It's just that...I've changed. She's changed me. And I don't know what to do now.

CONSTANCE:

Yes. I see. And you said she's your neighbor.

LOGAN:

She lives right above me. I hear her footsteps. And I hear them talking sometimes.

CONSTANCE:

And she's changed you because...of the elevator.

LOGAN:

Even before the elevator. I could hear her. She sings. From there. (He points to the vent behind him.) But then, I saw her. On the elevator.

CONSTANCE:

Did you guys talk?

LOGAN:

...No.

CONSTANCE

How did you know it was her?

LOGAN:

She was humming. And then she checked her mail. So I looked at the name on the mailbox and then I googled her. She's a singer. She has her own website. I'm friends with her on Facebook. Do you know Facebook?

CONSTANCE

Of course. So, you're friends with her on Facebook.

LOGAN:

Well, I'm not really friends with her. But Timothy and Phillip are. And I made Timothy and Phillip. So, in a way, I'm friends with her twice.

CONSTANCE:

What do you mean, you made Timothy and Phillip? ...Remember. You can tell me anything. That's part of my job. I won't tell anyone else. I won't report you. And I certainly won't judge you.

LOGAN:

I collect profiles. I'm a profile collector. Creator. Collector.

CONSTANCE:

What do you mean?

LOGAN:

Sometimes I'll find a picture of someone online. Or an unusual name. And I'll take that person's picture and I'll make him a profile. And I'll give him a job, and hobbies, and friends, and their friends will write on their timelines, and take pictures with them, and sometimes they'll get married, or have kids, or start vegan recipe blogs.

CONSTANCE:

You mean you steal identities.

LOGAN:

No, no. Not at all. The opposite of that, really. I — I gift identities.

CONSTANCE:

I see. Is it like...an imaginary friend? Are you creating tulpas?

LOGAN:

No. Absolutely not.

CONSTANCE:

Okay.

LOGAN:

You can't make tulpas based on real people. That would create an identity crisis. I just — I make dimensions. Alternatives. I give people the possibility of another life. Like, when my mail

girl left for law school, I gifted her a profile, where she's a mail delivery scout, and she dates this guitarist, Mickey, who needs a kidney transplant, because he was born with only one. One kidney. I wonder how he's doing now. ...Anyway, she doesn't live here anymore. She moved away, for law school.

CONSTANCE:

You said she was your mail girl?

LOGAN:

She'd get my mail and drop it off for me, so I wouldn't have to go outside. I have a new mail guy now, but I found him on Craig's list. Do you know Craig's list? Yeah. It's not the best. I don't like this guy as much. I think he reads my magazines. The pages always feel...fingered.

CONSTANCE:

How often do you typically get outside?

LOGAN:

I like being inside my home. I have a great home. It's very self-sustaining. I have everything I want inside my home. And if I don't have it, I can get it shipped. Usually for free, if I spend more than twenty-five dollars.

CONSTANCE:

So what were you doing on the elevator? When...things changed?

LOGAN:

It was the MiceDirect guy! Do you know MiceDirect? They ship mice, and they're usually very good. I've never had a problem with the packaging or the freezing. But I told this guy to bring the mice upstairs and I waited for him by the door and he never came and he left the mice downstairs, in the lobby. And I couldn't wait for Craig's list guy because I already messed up Zora's feeding schedule, and I forgot about Sunday, and she was starving, and I didn't want another dead snake. So I put on my shoes and I got them for her.

CONSTANCE:

And what happened when you went outside?

LOGAN:

I saw her.

CONSTANCE:

Besides that.

LOGAN:
What do you mean?

CONSTANCE:
How did you feel? When you were outside?

LOGAN:
Fine, I guess. I tried to hurry, but, I was fine.

CONSTANCE:
So you were outside in the elevator for like, ten minutes? And nothing happened. You were safe. What are some other small, achievable steps you could take toward your larger goal of leaving your house?

LOGAN:
No. No. I don't want to leave my home. I like my home. I just — Something's different now. I mean, she was there. Right in front of me. I could smell her!

CONSTANCE:
I see. Well. What is it about her that has so entrapped you? How has she...grabbed your goat, so to speak?

LOGAN:
She has the most incredible voice. Like, every morning, at eight, she'll wake up, and she'll start singing. Scales, first. Just scales. Really softly. And then, like, half an hour later, she'll burst into song again. Like, her voice will explode into my bathroom.

CONSTANCE:
From those vents.

LOGAN:
Yeah. Sometimes, I feel like — it's like she decides what kind of day I will have, by the emotion encapsulated in her song. And it's never very clear or straightforward. It's not like that chart you use with the smiley faces — do you know that chart? "Today I feel sad," "Today I feel anxious," "Today I feel lonely" — and it's not like, "I am 83 percent bored and 17 percent excited." Or maybe it is like that, except without math. Because even when she sings a song that's supposed to be happy, she's got — she sounds sad. Or maybe music is just always sad. Like it taps into this sadness that words, when they're spoken

and not sung, can't reach because they don't have long enough sound waves.

CONSTANCE:

Uh huh. ...How's your relationship with your mother?

LOGAN:

Fine. We talk on Sundays. It's just that, I never thought that the music was from her, you know? Like, from a person. It was more like, from God. Or like, the perfect algorithmically generated soul of every great composer and soprano who ever lived, combined in equal portions and programmed to release a new song every morning.

CONSTANCE:

It must be a very exciting bathroom you occupy.

LOGAN:

Oh, yeah. Sometimes she sings at night, too. Not every night, but some nights. If you wait for like, another half an hour, you might hear her.

CONSTANCE:

I've got another session later, but I just want to ask, what do you hope to get from this woman? Do you want to see her again? Do you want to have sex with her?

LOGAN:

Of course not! She doesn't have a vagina. (Makes a "vaginas are gross" face.)

CONSTANCE:

What do you want from her then?

LOGAN:

Nothing. I just want to see what she's doing. She's rehearsing for the Magic Fiddle now. And...and she's getting married.

CONSTANCE:

Okay, so what do you get out of this? How does it make you feel? Watching her life blossom as yours, in effect, stagnates?

LOGAN:

What do you mean, stagnates?

CANDIE:

You willingly become a passive observer, rather than an agent. You spend all your time lurking behind your computer monitor. How does that affect your interpersonal relationships?

LOGAN:

(Beat.) I have lots of friends.

CANDIE:

When do you see them?

LOGAN:

When I go online.

CANDIE:

But that's not the same as being in an elevator, is it? Standing next to someone, breathing the same air, almost touching, trapped, together? ...How often do you masturbate?

LOGAN:

(Beat.) A normal amount. What kind of question is that? Are you...Are you taking off your shirt?

CANDIE:

Imagine, the inside of the elevator. It's hot. Humid. You reach the fifteenth floor, but then you get stuck. The lights go off. Your neighbor, she's so hot, she can't bear it. She undoes the buttons of her shirt. There are beads of sweat appearing –

LOGAN:

I can see your boobs.

CANDIE:

And does that make you uncomfortable?

LOGAN:

(Defensively.) No.

CANDIE:

(Puts her shirt back on.) All right. We're nearing the end of our session today.

LOGAN:

Where did you say you got your degree again?

CANDIE:



The nature of my study was very self-directed. But I hold several certifications from various accredited online institutions. I have many high profile clients.

LOGAN:

That's why you're so expensive.

CANDIE:

Mm-hmm. So, a transaction will be made on your account within the next three days. Shall we go ahead and schedule for next week? Same time? I think we've got a lot to excavate here.

LOGAN:

Okay. I'll put it on my Google calendar.

CONSTANCE:

Great. I like to end my sessions with a visualization exercise. So, please close your eyes now, empty your mind, and take three cleansing breaths. ...Good. What color is the inside of your mind?

LOGAN:

[Black.]

CONSTANCE:

A door appears inside the space of your mind. You open it. A cold and cleansing wind sweeps by you, blowing all the scattered bits of debris out of your mind, until only the essential essence remains. What do you see?

LOGAN:

[Brown.]

CONSTANCE:

Yes. Your brain is an expansive space. It can hold so much. And yet, when you look up and around, you see the shell of your cerebrum. Transparent, at first, but growing more and more solid, closing in on you. What is the shell that encloses your understanding? What keeps you from reaching your full potential?

LOGAN:

[Gray.]

CONSTANCE:

Wonderful. I think we've had a very successful session. I look forward to seeing you next week.


LOGAN:

I'll see you - (CONSTANCE signs off.) - next week.

(The bathroom is empty. LOGAN looks around the emptiness. He crouches down by the vent and waits for the music. Soon, it comes, softly, then louder, and we move upstairs to...)


End of Scene 1


Scene 2

 (Evan and Olivia's apartment. Olivia sings inside the bathroom, getting ready for bed. She moves into the bedroom, and Evan steps in as well, watching her.)

OLIVIA:
[MUSIC]

EVAN:
New tune?

 OLIVIA:
Old tune. *Lasciatemi morir*. The only song remaining from Monteverdi's L'Arianna.

 EVAN:
Sounds like a riot. (He begins to get ready for bed.) So? You send out the invitations today?

OLIVIA:
Mm-hmm. Post office didn't have any roses or ring stamps, so we got Snoopy instead. It was that or Abraham Lincoln.

EVAN:
You chose a cartoon dog over a former president as the image that will forever brand our envelopes?

OLIVIA:
Lincoln — victim of assassination. Snoopy — proprietor of the happy dance. I thought it was more celebratory.

EVAN:
Good point. What's Lincoln doing on a stamp anyway? Snoopy it is. So. (Rubbing her shoulders.) Invitations are sent. The world is alerted. No backing out now.

OLIVIA:
Cancel that one-way ticket to Peru.

EVAN:
Throw out that Carmen San Diego disguise.

OLIVIA:
Two more months.

EVAN:

Two more months.

(Beat.)

EVAN:

(Getting into bed.) When we're married, do you think we should get our initials carved into some kind of rubber stamp? We could get fabric paint and glassware paint. That seems like the easiest way to monogram all our dishtowels and wine glasses, right? We should have our own seal, you know. All the properly married people do.

OLIVIA:

(Distracted.) Uh-huh.

EVAN:

How were rehearsals?

OLIVIA:

They were good.

EVAN:

After the show is done, maybe we can take a trip somewhere.

OLIVIA:

We're going to Paris in two months.

EVAN:

Just a small trip. A day trip. It'd be nice to spend a day with you.

OLIVIA:

Yeah. I guess that would be nice.

EVAN:

We could go back to that inn, in Port Townsend.

OLIVIA:

You hated Port Townsend.

EVAN:

And you found dusty flea markets and lopsided pottery unequivocally charming. I'll never know why.

OLIVIA:

Thank you.

(She kisses him and gets into bed.)

EVAN:

How was the rest of your day?

OLIVIA:

Good. I walked around town a lot. I smelled hot dogs everywhere. Coming out of doughnut shops and sewer grates. You wouldn't believe how much I wanted a hot dog. I salivated for hot dog.

EVAN:

Was today the day you gave up being vegetarian?

OLIVIA:

I had a lettuce tofu wrap instead.

EVAN:

Ahh, so you've only increased in your martyr status. Another pig has lived to see tomorrow. All because of you.

OLIVIA:

How was your day?

EVAN:

Uneventful. As per usual. Adulthood's exciting the first five years. Then the tedium set in. At least there's free bagel Fridays.

OLIVIA:

Sounds pretty bleak.

EVAN:

It'll be different for you. You'll be famous. You'll steal the show every night.

OLIVIA:

I don't care about being famous. I just want to sing. And I want them to listen.

EVAN:

And that's why you'll be famous. (Kisses her.) When you're famous, I'll be all like, hey, my towels are monogrammed with her towels. We share monogrammed towels.

OLIVIA:

Does the tedium never end?

EVAN:

No, but sometimes the sunlight breaks through. And I get to marry you. (Takes her hand and kisses it.) Have children with you. (Kisses her more.) Watch you sing and see you own the crowd. I get to do all of that, so I am pretty damn lucky. (Moves in for the sexual kill.)

OLIVIA:

Not tonight, please. I'm tired. It was a long day.

EVAN:

Okay.

OLIVIA:

I'm sorry. I love you.

EVAN:

I adore you.

OLIVIA:

I'll see you in the morning.

EVAN:

Sleep well.

OLIVIA:

You, too. (They settle in for bed. Beat.) Can I tell you something? I did eat a hot dog today. In fact, I ate three.

EVAN:

How was it?

OLIVIA:

They tasted so good. I didn't know a hot dog could taste so good.

EVAN:

Did you get toppings? You got toppings, right?

OLIVIA:

Everything I could.

EVAN:

Good. That's good. I'm happy for you.

OLIVIA:

I'm going to dream of hot dogs tonight.

EVAN:
You could dream of worse.

OLIVIA:
I'll dream of you and I, eating hot dogs by the Arc de Triomphe.

EVAN:
Like Lady and the Tramp? With Django Reinhardt playing guitar in the background?

OLIVIA:
Precisely.

EVAN:
Leave the onions off of mine, please.

OLIVIA:
Will do.

EVAN:
Hey. Tomorrow's Third Wednesday. Can you run to the bank?

OLIVIA:
Sure. No problem.

EVAN:
Okay. Thanks, sweets. Good night.

OLIVIA:
Night.

(Lights off until the middle of the night. Lights up on Olivia as she sits up in bed and ponders Evan's sleeping form.)

OLIVIA: Evan? Evan? I want a cigarette so bad. God. ... I love you. Do you still love me? I love you so much... (Kisses him.) Do you know that? Will you remember that? (Kisses him again.)

(Olivia gets up and walks around the stage. She takes a gun out of a drawer and then curls up in a fetal position on the floor. It takes a while for her to press the trigger, but she does it, she puts that fucking bullet inside her brain. The sound of it jolts Evan awake.)

End of Scene 2.

Scene 3

(Living room of Evan's apartment, in some happy-sad, past-present mish-mash. The lighting is a bit off. Evan and Olivia are seated close together. Olivia is on her laptop. Beth sits a little off to the side, a little separated from them. They have some beer and food out.)

OLIVIA:

My web site is out-of-date again. I swear, every other week! And now my agent wants me to *tweet*, too.

EVAN:

(Gives Beth a look.) Oh, the plight of being successful.

OLIVIA:

It takes up a lot of time. I mean, I could be practicing. Or wedding planning.

BETH:

How is that going, anyway? I've been working on the cake.

EVAN:

Pretty well. We're gonna meet with the caterers on Monday, and then we'll finalize the menu.

BETH:

That's good. Thanks so much for letting me make the cake, you guys. I've been testing a whole bunch of recipes, and I think I've got some good ones.

OLIVIA:

Wait. Caterers on Monday? What time? I have rehearsals all afternoon, and two private lessons in the morning. ...I can't wait till this is all over.

EVAN:

Come on, Liv. You get to choose the ice sculpture.

BETH:

(Excited.) You're getting an ice sculpture?

OLIVIA:

Of course not. What would we do with an ice sculpture? Make a statue of swans?

EVAN:

I was thinking we should make a statue of my penis.

BETH:

(Laughter, then the fear that she has laughed too much.)

OLIVIA:

It would just keep shrinking all night. (She and Evan make a face. Then her computer makes a noise. She gets back to work.)

EVAN:

Okay, Monday's out. What about Wednesday afternoon?

OLIVIA:

I can't. I have a thing.

EVAN:

Really? I thought you kept Wednesdays off.

OLIVIA:

Yeah, but something came up. Let's do Thursday! Can we do that?

EVAN:

Okay. I could do Thursday morning. Does that work?

OLIVIA:

Yep.

EVAN:

Great. I'll let them know tomorrow.

(Olivia goes back to her website. She tries to update it, but stares blankly at the screen instead.)

BETH:

You guys are so busy. Did you end up looking at those houses downtown?

EVAN:

Nope. Just didn't have the time. Looks like we're going to hold off the homeowner thing another year.

BETH:

Oh! Good! I mean, maybe not good, but I'm happy. I like having you guys across the hall.

EVAN:

Well, even if we did move, you'd still be Protector of the Spare Key.

OLIVIA:

(Snapping out of her daze.) I got those invitations stuffed yesterday! (She gets up to grab the invitations.)

EVAN:

Olivia doesn't want to move. She's far too attached to her precious bathroom.

OLIVIA:

It's got great acoustics! (Comes back with the invitations and sets them down.) These need to be addressed. Oh, Beth, I almost forgot. My agent is looking for some people for this musical. Are you still looking for gigs? I could send him your headshot.

BETH:

Oh, no. Please don't. I'm not — I'm not really trying to do the acting thing anymore. Thank you, but, I mean, I — I like baking.

EVAN:

You could do both! Why not? You totally should.

BETH:

Do you need help with the envelopes? I can help you address them.

OLIVIA:

Oh. Don't worry about it. I've got it. (She picks up a pen and scrolls through her address book. She puts the pen to paper but she doesn't write.)

EVAN:

So, let's hear more about the cake. What's going on with the cake?

BETH:

Okay, so I made three different kinds last night.

EVAN:

Three different cakes? Beth, you're a baking machine! We aren't even paying you. Seriously, you can make it with a box mix.

BETH:

Oh, it didn't take very long. This is my first wedding cake. And it's for you! I just want to make sure it's good.

EVAN:
It's gonna be great.

BETH:
I was thinking three layers, with another small bride-and-groom cake on top, and every layer will be a different flavor. Yesterday, I made a coconut cream, a red velvet, and a double chocolate raspberry.

EVAN:
Double chocolate raspberry? What do you think of that, Liv?

OLIVIA:
(Startled, looks up.) Sounds great. (She puts the envelopes away.) Yeah. So are we going to do a cake-tasting?

EVAN:
Cake-tasting! How can you complain about wedding planning when there's cake-tasting?

OLIVIA:
I'm not complaining.

BETH:
That would be so much fun. I can't wait for you guys to try the double chocolate raspberry. It's got double chocolate stout in it.

OLIVIA:
That sounds great, Beth. (To Evan.) Doesn't it, sweetheart?

BETH:
I just want to experiment with the frosting a little bit, and try a few more flavors. Then I'll be ready. I'm so excited.

(Another beep from Olivia's phone, which causes her to turn on her computer again. She makes a face as she looks at it.)

EVAN:
What's going on?

OLIVIA:
Oh, nothing. (She shuts her computer.) Just, some mail.

EVAN:
All right. Should we schedule a cake-tasting, too?



BETH:

Yeah. Sounds good. Just give me a week?

EVAN:

Sure. Let me look at our calendars...How is...?

(Olivia gets up and starts walking away.)

EVAN:

Olivia? Where are you going? ... Come back here.

(The scene changes as Olivia walks away. Perhaps there is a moment where she glances back, and they share a look, but then she continues walking away. As Evan continues looking in her direction, mourners step onto the stage and bring food and flowers. Beth cries and grabs Evan's hand, but he continues to look in the direction where Olivia exited.)

EVAN:

Come back.

End of Scene 3

Scene 4



(Beth and Evan remain in the same place in Evan's apartment, which is now in shambles. Evan is wearing a bathrobe and building a sugar cube castle. A patch of dark blood, The Stain, marks the area where Olivia died.)

BETH:

That was the last time I saw her. ...I have all this...cake, but she's never coming back.

EVAN:

(Scoffs and takes a swig of whiskey.)

BETH:

I'm so sorry, Evan. That's...all I can say.

EVAN:

Uh huh.

BETH:

I called the church and the caterers, and I picked up your mail. Your work sent an orchid.

EVAN:

Thooose bastards.

BETH:

There's a card. "Dear Evan, We're so sorry for your loss. We hope you're recovering from this unfortunate incident and we know we'll see you back in the game soon. Please let Sally know how soon exactly. The sofa company is on our ass right now. It's catalogue season. All our condolences."

EVAN:

Yep. Bastards.

BETH:

I brought a beef stroganoff. (Bends down and takes the plate out of her bag.) I thought you've probably had enough eggs and baked goods now.

EVAN:

Nonsense. Eggs are great. Want an egg, Beth? This one's got celery and dill. Here we've got original, with a dash of chili pepper. And THESE. These sick looking things have crab meat!

They look green, but don't be alarmed. It's just the avocado. Avocado deviled eggs! Can you believe it?

BETH:
That's a new twist.

EVAN:
You're not kiddin', sister. The world's just full of twists. One day you're planning a honeymoon to Paris. The next you're mopping up the pieces of your dead girlfriend's brain. Never stop twisting, world.

BETH:
I have to tell you something, Evan.

EVAN:
What's that?

BETH:
Olivia's dad and step-mom have stayed in town. They want to know what happened.

EVAN:
(He pieces together some sugar cubes.) Don't we all.

BETH:
I mean, they hired someone. He came by my place this morning to ask me questions. About you.

EVAN:
Did you tell him all about my wit and my charm?

BETH:
I told him you would never hurt anybody. But then he asked me why you owned a gun.

EVAN:
(Leans his head back and squeezes his eyes shut for a long time.) How does the sugar stay in such a perfect cube, do you think? Look at this thing. Just look at it. This is geometry.

BETH:
Did you know she was depressed? Did she ever...say anything?

EVAN:
Olivia wasn't depressed, Beth. She was just a rotten bitch.

BETH:
Don't say that. Please don't say that.

EVAN:
(Chastised.) Was I a good man to her?

BETH:
What?

EVAN:
Was I good?

BETH:
Yes. You were wonderful.

EVAN:
But not good enough.

BETH:
You were wonderful.

EVAN:
Then why didn't I know?

BETH:
Evan, have you thought about seeing someone?

EVAN:
What do you mean?

BETH:
Someone to help you through this. Like, a grief counselor, or a group.

EVAN:
I don't need to go to a group, Beth. I'm fine. I'm great. And I've got you.

BETH:
(Pleased but uncertain.) You know I'm here for you, Evan. Whenever you need me. I'm really worried about this detective, though. Do you think Olivia wrote anything down, said anything ever? She must have left something behind.

EVAN:
She left a lot of things behind. Look at all the things she left behind.

BETH:

The memorial fund's been set up. Donations are being made to the music school downtown. They do musical therapy there, and give free lessons... I thought that would make you feel better.

EVAN:

Sure. That sounds wonderful.

BETH:

Evan, I have to get to work soon. Will you make sure you eat something? Eat the beef stroganoff, okay?

EVAN:

Of course. Of course.

BETH:

It's not your fault, Evan. I'll come by tomorrow, okay? Or, tonight? If you want? (She's hopeful, but Evan doesn't respond.) If you need anything, you can knock. I'm right across the hall.

EVAN:

(Building onto his sugar cube castle.) Beth. You are the best. I will build you a turret.

BETH:

(Smiles a little.) You'll build me turret?

EVAN:

I'll build a castle. It'll have turrets. And a dungeon.

BETH:

Okay. I'll see you later. Have a ... a good-ish day.

EVAN:

And a good day to you, Madame!

(He toasts her and she exits. After struggling with the placement of a sugar cube, Evan loses interest in his castle. He picks Olivia's robe and smells it. He lies down with the robe crumpled over his face. Then he sits up and flings the robe across the room onto The Stain. When the robe lands, Olivia's computer suddenly makes a noise. He goes to the computer and finds a note sent to Olivia.)

NOTE 1:

(Evan reads the notes in a mimicking voice.)





Dear Olivia. Your voice is so beautiful. I love to relax to your voice. I think about coming...on your face.

EVAN:

The fuck...?

NOTE 1:

I want to bury myself in your tits and, trust me, baby, I can make you squeal.

EVAN:

Who the fuck...?

NOTE 2:

Olivia! You are the best American soprano in the world! I would like you to visit and perform. We are a retreat center for top business executives hoping to take a restive from the daily stressors of life. ...Can't pay...free access to our cleansing mineral hot springs and detoxifying sweat lodge. ...Happy Mountain Retreat and Recovery Center!

EVAN:

Someone missed a memo at the sweat lodge.

NOTE 3:

Dear Ms. Holland-Pryce, I write from the Monteverdi Institute in Bulgaria...heard you are making extended travel...Opportunities to teach and perform...

(His voice trails off and he becomes more serious looking at the final note.)

EVAN:

"I'm sorry that you have been so sad. I hope you are happy now. I hope you can be at peace. Maybe it is quiet for you. But I hope it is not too quiet. I hope you get to sing. I hope you get to sing every song you like. And if you don't like any songs, I hope I can make one for you. I adore you. Timothy." ... Timothy. Who's Timothy?

(He needs to get away from this letter. He pulls up a large image of Olivia from her web site and studies it. Then he presses play on a video.)

OLIVIA'S VIDEO:

Hi, friend. Thank you so much for stopping by my page. I'm so glad you're here. I hope you've been able to listen to my pieces



and explore my work. Please, feel free to e-mail me or to leave comments.

Music is my passion, and I dream of sharing this passion with the world. I believe music has the power to transform and to heal, to unify and to transcend the petty banalities of everyday life.

Before you begin to explore my verse, I hope to leave you with one of my favorite poems, which expresses some of my beliefs about the mysterious depths of great music. This is Sonnets to Orpheus 9, by Rainer Maria Rilke.

EVAN:

I gave you that poem! And you said you didn't even get it.

OLIVIA:

Only he who has raised
his lyre among shadows
may find his way back
to infinite praise.

Only he who has eaten with the dead
from the stores of poppy
will never again lose
the softest chord.

And though the pool's reflection
often blurs before us:
Know the image.

Only in the double realm
do the voices become
eternal and mild.

(The video freezes on a still image of Olivia, and Evan lingers on it for several minutes.)

EVAN:

You beautiful wretched conniving transcendent deceitful slut. I drink to you.

(He toasts her with a swig of whiskey and then he hits the Replay button. He forwards to the parts he wants to see. He knows how her movements fall to each second of video. As he watches, more notes arrive to Olivia.)



(Finally, Evan tires of the video and puts on a CD of her singing. He lies down on the couch to go to sleep. When the song ends, the computer suddenly lights up again. There is a rustle at the side of the stage as the robe tossed over The Stain begins to move. It fills out and Olivia stands up, dressed in the robe, or in her performance gown.)

OLIVIA:

(Repeating lines from the video.)



Only he who has eaten...Only he who has eaten...Only he who has eaten with the dead...

(After taking some time to adjust back to the physical world, she steps her way over to Evan's sleeping form. She crouches down so that her face is level with his. She studies him lovingly.)

OLIVIA:

I never meant to lie to you, darling. I thought I always told the truth. But I didn't recognize the truth, until it crawled into my skull.



There's a pounding in my skull, baby. It echoes like a metronome. Clack. Clack. Clack. Clack. Every second is a half note.

Please help me, baby. They won't leave me alone. They keep touching me. They keep playing with me. Oh, baby, please help me.

(She crawls on top of him and places her head over his chest.)

OLIVIA:

(Whispers.) Please help me. Please help me. Please help me.

End of Scene 4.



Scene 5



(Logan sits inside his bathroom, waiting to begin his session. The floor of the bathroom is full of red rose petals and half-burned candles. Finally, his Skype phone rings.)

CANDIE:
Hello there. How are you tonight?

LOGAN:
(Ponders the screen but does not respond.)

CANDIE:
Can you hear me? Are we set up on sound? ... CAN. YOU. HEEEAR. MEEEEEE? (Fiddles with microphone.) Fucking Tad. I told him not to fuck around with cheap equipment. Next time governor of New Jersey wants to *record* everything ... (To someone else.) Tad! Hey, Tad! Stop whacking off and get your lazy ass over here!

LOGAN:
(Snaps out of his trance.) I'm here. I can hear you.

CANDIE:
Oh! Okay, then. Well, I, um — (To someone else.) Never mind! I — I won't be requiring tech support anymore. You can...go back to your business. (To Logan) So. Ahem. Last time we met, we dipped into some of the obstacles preventing you from optimizing your selfhood. How would you like to direct today's session? Where would you like to go?

LOGAN:
Nowhere. I like my home.

CANDIE:
I mean, what would you like to talk about?

LOGAN:
Oh. (Looks around and sweeps a hand across the petals.) Afterlife.

CANDIE:
What do you mean? Afterlife?

LOGAN:
I don't believe in heaven. And I definitely don't believe in hell. I'd like to believe in God. I don't know if I believe in ghosts, but I think, maybe. I think we all leave something

behind, but I don't know what it is. It's like dark matter. Do you know dark matter?

CANDIE:

Yes. I've heard of it.

LOGAN:

It's like, the opposite of matter. It's not really there, and they didn't know about it for a long time, but then they said that if you listen carefully in space, you can hear it scream. You know how we're all made out of atoms? I think, maybe, when we die, we create the opposite of atoms. Like, negative space. And it works like a magnet, drawing the positive space we used to know as close as we can, until there's no more room to breathe.

CANDIE:

...Do you keep your windows open at home? Fresh air and sunshine are great medicine for emotional pain.

LOGAN:

No, I don't open my windows that much. It rains a lot here. Like, all the time.

CANDIE:

That can be depressing for some people.

LOGAN:

It can be dangerous for some people. I just...I don't like water. I don't like being outside. Because of the rain. And the space.

CANDIE:

Space?

LOGAN:

I don't like space very much. I mean, I'm okay with it, in my home, in the bathroom, under the kitchen table, but I don't like the space outside, or like, atmospheric space. I wish the world were flat. So the space could at least be in one direction. But, it's, like, all around us, you know?

CANDIE:

Yes. There is space. All around us.

LOGAN:



Did you know that the diameter of the sun is 1.392 million kilometers? It's like the biggest thing in our solar system by far, because you could fit one million Earths inside the sun, and still have room for like, Jupiter and a swimming pool. But the sun isn't even the biggest thing in outer space. There's another star, it's called Betelgeuse, and it's 700 times bigger than the sun. I think, in outer space, the sun is like, just a marble. Space is just...so big. Like, if you floated away, where would you go?

CANDIE:
You pose an intriguing question.

LOGAN:
I don't want to float away. I don't want anyone to float away.

CANDIE:
I think that's admirable of you.

LOGAN:
You know how sometimes they'll say, "a web of stars?" Do you know that phrase? ...The thing is, actually, they aren't webs. The stars are just scattered there. A "scattering of stars." That's a better way to say it. So, once you go too far into space, it's just...space, with an infinite amount of stars – big ones, and small ones, and, actually, they aren't even in the same plane, sometimes. Some stars are much older than other stars. And they're much farther away from each other than people think. So you'd just float away, into all these stars. ...It must be so quiet there. But everyone is screaming. All the dark matter is screaming.



CANDIE:
Let's bring this back a little bit. Last week, we talked about your neighbor. Where are you with that?

LOGAN:
She doesn't sing anymore.

CANDIE:
No?

LOGAN:
No. She, um, she went away. She got this fellowship to sing in Bulgaria. So she packed up and moved away. But the guy, he's still here. They're just – they're not getting married anymore.

She's going to be famous, though. The director of the symphony – his name is Claude? He's...he's really good.

CANDIE:

It sounds like you're keeping up with her Facebook feed and all that.

LOGAN:

Phillip and Timothy are. Timothy, um, Timothy sent her some letters.

CANDIE:

Did he? Well, that's good progress.

LOGAN:

Timothy is a composer. He specializes in baroque and rock and roll. Rock n' baroque. That's what he calls it. Cuz he's also broke. Do you get it? ...

CANDIE:

Nice one.

LOGAN:

I think he could do very cool collaborations with her voice. It would be good for his career.

CANDIE:

That sounds wonderful. I'm happy for you.

LOGAN:

She's not going to write back.

CANDIE:

Perhaps not...but this is a good first step. You're taking the initiative to reach out to someone. And isn't the first step the most important one of all?

LOGAN:

It doesn't matter. When no one's there on the other end.

CANDIE:

Sometimes people are busy, and sometimes mail gets lost. But you're still sending your voice out there, towards another soul, rather than a void.

LOGAN:

I wish stars were like connect-the-dot. And you could connect them together.

CANDIE:

So...Timothy. Does he look at her Facebook pictures a lot?

LOGAN:

Sometimes. ...She doesn't look the way she did on the elevator.

CANDIE:

How did she look on the elevator? To Timothy?

LOGAN:

Timothy wasn't on the elevator. How would Timothy get on an elevator? (Chuckles at her.)

CANDIE:

I'm sorry. I meant, how did she look to you?

LOGAN:

Fine. She was wearing a...skirt, and a white shirt. She had a lot of hair, and...so much skin.

CANDIE:

Was it a sheer kind of shirt? Could you see through it? Did it dip low, over her breasts?

LOGAN:

Stop it. I know what you're trying to do. That's not what I want.

CANDIE:

What do you want, then?

LOGAN:

(Beat.) Can you take off your shirt again?

CANDIE:

I'm so glad you asked.

LOGAN:

You have nice boobs.

CANDIE:

Thank you.

LOGAN:



(Takes out his boner. Hesitates for one shy moment. Then starts pounding it.)

CANDIE:

Slow down a little. Enjoy it. Shhh. Picture my hand on your cock.

LOGAN:

(Makes his weird masturbation sound.)

CANDIE:

Wait. Stop.



(Logan stops and looks up.)

CANDIE:

Let's begin this with a visualization exercise instead. Close your eyes, and take three deep breaths with me. We have to take them at the same time. It's very important.

(Some breathing synchronization occurs. There is struggle.)

CANDIE:

Nope. Nope! Slow down! ... Okay. One, two – Nope. All right. Start over. One. Two. Three.

(Finally, they are able to take three breaths together.)

CANDIE:

Good. Good. Now. Picture us sitting inside a field. A damp wind comes and blows away all of our inhibitions, all of our uncleanness, all of our shame, making us ready, for one another.

LOGAN:

(Tosses his hair back to make himself spiffy.)



CANDIE:

You come to me. You grab me by my butt cheeks. You pull me close to you. ...When you're ready, you feel yourself grow hard. You are harder than you have ever been, bigger than you have ever been. You are throbbing. You want to plunge yourself inside of me. You do it. You plunge. ...Now. What color is the inside of my cunt?



End of Scene 5

Scene 6

(Detective Samuels clears off a spot to sit down. Evan is overall not very impressed with him. His computer is on and he is more interested in the images of Olivia.)

DETECTIVE:

This is a very difficult situation for you, I'm sure. I don't mean to come here and disturb your grieving, but, as I'm sure you're aware, there are things I've been hired to follow up on. Don't worry though. I'm not making any accusations, or judgments. I just want to talk. Here. I brought you a sandwich.

EVAN:

You take sugar in your coffee?

DETECTIVE:

Just cream.

EVAN:

Of course. (Under his breath.) Fucker.

DETECTIVE:

I got a roast beef hoagie and a Portobello eggplant. I wasn't sure if you were veggie or not. I know your wife was.

EVAN:

She was my fiancée.

DETECTIVE:

Right. You had about two months till your wedding, didn't you?

(Evan hands the guy some coffee and sits down.)

DETECTIVE:

(Shakes his head.) A real shame, buddy. It's a real shame. A tragedy.

EVAN:

Some people would see it that way. Shakespeare, for instance.

DETECTIVE:

How do you see it?

EVAN:

What do you mean?

DETECTIVE:

Well, what do you think happened? What's your perspective?

EVAN:

Do I get a perspective?

DETECTIVE:

I'm going to be honest with you, buddy. Because I feel your pain. Some people see this like a tragedy. But others, they see a murder mystery. And after investigating Olivia's contacts, there aren't too many suspects in the pool.

EVAN:

She didn't make it onto too many hit lists. Not Liv.

DETECTIVE:

How did you and Miss Holland-Pryce meet, bud?

EVAN:

(Considers his answer.) I was walking in a rainstorm, looking for shelter. Found a bus stop, and there she was, drenched within an inch of her soul. Or rather, she was on the balcony of a manor on the lake. I saw her from the garden below and after that I was a lost man. Or try this one on for size. We were children together, living on opposite sides of the shire. Our fathers tried to keep us apart but we still found each other. We went on an adventure and scaled a mountain in the moors.

DETECTIVE:

You enjoy telling stories, Mr. Robertson?

EVAN:

We met the usual way. On the Internet. She was still a student. I was still a writer.

DETECTIVE:

How long have you been together?

EVAN:

Something tells me you already know.

DETECTIVE:

I'm trying to help you out here. I'm on your side.

EVAN:

Who's on the other side? Olivia's dad? Great parent he was. Pushed her so hard she almost stopped singing. But then she

stopped talking to *him*, instead. Couldn't say it was much of a loss.

DETECTIVE:

Eat your sandwich. He might not have been the best parent, but he's a broken man, too. And he's not the one without an alibi.

EVAN:

I was in my bedroom. Sleeping. Where else was I supposed to be?

DETECTIVE:

The gun that killed your fiancée was registered in your name. It had both your prints and hers.

EVAN:

I told the cops. It was my grandfather's gun. I got it when I was eighteen. Almost forgot I had it.

DETECTIVE:

But Olivia knew you had it.

EVAN:

She said she didn't want it in the house. She said that knowing it was close made her feel like we were in danger.

DETECTIVE:

But you forgot you had it.

EVAN:

(Studies the detective a moment.) It's not something that often saw the light of day.

(They partake in a stare down. Evan goes back onto his computer, flipping through photographs of Olivia.)

DETECTIVE:

She was a beautiful lady.

(Evan plays a video of her singing.)

OLIVIA:

[Music]

(They sit for a moment, soaking in the residue of her voice.)

EVAN:

Well? What do you want to know? What can I do for you?



DETECTIVE:

There are pieces that are missing to this. I'm just trying to puzzle it out.

EVAN:

Pieces that are missing... Have you checked underneath the couch?

(He picks up a sugar cube and studies it before dropping it into his coffee.)

DETECTIVE:

You don't strike me as the kind of guy that would lose his temper, let things get out of control. You wouldn't believe how many cases I've seen. A guy who drinks too many, or gets jealous over nothing. One little incident, and then there's a lady, beaten or killed. (He watches as Evan grimaces and then moves on.) I'm not saying that's what happened here. I'm not saying that at all. ...Did you know that Olivia was seeing a psychiatrist at Hillcrest Hospital?

EVAN:

What?

DETECTIVE:

She had a standing appointment every other Wednesday.

EVAN:

I was not aware of that. No. ...What does — Why was she seeing a doctor?

DETECTIVE:

I don't know. Patient's right to privacy. Thought you might have some light to shine on it though.

EVAN:

(Shakes his head.) No light here. ... There's this guy. Timothy. Maybe he knows.

DETECTIVE:

Timothy?

EVAN:

Yeah. A fan of hers.

DETECTIVE:

A lover?

EVAN:

No. She didn't ...*cheat*. Just a fan. Or a colleague. I don't know. I just saw a note.

DETECTIVE:

Thank you, Mr. Robertson. I'll be sure to look into that.

EVAN:

... How did this happen? Why didn't I know?

(Olivia, dressed in an outfit from her younger days, with no injuries apparent on her body, steps onto a corner of the stage, unseen by the men.)

DETECTIVE:

Don't be so hard on things. Even if you did know, doesn't mean you could have stopped it. These things have a force of their own, sometimes.

EVAN:

I just want to go back. I want to...revise.

(Olivia sits down and takes out her computer, plugging in the charger and getting comfortable.)

DETECTIVE:

What would you do different? Tell her you love her more? Keep yourself from picking a fight? Swallow your temper and count to ten, or wake yourself up before she does? ...Whatever you do different, the results will remain the same. That's the problem with digging in the past.

OLIVIA:

(Reciting her thoughts as she composes e-mails.)

Hi, Evan! Thanks for your note, as well as your poem. Smiley face. I would love to grab coffee but my schedule is a bit full this week. But I am heading downtown to the symphony on Sunday, and would not mind having company, if you would like to.... if you are not bored by orchestral instruments. The Frankfurt Philharmonic will be performing Bach, so it will be a classic, and I am friends with one of the violinists...Does he need to know that? It's not like we're GOOD friends. ...There is also decent coffee... There is also a great wine bar around the area that I've been told to check out.



(She prints this letter out and puts it in an envelope. Evan finds the envelope among the sugar cubes. He sets it aside.)

DETECTIVE:

That's the problem with my job. I go through the past picking up stray pieces, but for all that I collect, I can't do a thing to change the present.

EVAN:

Are you trying to compare your mid-life crisis with my quarter-life apocalypse?

OLIVIA:

There is never enough time in our lives to do what we love and what we must. That is the biggest dissatisfaction, isn't it? I know that what you want to do in life is to write poetry, just like what I want to do in life is to sing, and what we both want is to love each other, but then there are the things we must do, like go to work, buy groceries, eat, sleep, commute. If only time were limitless, I would spend ten thousand years just loving you.

(She prints this letter out and puts it in an envelope. Evan finds the envelope among the sugar cubes. He sets it aside.)

DETECTIVE:

Sometimes though — often, actually — what I find is that the past isn't what it seems. There is no solid thing we call the past. The past is fluid. It's constantly repeating, constantly changing.

OLIVIA:

Do you know what I love about art? I mean, what it is about art that makes it necessary and impossible to live without? The thing about art is that there is truth in it. Even if it is just a tiny tiny kernel hiding somewhere inside the highest, most difficult, most unpleasant note. Underneath all the makeup, and the costumes, and the stage lights, and the interviews, and the posturing, and the smiling, there is truth. And that is the only time I can ever, ever tell the truth.

(She prints this letter out and puts it in an envelope. Evan finds the envelope among the sugar cubes. He sets it aside.)

DETECTIVE:

Listen, kid. I'll leave you alone. You look like you can use a break. Take a good, long vacation. Get out of town, maybe. Go meditate.

OLIVIA:

I just want the world to shut up sometimes. I want there to be a still point, a silence. I just want things to stop sometimes. How can we ever think, to know our thoughts, to feel our bodies, if we aren't ever able to stop? I just want to stop. I want to stop. ... (That moment when you arrive at the perfect status or post.) I want to curl up inside the curve of the fermata.

(She prints this letter out and puts it in an envelope. Evan finds the envelope among the sugar cubes. He sets it aside.)

DETECTIVE:

I do want to ask, though, have you noticed anything else about Olivia these past few months? How would you describe her mood, leading up to her death? Was there anything else unusual?

OLIVIA:

Birds stop in flight. I want to watch the sparrow stop in flight. I want to watch the sparrow fall out of the sky. There are thirteen ways of watching a sparrow fall out of the sky.

(She prints this letter out and puts it in an envelope. Evan finds the envelope among the sugar cubes. He sets it aside.)

EVAN:

Unusual? No. Was she indescribably happy? No. Did she give the slightest indication she was about to fuck it all and off herself? No.

OLIVIA:

Stop talking about me. Stop looking at me. Stop thinking about me. Stop wanting me. Stop waiting for me. Stop masturbating to me. Stop re-naming me. Stop manifesting me. Stop creating me.

(She prints this letter out and puts it in an envelope. Evan finds the envelope among the sugar cubes. He sets it aside.)

DETECTIVE:

All right. Thanks so much for your time, Mr. Robertson. You take care of yourself now.

OLIVIA:

Stop. Stop. Stop. Stop.

(She prints this letter out and puts it in an envelope. Evan finds the envelope among the sugar cubes. He sets it aside.)

(Detective exits. Evan picks up the stack of envelopes, fingering them and thinking over the content.)

EVAN:

(Asking the emptiness.) Why were you going to the doctor's?

(He gets up and goes over to her computer, pushing her out of the way and taking her seat. Olivia stands and looks over his shoulder.)

OLIVIA:

Look at that. Pictures for our slideshow. You were such a cute baby. Look at those chubby little cheeks. Did you know I was making a slideshow? I had to ask your mom for those pictures. Mmm, okay. That might not be your cup of tea. I get it.

EVAN:

(Browsing, browsing, browsing.)

OLIVIA:

Internet history? You don't think I clean that up? Oh, don't go for that folder, baby. Not that one. There, that's better. That's a good one.

EVAN:

(Pauses and smiles at the screen.)

OLIVIA:

We were so young then, weren't we? So young and poor and hopeful. Were these the pictures from Port Townsend? When we stayed out on the beach?

(Shadows of them playing at the beach run across the wall.)

OLIVIA:

There were seagulls at the beach. You held French fries above your head and they all came swooping down at us. I thought they were going to bite off your fingers.

EVAN:

I laughed at you for being scared of birds, and you said, "God damnit. They have talons." And then...(He gets up and moves closer to the shadows)...and then, one of them brushed by your hair.

OLIVIA:

Instead of the French fries, the seagulls dove for my hair. I thought one of them was going to build a nest on me.

EVAN:

You screamed, "Get it off! Get it off!" It was a full soprano scream. Probably scared the birds off for weeks. You grabbed me by the neck.

OLIVIA:

No. You took me by the hands. You touched my face.

EVAN:

You kissed me.

OLIVIA:

Liar. You kissed me first.

EVAN:

You didn't want to go home. You wanted to stay out there all night.

(He sits down in the place of the male shadow, next to the female shadow, who makes dramatic conversational gestures.)

OLIVIA:

You thought we were going to have sex. But I made you listen first.

EVAN:

We made a fire and watched it burn out. You told me the stories of all your favorite heroines.

OLIVIA:

You asked me why they all died such gruesome deaths.

(The female shadow stills and quiets down. As if she too is listening.)

EVAN:

There was Carmen, the untamable one. You liked Aida, who saved her country, but wouldn't save herself. And then Floria Tosca, an opera singer, too, made an exchange to save her lover, but she was tricked. You didn't have a favorite role, though. You didn't want to be any of them.

OLIVIA:

I wanted to be a new role. A woman who survives.

EVAN:

You trained so hard you made me feel guilty. Writing was so ... capricious.

OLIVIA:

I told you you just had to do the work. And be ready for anything that came up. And be ready to give up everything when anything did.

EVAN:

I asked you what the hardest part was. You said it was all hard, but...

OLIVIA:

...but you just had to remember how much you want it.

EVAN:

And then you lay down. And you pointed at the sunrise. (He turns to look at the female shadow.) Even then you were hiding things from me, weren't you? Why couldn't you tell me?

(The female shadow fades away, and Olivia exits the stage as well. Evan goes back to Olivia's computer. He begins composing a note.)



EVAN:

Where are you? Where the fuck are you? ... Please come back. I just want to talk to you. I just want to see you. Come back here, you bitch! Please. Please come back? I need to talk to you. I need to know you.

End of Scene 6.

Scene 7



(Beth and Evan hang out in Evan's apartment. Evan is on the computer. Beth tries to clean Evan's apartment.)

EVAN:

(Getting Beth a drink.) Beth, I will not allow you to clean my dishes. Please don't clean my dishes.

BETH:

I'm beginning to think there are things living in your sink. A mini kraken. Borne out of food bacteria.

EVAN:

I'll battle it down tomorrow. (Settling back down to the computer.)

BETH:

Should we throw out some of these eggs? I think they're the main cause of the smell.

EVAN:

(Sniffs himself.) That's kind of you, Beth.

BETH:

(Goes to throw a few things out and picks up Olivia's robe from the ground. She takes it and uncovers the blood stain. It unnerves her for a while.) We should clean ...

EVAN:

(Looking through Olivia's computer. Didn't hear Beth.)

BETH:

(Keeping her voice cheerful.) Evan, should I call a carpet cleaner, do you think?

EVAN:

(His attention to the computer is distracted by memory.) Olivia wanted to clean the carpet once. She thought she was allergic to it. Like it was making her throat itchy. I told her it was the cigarettes, but she insisted it was the carpet.

BETH:

Oh. (She sets the robe aside and sits down by Evan, forcing cheerfulness into her voice.) So what are you looking at?

EVAN:

Oh, I'm just ... going through fan mail. They keep coming in.

BETH:

Yeah? What do they say?

EVAN:

Well, this guy named Timothy's been sending notes since...you know. He said he was sorry she was so sad. This one says, "Dear Olivia, your voice is so amazing. As a composer, I know I could do wonders with your voice. I want to write you a piece that is worthy of singing with the angels. Just let me know what kind of accompaniment you would like. I think we should call the song, "Olivia's Lament." Or "Olivia's Lullaby." Or "The Best of Olivia – Gold Album." ... He seems like a nice guy.



(He sighs and starts typing.)

BETH:

What are you doing?

EVAN:

Getting back to him. Someone's gotta keep up with this stuff.

BETH:

"Thank you so much for your interest in my voice... I would love to sing whatever melody you write...I think the lullaby would be best..." (???...!)

EVAN:

Does that look good, you think?

BETH:

Sure.

EVAN:

Here's one from the cat guy. He used to send these postcards with pictures of his cat. There was one with the cat sitting on top of the piano, with this caption, "Meow! I love your mew-mew-mew-sic." Olivia and I would say, "hey, let's play some mew-mew-mew-sic" for weeks. This one – this one's just a picture of a dead cat next to a birthday cake...I don't think it needs a response, do you?

BETH:

Evan, don't you think this might be a little bit confusing for some people?

EVAN:

It's not good for her image, if she doesn't get back to people.

BETH:

But it doesn't matter anymore. ...Look. Here are some sympathy cards. Maybe you should just send a thank-you note for those.

EVAN:

Let's get back to this mail later. Look. The Magic Flute went up last night. They posted a video of her rehearsing with them.

BETH:

Why would they post that?

EVAN:

One hundred and seventeen people have liked it. She should like it, too.

BETH:

Evan, does this really matter? Keeping up her reputation?

EVAN:

This was important to her. Her fans were important to her.

BETH:

I always thought she hated that part.

EVAN:

So I'm doing it for her now.

BETH:

Evan, stop, okay? I want to talk to you.

EVAN:

Yeah, just a sec. I think Timothy just responded.

BETH:

Please? I feel really bad about something.

EVAN:

Hold on. Just let me read this...

BETH:

I was jealous! I was jealous of her.

EVAN:

What?

BETH:

I feel so bad. We were supposed to be friends, but we weren't ever, really. Because I was jealous. And maybe if we had been friends, I would have known, or she would have told me.

EVAN:

You were jealous of her?

BETH:

Yeah. Because she was so successful. And she was getting this wonderful happy-ever-after, with you...

EVAN:

You have no reason to be jealous of her, Beth.

BETH:

(Looks up at him.) I don't?

EVAN:

I mean, just because you're not acting. Nothing's wrong with that.

BETH:

Thank you.

EVAN:

(Looks back at the computer.) They printed an article about her in the alumni magazine. Oh, they got so much stuff wrong. I'm going to write them about it.

BETH:

Is it a good idea, Evan? For you to obsess over all this news about her on the Internet? There are a lot of strange people and strange groups out there who —

EVAN:

That's why I have to do this. Did you see how the local newspaper said she had a drug problem? And that idiot director at the Birchwood Conservatory said she was often tardy, and inattentive to students.

BETH:

That was only recently. He also said that her voice was haunting, and her passion was tangible.

EVAN:

People out there are saying things about her, Beth. They don't even know her, but they're messing with her. Playing with her. I have to stop them. They're going to destroy her.

BETH:
Okay! Okay. I'm sorry.

EVAN:
I'm sorry. I got worked up. It's just that she had a hard enough time figuring out who she is. She doesn't need these...people messing around with her.

BETH:
Okay.

EVAN:
I think I should tell the alumni magazine to make the piece longer. Do you think I should do that? I mean, she was one of their most talented students ever.

BETH:
Sure. But, what if you did that later? We can do other things tonight. Like, watch that movie, maybe?

EVAN:
(Considers it.) Okay. All right.

BETH:
Why don't you just put the computer away then?

EVAN:
It's okay. I can watch and work at the same time.

BETH:
But you're not working. That's not your work. Weren't you supposed to go to work today?

EVAN:
I tried to, but, some stuff came up.

BETH:
(Reaches out and closes the laptop.) You can do this later, okay?

EVAN:
(A little apprehensive at first.) Okay. Sure. Whatever you want, Beth.

(She smiles at him and turns on the television.)

BETH:

I'm glad we're doing this, Evan. (And we are god damn doing this.) We should make popcorn!

EVAN:

Right.

BETH:

This is going to be good.

EVAN:

Yeah.

(As the lights dim, Evan cannot help glancing at the closed laptop. Sometimes he touches it and strokes it. There are some background noises of television tracks and popcorn popping. Finally, Beth falls asleep on the couch. Evan notices, grabs his laptop and opens it. He smiles at the screen.)

EVAN:

Don't worry. I'm back.

(He looks through various pictures of them. He turns on some music of Olivia's, but instead of coming out of the computer, it comes out from the bathroom. Evan stands up and looks around. A light appears in the bathroom. Water begins to run. The singing gets louder. Evan walks over and opens the door, careful not to wake Beth. When he does, he sees a female profile shadowed behind the shower curtain. The voice in the music becomes clearer. Evan watches but does not disturb her. After a while, a male figure springs up from behind the shower curtain as well. The two figures begin to talk and kiss, but their voices and the sound of the water seem to bounce across the whole space, not confined to the country of the tub.)

MALE FIGURE:

You're so lovely. Let me soap you. How did you get so lovely?

FEMALE FIGURE:

It took a lot of hard work and dedication. No dithering around here.

MALE FIGURE:

I love being with you like this. Nothing between us. Everything washed off. No makeup, no costumes. You're just you.

FEMALE FIGURE:

I don't even know who I am anymore.

MALE FIGURE:

You're just you. I love you.

FEMALE:

I love you, too.

(They begin kissing more aggressively.)

FEMALE:

When I was little, I loved watching my mom put her makeup on. She called it making her face. Sometimes she put makeup on me, too. But once we were at the beach, it was hot, and her makeup started to melt. She used surgical makeup. A lot of it. And it started sliding off her face, like ice cream dripping down. It was horrible. I dream about it still. My face sliding off. And nothing underneath the makeup but a dark hole.

MALE FIGURE:

Your face is not going to slide off. Your face is beautiful. I'd lick your face if it were ice cream.

FEMALE FIGURE:

Oh! Stop that.

MALE FIGURE:

What flavor ice cream would you be? Something sweet, but tangy.

FEMALE FIGURE:

Mango?

MALE FIGURE:

Passion fruit.

FEMALE FIGURE:

You'd be pistachio. Or pecan. Something nutty.

MALE FIGURE:

Hmmm.

(He gets on his knees to kiss her, then works his way back up.)

MALE FIGURE:

I can't get enough of you.

FEMALE FIGURE:

Come inside me.

(Sloppy shower sex ensues.)

MALE FIGURE:

I want to stay like this forever.

FEMALE FIGURE:

(Something changes in her voice.)

You can't. You have to go back to where you belong.

(A beat.)

MALE FIGURE:

That doesn't belong here.

FEMALE FIGURE:

Neither do you.

MALE FIGURE:

Don't talk. No more talking. Just touching. Just feeling.

(He renews this escapade with vigor, gaining in momentum and pleasure as she becomes more and more detached.)

FEMALE FIGURE:

You can't stay here. There's no place for you here. No place for either of us.

MALE FIGURE:

I don't care. I just — uhnn.

FEMALE FIGURE:

They're going to find out, you know. They'll find your name in the lottery and they'll toss you out.

MALE FIGURE:

Oh God. Oh God. Stop talking.

FEMALE FIGURE:

The metronome is clicking. One two three four. One two three four. You have to count the note to the very end. There's no coda in this one. There's no break. There's no —

MALE FIGURE:

Be quiet. Just be quiet. (Covers her mouth with his hand.)

FEMALE FIGURE:

(Shrugs his hand off. Whispers.) We're almost at the end again... one... two... three...

MALE FIGURE:

Ah ... ahh ... ah ...



(A gun explodes. Blood splatters over the shower curtain. The female figure slumps against the male figure.)

EVAN:

Don't! No!

(Olivia creeps up behind him.)

OLIVIA:

Don't worry, baby. I'm back.

EVAN:

(Whips around at the sound of her voice.)
You're home!



(Lights out.)

End of Scene 7

END OF ACT I

ACT II

Scene 1

LOGAN:

Have you ever been to a midnight tea party?

CANDIE:

I don't drink tea. I drink coffee.

LOGAN:

There's no tea at the tea party. No one brings tea. Some of the vampires will bring blood, but they don't really drink it or anything. They're not really vampires.

CANDIE:

Good to know.

LOGAN:

Last time, at the tea party, Marie Antoinette was there, Joan of Arc was there, Benjamin Franklin was there – He was totally boring. He didn't know anything about lightning – and three Elvis Presley's were there. Do you like Elvis Presley?

CANDIE:

No. He stinks of patriarchal machismo, and he's afraid of women.

LOGAN:

Oh. Marie Antoinette is a vampire. She's delightful. Do you like Marie Antoinette?

CANDIE:

I'm not informed enough to have an opinion.

LOGAN:

Cool. So do you want to go with me?

CANDIE:

Excuse me?

LOGAN:

Do you want to go with me? To a midnight tea party?

CANDIE:

Nnnno. I think you misunderstand the boundaries of our relationship.

LOGAN:
Oh.

CANDIE:
I'm sorry. I used to have a handbook. I'm in the midst of updating it, but I could e-mail you a copy. I won't see your e-mail address. It'll be hidden.

LOGAN:
No. That's okay. It's not a big deal. (Beat.) Let's do "visualization" again.

CANDIE:
Pause your ponies. I'd like to talk first. You seem...happier. Your mood's improved. Would you like to detail some of the progress or achievements you've made that are contributing to your good spirits?

LOGAN:
(Giggles.) I figured it out. The mystery.

CANDIE:
What mystery?

LOGAN:
THEE mystery. Of immortality!

CANDIE:
Uh...vampires?

LOGAN:
No! Vampires aren't real! We just talked about that.

CANDIE:
Okay. So, what?

LOGAN:
I don't really know how I did it. But, usually, I have to juggle so many profiles, so many people. And I can only hold two or three of them in my hand at a time. When I toss them into the air, they can go anywhere. They get lost. But now, this time, with her ... she spoke to me. I brought her back somehow. Or maybe ... maybe I didn't do it at all. Maybe it wasn't me. I mean, who am I to think that I could — Maybe it was her. Because she ... she ascended somehow, she resurrected —

CANDIE:

Okay. Hold up there. I don't do any of that weird religion stuff. That's stated on my web site.

LOGAN:

No. No. It's not weird. It's beautiful. I just wish I could understand it.

CANDIE:

We have twenty minutes left in our session today. Perhaps we should end with a lengthier exercise?

LOGAN:

I don't even really need to understand it, though. I'm just glad to know that it's there. That she's there. She's all around us ...Like the stratosphere. She's...eternal.

CANDIE:

Listen. If you need to talk to a priest, or a rabbi, or a monk, or a shaman, that is fine, but I am none of those things. I am just a New Age Techno-Therapist, and, although I'm very good at my job, I just —

LOGAN:

You're just wonderful. I really like you.

CANDIE:

Oh boy.

LOGAN:

I really like talking to you and doing visualization with you.

CANDIE:

Should have seen this one coming.

LOGAN:

Hey! Hey. What's your name?

CANDIE:

We've gotten a little off-course, so let's end today's session a little bit early. You'll only be charged for half a session, and I'll send you a copy of my handbook.

LOGAN:

Okay. But tell me what your —

CANDIE:

Please read it. And then you can decide if you'd like to schedule another session! (Signs off.)

LOGAN:

(Sits quietly, a little bit abandoned.) My name's Logan. It's nice to...meet you.

End of Scene 1.

Scene 2

(Evan and Olivia sit next to each other on the floor of the bathroom. The blood on the shower curtain has been washed away. Olivia looks beautiful, transcendent, and also barely there. Beth, unseen, sleeps in the living room.)

 EVAN:

Does it hurt?

OLIVIA:

(Touches a small wound on the right side of her head.)
Not really. It's just uncomfortable. It's like I've got a splinter in there, and I can't dig it out.

EVAN:

It went in deep, huh?

OLIVIA:

I guess so.

EVAN:

I could get tweezers. Do you want to try tweezers? That's how they do it in hospitals, right?

OLIVIA:

Calm down. I'm fine. You don't have to worry.

EVAN:

I don't have to worry? You — you just — do you know what you did?

OLIVIA:

I can't stay long. Let's not fight.

EVAN:

Why can't you stay? Where are you going?

OLIVIA:

I don't know. London. France. Bulgaria?

EVAN:

Why did you leave me?

OLIVIA:

(Looks at him sadly.) I didn't mean to do it. It was just — it was just a mistake.

EVAN:

It could happen to anyone?

OLIVIA:

Exactly. It was an accident. It wasn't intentional.

EVAN:

I missed you.

OLIVIA:

I missed you so much.

EVAN:

Don't go, okay? Stay with me. I'll make you happy. Just tell me what to do.

OLIVIA:

You should take better care of yourself. You look so tired. I can smell the whiskey on you.

EVAN:

I'll stop drinking. I can stop drinking. I can take a shower. With you.

(Olivia smiles but doesn't speak. She flickers in and out.)

EVAN:

I know...I'm not in the best shape, but...can't you see how much I need you?

OLIVIA:

I need you, too, baby. I can't live without you.

EVAN:

You won't be without me. You'll never be without me.

(He grabs onto the hem of her robe, which stops the flickering.)

OLIVIA:

You're so good to me.

EVAN:

I would never leave you. You're — you're the one who left me.

OLIVIA:

Don't dwell on that, baby. Just try to forget it. You know we won't be happy until you do.

EVAN:
Why? Why did you do it?

OLIVIA:
Let's go back the coast. Let's stay there a while. We can watch that fire burn. Maybe...Maybe the sun won't come back up this time.

EVAN:
Tell me why. Just tell me why.

OLIVIA:
(Shakes her head.) I don't know. I'm like a song that got misarranged, and half the notes went missing. They're lost underneath the couch.

EVAN:
Stop speaking in riddles. You're keeping things from me. You always were. I found your letters. Were they for me? Did you leave them for me?

OLIVIA:
I used to write a journal. But then I realized no one would ever read it. So I started writing letters, instead. Sometimes even e-mails. I never addressed them to anyone, though.

EVAN:
What did they even mean?

OLIVIA:
Do you remember Port Townsend? The crooked pottery and dusty flea markets? Do you know why I liked it so much? We had a fight there.

EVAN:
That's why you liked it?

OLIVIA:
You don't remember. We were walking along the coast, and you told me I should try pottery, and I said, I didn't have time for anything but music. And we argued about "The Place of Art" in our lives. You said I revered it too much, and I said you couldn't be a poet and a copywriter both, and that a serious poet would never have children, because they wouldn't want to bring their children into such a cruel world. And then you said I was full of romantic bullshit, and we fought, and in the end

you said, "Let's just stop. None of this will change the fact that I'm doomed to love you." And then you pecked my cheek like a little bird.

EVAN:

I remember that. Who says I don't remember?

OLIVIA:

That was the first time you told me you loved me. (Laughs.) I'm such a silly girl. A stupid, silly girl.

EVAN:

You're not stupid. Sometimes you're stupid.

OLIVIA:

I couldn't breathe. I would get so scared. Out of nowhere. This fear would curl up inside me.

EVAN:

Why didn't you tell me? I would have helped you. What were you afraid of?

OLIVIA:

Of the future.

EVAN:

Of us? Of the wedding?

OLIVIA:

No. Just the unknown. The door that hasn't been opened. (She pulls out a letter in an envelope and reads it.) Do you know I have this dream? I had it the night before my first audition. When I was, like, sixteen. And it hasn't gone away since. I'm about to get on stage, and I have my sheet music, and I'm wearing my grandmother's white dress. So I step onto the stage, clutching my music, and the audience starts laughing at me. Everyone is laughing. (Insert bizarro laugh track and strange stage music.) The auditorium is endless. It stretches forever. I try to run away, but I can't move, because suddenly there are strings attached to my arms and legs. I'm a puppet. And everyone is pointing and laughing. (Another wave of bizarro laughter). I fear that that is the future.

EVAN:

No. The future is us, together. Our marriage. Our kids. Our mortgage bill and family vacations and retirement plan. Our

condo in sunny Florida. Is that what you're afraid of? Normal, mundane life creeping its normal pace forward?

OLIVIA:
Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow.

EVAN:
What is so bad about tomorrow? What is so fucking bad about tomorrow?

OLIVIA:
Sometimes I didn't even want to sing. I hate stepping onto the stage. Did you know that? I hate that moment in between, when I'm still me but I'm not me, and I'm about to be someone else, but it's not just anyone, it's —

EVAN:
Answer the question.

BETH:
Evan? (Evan turns around and finds Beth peering in.) Is everything okay? I heard you...shouting.

EVAN:
I ... (He looks back at Olivia. Her wound is suddenly bleeding, and for a moment, she is a rotting corpse.) I'm just losing my mind.

BETH:
Why don't you come back into the living room?

OLIVIA:
(Pointing at him, and suddenly more vindictive.) You're in the audience, too. You've got a box seat. And you're sitting next to her.

EVAN:
This doesn't make any sense.

OLIVIA:
You talk to her so loudly I can overhear what you say. "What a waste," you say. "Did you know she's been waiting for this her whole life?" And then you laugh. And you say, "I just can't stop laughing. I'm crying!"

BETH:
Maybe it will never make sense. But it still happened.

OLIVIA:

No, it doesn't make sense, does it? But isn't it nice? Isn't it nice to be able to talk like this?

EVAN:

(Laughs.)

BETH:

Evan?

EVAN:

I just can't stop laughing. I'm crying.

OLIVIA:

In my dream, you shout up to me, "Is this what you've worked for?" "Is this what your life is about?" And then you turn to her again. "What a waste," you say. "Did you know she's been -"

BETH:

Come on, Evan. Get up from there.



OLIVIA:

"Did you know she's been waiting for this her whole life?"

BETH:

Get up. Let's get you to bed. (She kneels down by him.) It's okay. It's going to be okay.

EVAN:

(Covering his head in his arms.)

I don't want to look at her like this. Not like this.

OLIVIA:

But this is who I am, Evan. This is me.

BETH:

Evan, what are you talking about?

EVAN:

This isn't who she is.

OLIVIA:

Who am I then? Tell me who I am.


EVAN:

No. No. No.

OLIVIA:
Who do you want to be?

EVAN:
I don't know!

BETH:
Evan, please. Look at me.

 OLIVIA:
I told you I couldn't stay long. It's too much for you. I knew you'd want me to go.


EVAN:
(Looks up and grabs Beth.) Don't go.

BETH:
I'm not going anywhere.

OLIVIA:
(Reaches out to touch Evan, but doesn't quite get there.)
You know where to look for me. (She turns into shadow or exits or just sits there.)

BETH:
Come on. Let's get up.

(Beth and Evan go back into the living room and sit down. It is overwhelmingly quiet.)

 BETH:
Are you okay? What happened in there?

EVAN:
(Looks back up for Olivia. Then looks over at Beth.)
Nothing. Nothing happened.

BETH:
Did you...did you have a dream?

EVAN:
(Sarcastic.) Yeah. It was all just a dream.

BETH:
Well, it's over now. Do you...Do you want...a glass of milk?

EVAN:

No. I'm fine. (He reaches for the computer.)

BETH:

(Places a hand over the computer to stop him.) Wait. Tell me what happened.

EVAN:

I just — She was singing. In the bathroom. God. She loved singing in that bathroom. Is she — Is she still there?

BETH:

Of course not. Evan. She's gone.

EVAN:

(Takes a long breath.)

BETH:

What people say about her? Her fans? None of that matters anymore because she's gone. (Pause.) She'll live on in our memories, but you have to deal with the fact that she's gone.

EVAN:

(Grabs his computer from her.) Have you seen our pictures from Port Townsend? Did we ever show you those? I'm going to post them online.

BETH:

Evan. Stop this. You're torturing yourself.

EVAN:

You should make a trip down there, Beth. It's lovely there. Olivia loved it so much. We were — We were going to go out there for a day, take it easy before the wedding.

BETH:

You went there before, too, didn't you? What did you do there?

EVAN:

We sat all night on the coast. Talking. Arguing.

BETH:

It's a nice memory, isn't it?

EVAN:

We built a fire. She told me about her favorite operas. I read her my favorite poems.

BETH:
That sounds lovely. What poems did you read her?

EVAN:
(Frantic again.) There's a video of her in here. Singing the part of Aida. Aida was one of her favorite parts.

BETH:
I'm taking this. (Takes the computer and hugs it to her chest.)

EVAN:
Give it back, Beth.

BETH:
No. It's bad for you — how much time you spend on this thing. I'm taking it away. And we're cleaning. (She stands up.) We're cleaning right now.

EVAN:
I just want to see the video.

BETH:
You need to let her go. (She grabs some cleaning supplies, kneels by the stain and furiously scrubs at it, muttering to herself.) She wanted to go. Just let her go. What are you holding onto her for anyway?

EVAN:
(To himself.) I need to her. She was just here. I saw her. I smelled her.

BETH:
(Tosses a brush over to him.) Help me, Evan.

EVAN:
It wasn't real, you idiot. She wasn't real. She's rotting in a grave.

BETH:
(Pauses in her work.) We should blot first. Scrubbing will only rub it in worse.

EVAN:
(Touching the computer.) But she's so lovely. She's so alive. She's going to sing in Bulgaria. The Bulgarians will adore her.

BETH:
Maybe we should use baking soda.

EVAN:
Stop it. Stop it. (Picks up a rag and starts rubbing at the stain with Beth.) She's gone. Go away. She's gone.

BETH:
I'm going to mix baking soda with ammonia with laundry detergent with lemon juice. You keep scrubbing.

EVAN:
Go away. Go away. (Stops scrubbing and stands up.) Get out! Get out! Stop squirming in my brain!

(He picks up a pot of lilies and smashes it on the ground.)

(Beat.)

BETH:
(Bucket in hand, yellow gloves to elbows.) Okay! That will work, too!



(She picks up another pot and smashes it on the ground. Then she kneels down and spreads the dirt around.)

EVAN:
(Kneels and joins her.)

BETH:
We can cover it up. See? It'll almost be like a garden.

(Evan takes another pot and empties the soil into the ground. Beth brings more pots over, too. They work slowly and carefully, until the mood mellows out, so that they almost forget what they are doing. As the stain gets more fully covered, both relax.)

EVAN:
I've always wanted a garden, you know? That's the main reason I wanted to buy a house.

BETH:
You should totally buy a house. Get out of this building. You could rent a room to me!

EVAN:
Would you help me keep up the garden?

BETH:

Of course. Did you know my pumpkin won third place at the Iowa State Fair when I was nine?

EVAN:

You're kidding. I bet you had a great pumpkin.

BETH:

The best. Or the third best.

EVAN:

Let's plant some flowers for her. (He picks up some of the wilted lilies and tries to stand them up with little mounds of dirt.)

BETH:

My grandma always said that the best flowers grow where the earth has seen great sorrow.

EVAN:

Really? My grandpa always asked why we didn't plant flowers upside-down so they could be enjoyed by the right audience.

BETH:

Your grandpa sounds wise.

EVAN:

So does your grandma.

(They smile at each other, then look down at the dirt.)

BETH:

I hope she rests in peace. I hope there's nothing to trouble her anymore.

EVAN:

(Smiles and squeezes Beth's shoulder.) Thanks, Beth. This was a good night.

BETH:

There can still be good things that come out of her death. You'll see.

(The lilies in the dirt turn red.)

End of Scene 2.

Scene 3

(Beth enters the detective's office, holding Olivia's computer.)



DETECTIVE:

Miss...um...Beaseley! How are you? What can I do for you today?

BETH:

You said I could stop by if I thought of anything or had anything else to tell you.

DETECTIVE:

Of course. Have a seat. I'm so glad you came.

BETH:

I don't know how your investigation is going, but Evan is not guilty.

(Lights up on the other side of the stage, where Evan is whistling an innocent tune and tidying up the house.)

BETH:

Here. This is Olivia's computer. She wasn't as happy as everyone thought she was. You'll see, if you look in the computer.

DETECTIVE:

So, you...looked through this?

BETH:

(Uncomfortable about the privacy violation.) Well, I — you give up your privacy a little, don't you? When you're...dead?

DETECTIVE:

Well, they used to say you could take a secret to the grave, but there are more and more ways now to dig up a grave. (He takes the computer from her.)

(Evan rakes and waters the grave, but something is missing. He hauls in a bag of soil, and pours that over the grave.)

BETH:

(Defending/Explaining her actions.) I just thought it would be helpful for the investigation. She has these letters in there, or journal entries...and then there are the fan notes. Sometimes she'd write back, and. ...Please just look at it. You'll see that Evan didn't kill her.

DETECTIVE:

Oh, I know he didn't kill her. Not literally, at least.

(Evan creates a grave site for Olivia.)

BETH:

Then is the investigation off?

DETECTIVE:

Well, not quite. I'm following up on a few other threads.

BETH:

What kind of threads? I'm sorry. I shouldn't have asked.

DETECTIVE:

It's all right. I know she was your friend.

BETH:

It doesn't have anything to do with Evan, does it? He loved her, you know. He loved her so freaking much.

DETECTIVE:

Love's a tricky thing, Miss Beaseley. I'm sure you're aware.

(Evan sits on top of the grave, sifting the dirt through his fingers, fidgeting nervously. He takes out his phone and dials Beth.)

DETECTIVE:

Like I said, I don't think Mr. Richardson ever intended any harm to his affianced. But the nonsense that happens between men and women ... there's no making sense of it.

EVAN:

Beth? ... Are you there? ... I was just — I was just thinking about that guy Timothy, and wondering if he wrote back. I feel like maybe I should check on that? ... Let me know what you think.

BETH:

I just don't want to see him go through an investigation.

DETECTIVE:

Don't worry. I won't be questioning him again. How is he doing anyway?

BETH:

He's good. I think he's making progress. He went back to work yesterday.

DETECTIVE:

Good, good. Glad to hear it. Probably best that he moves on.

(After some effort to distract himself, Evan calls Beth again.)

EVAN:

Hi, Beth. Just seeing what you're up to. We should...um...we should finish watching that movie, or you know...You should come over!

BETH:

So ... what are you investigating, then, if you're not investigating Evan?

DETECTIVE:

Well, since you're here, I might as well ask. Are you familiar with a Logan Blake? The third?

BETH:

I don't think so.

DETECTIVE:

He lives in the building.

BETH:

Oh! The guy on 3? The one who never leaves his house. I've heard about him. Why?

(After trying to resist, Evan finally turns on his computer. He sits with it in his lap on the grave.)

DETECTIVE:

The guy's a bit of an Internet wizard, it seems. Very wealthy, very...introverted. It seems he's been stalking Olivia for awhile. Following her feeds. Sending her notes under different pseudonyms.

BETH:

That's strange.

(Evan stares at his computer, not sure what to do.)

DETECTIVE:

Did Olivia ever mention anything about this guy?

BETH:

No. Not that I recall.

EVAN:

(Dialing again.) Beth. I need help. Please, Beth. I need you. I can feel her inside me. She's this emptiness inside me. This...nothingness. I can't stand this nothingness.

DETECTIVE:

All right. Well. Thanks so much, Miss Beaseley.

BETH:

Is this guy dangerous? Do you think he was somehow ... involved?

DETECTIVE:

I don't think so. But I do what I'm hired to do. Evan's the one who tipped me off, you know. With that letter from Timothy.

BETH:

Timothy?

DETECTIVE:

Yeah. Let him know I looked into that. I tried to contact him but I couldn't get in touch. Tell him to give me a call, if he wants.

BETH:

Okay.

DETECTIVE:

I could see how he might just want to put the past behind him, though.

(Evan begins exploring Olivia's pictures and news on the Internet and visibly relaxes.)

DETECTIVE:

That would be the best way to go, in my opinion.

BETH:

I agree. He needs to stop looking behind him.

DETECTIVE:

Well, thanks so much for stopping by again. You take care, okay?

BETH:
I will.

DETECTIVE:
I wouldn't worry about that Logan character too much, but watch out for yourself. A woman can't be too careful these days.

BETH:
Thank you. I hope all goes well with your investigation.

(Lights off on Beth and Detective.)

EVAN:
(Still on the computer, he looks down at the grave and scoops a few handfuls of dirt away. He finds Olivia's face. He smiles at it, and kisses her forehead.)

End of scene 3.

Scene 4



(Logan sits at his computer in his bathroom, fully immersed in the Internet world. He types furiously and the shadows around him dance with vigor. Periodically, he sighs, unable to find the satisfaction that he used to know, and the shadows subside. But then, he tries again, types furiously, causing the shadows to dance furiously, and then, stops. Finally, he stands up and wanders to another part of the darkened stage, creating another small pocket of light, which reveals a shrine to Olivia and a window. Logan places an offering onto the shrine.)

LOGAN:

I made you a studio today. It's entirely your own studio. You don't have to share it with Rosa, or Nicholls, or anyone else. It's just yours.

LOGAN:

I can find you some students, too. I know lots of people, with kids who might want to sing.

(Logan sits down and admires his MS Paint portrait of her. He picks up a marker, draws himself into the picture, too, though a smaller size than she is.)

LOGAN:

That's me. I want to be your student, too. Would you take me as a student? If you knew who I was?

(He sighs.)

LOGAN:

I want to, you know. I want to tell you who I am. I'm not Timothy. Timothy is pretend....I hope that doesn't make you sad to know that. (Bitter.) I hope you don't tell me to go away.

(He plays one of Olivia's songs. Because her voice is where she reigns.)

LOGAN:

(Closes his eyes and revels in it.) I don't have to listen to them, do I? I don't have to go outside. Outside is stupid. Rain is stupid.

(He pauses as his gaze falls onto the window. He opens the window.)

LOGAN:

You're stupid! ...(To the shrine.) Where do your sound waves end up, do you think, when you scream outside? How far does it go before it melds into the space? That's frightening. You could scream for hours and no one would hear you.

(He continues looking outside the window. Apprehensively, he sticks a hand outside, and then pulls it back in. He does this until he can leave his hand out there until the count of ten.)


LOGAN:

(Sits back down at his computer.)

Dear Olivia ...

End of Scene 4.

Scene 5

 (Beth stops by at Evan's apartment. She knocks and he opens the door by a crack.)

BETH:

Hi! I just wanted to say congratulations and...Can I come in?

EVAN:

Um...Now's not the best time. I don't feel too great.

BETH:

Oh, no! What's wrong?

OLIVIA:

(Stepping out from the shadows.) Great. Now she'll never go away.

EVAN:

Um...

OLIVIA:

You better just let her in. And try not to do anything stupid.

EVAN:

Come in, Beth! I'm glad you stopped by!

 BETH:

Is everything okay?

EVAN:

Uh, yeah! Just, um, having some stomach problems.

BETH:

Evan! You cleaned!

EVAN:

Oh. Yeah. I picked up a little.

BETH:

It looks great! I'm so glad you did that.

OLIVIA:

Oh, spare us.

EVAN:

Thanks, Beth. So...what can I do for you tonight?

BETH:

Oh. I have good news! I went to the detective today. He's not trying to investigate you at all anymore. In fact, it's interesting. You know that guy downstairs?

EVAN:

Why were you at the detective's?

BETH:

(Shamefaced.) Oh, I, um...I found some things on...Olivia's computer. I thought it would be good for him to see it.

OLIVIA:

You bitch!

EVAN:

Who said you could look through her computer?

BETH:

I'm...sorry. I just — I just wanted to help you.

OLIVIA:

It's okay, baby. Forget about it. She can't do anything to us.

EVAN:

It's okay. Forget about it.

BETH:

...It's good news, right?

EVAN:

Yeah. It's great.

OLIVIA:

How long is she going to stick around?

BETH:

So how was work?

OLIVIA:

Shh... (Touches him to relax him.) Just play it cool.

EVAN:

It was fine. They barely noticed I was there.

BETH:

(Laughs.) I'm sure they noticed you. (She almost walks into Olivia as she sets her stuff down and takes out some food out.)

OLIVIA:
Watch where you're going.

BETH:
I brought a shepherd's pie and some cupcakes. So we can celebrate.

OLIVIA:
(Goading him.) Oh, look. A shepherd's pie. Goodie.

EVAN:
It doesn't mean anything.

BETH:
What?

EVAN:
Nothing! Work! Work doesn't mean anything.

BETH:
Have you thought about writing again? I mean, writing poetry?

OLIVIA:
"I know that what you want to do in life is to write poetry, just like what I want to do in life is to sing...but then there are the things we must do, like go to work, buy groceries, eat, sleep" ...entertain Beth.

EVAN:
Poetry. Yeah, I love poetry.

BETH:
(Laying out plates.) I know. So wouldn't it be nice to write it again.

EVAN:
Yeah, maybe. I could try writing again.

BETH:
Should we open a bottle of wine?

OLIVIA:
Oh, boy. She's trying to get you drunk. What are you going to do about that?

EVAN:

Um, yeah, I've got a bottle of red. But you know, my stomach wasn't feeling well.

BETH:

Oh, you're right. I could get some tea for you. I like ginger tea, when my stomach's upset.

EVAN:

Oh, no. No, that's okay. It's getting better.

BETH:

That's rough. Getting sick on your first days back at work.

EVAN:

It's all right. (He sits down and plays around with the food.)

BETH:

Are you okay...? (She takes his hand.)

(Evan looks at her with a pained expression.)

BETH:

If you don't feel like eating right now, that's okay.

EVAN:

Oh, no. I'm fine. This looks great. (He takes a big bite.)

OLIVIA:

Oh, come on, baby. Just tell her you want to go to bed. (Starts playing with him.)

BETH:

So I see you gardened without me. That's...quite ambitious of you.

EVAN:

Yeah. Uh huh.

BETH:

Hey. Do you want to finish watching that movie tonight?

OLIVIA:

(Pauses.) She can't be serious. Tell her you want to go to bed.

EVAN:

I actually might turn in kind of early today.

BETH:
Oh. Okay, then.

(They eat silently for a while. Olivia watches them, then wanders off to the bathroom to sing.)

BETH:
I almost forgot! Detective Samuels said something about Timothy. The guy sending those letters? I think...I think he might actually be the same person as the guy downstairs.

EVAN:
(Not quite comprehending. More distracted by where Olivia has gone.) That's crazy. How does that work?

BETH:
I don't know. It *is* pretty crazy, isn't it? It's weird.

EVAN:
Yeah. Hey, I'll be right back, okay? (He gets up and goes over to the bathroom.)

BETH:
Oh. I hope your stomach feels okay. (She eats some more and then checks her phone. She gets all the messages that Evan left her earlier. She looks back at the bathroom in concern.)

EVAN:
(From the bathroom.) I know. I know. I'm trying. Yeah, don't worry. I'll do it. I'll get rid of her.

BETH:
(Looks around in concern. Then hurries out of the apartment.)

EVAN:
(Coming out of the bathroom holding Olivia's hand.) Beth? I'm really not feeling too well...Beth? (To Olivia.) Look. I did it.

OLIVIA:
(Smiles at him.) Hi, friend. Thank you so much for stopping by my page. I'm so glad you're here.

EVAN:
No, Liv. It's me. You don't have to pose with me.

OLIVIA:

(Shakes her head and comes out of it.) She's gone.

EVAN:

Yeah. She's gone.

OLIVIA:

Good. (Throws her arms around him.) Now where were we?

EVAN:

(Picks her up and seats her down on the sofa, burying his face into her hair.) You smell different.

OLIVIA:

How do I smell?

EVAN:

I don't know. I don't smell you at all.

OLIVIA:

But you feel me, don't you? (She runs her hands down his body.) Isn't that the important part?

EVAN:

Yeah. (Reaches into his pants.) You feel so good. I missed you so much.

OLIVIA:

I missed you, too, baby. I missed you, too. But don't worry. I'm here now. You can have me however you want now. (She undresses herself.)

EVAN:

I want you just the way you are.

OLIVIA:

Lucky for you.

(Naked, she kneels in front of him and watches as he jerks off.)

End of Scene 5.

Scene 6

(Logan and Evan sit on opposite sides of the stage in front of their computers. They exchange letters. Olivia stands behind Evan.)

LOGAN:

Dear Olivia. My name is Logan. It's nice to meet you.

EVAN:

(To Olivia.) I'm so glad you're back. This guy wants to write a song for you. I was afraid I'd have to work with him myself.

LOGAN:

I am writing on behalf of my friend, Timothy. Timothy won't be able to write a song for you anymore, because, quite frankly, he's not qualified. He's a great composer, really, but he doesn't actually know anything about Baroque music. Or any music. He might know a little about rock and roll, but that might not be music.

EVAN:

Beth told me about this guy. I don't know. He seems pretty nice.

LOGAN:

Please forgive him, though. He only got in touch with you because I asked him to. I listen for your singing every day. Your voice is my comfort, and my inspiration, and my rock. And my roll. It is the dwelling place of my soul. Nothing on earth is more beautiful than your music. And I just wanted to tell you that. By myself. Yours truly, Logan.

(Evan types and Olivia speaks.)

OLIVIA:

Dear Logan. Thank you so much for your honesty. I'm touched by your devotion and your...loyalty. You seem like a very loyal fan.

LOGAN:

I could be your best fan! I think I *am* your best fan. Do you like the studio I made for you? I could put it next to the ocean. I could build you a stage. And you can sing on the stage forever. What do you want me to build for you?

(The middle of stage changes according to Logan's description. Olivia walks toward it, steps onto the podium, and begins to sing.)

EVAN:

I want to be with my lover. I want to be with my lover forever. I want to get married. Did you know I was supposed to get married? Well, I was. There was supposed to be a wedding. With flowers and caterers and music and a bride and a groom. We were supposed to exchange vows and say "till death do us part." But I want more than that. I want more than death.

LOGAN:

And you can have it! You're bigger than death. You've surpassed death. Your voice continues forever. You'll sing forever...I'm going to write you so many songs. So you can sing everything. And everyone will hear you sing.

(Olivia sings a distorted song.)

EVAN:

I don't want them to hear me sing. I don't even want to sing anymore. (Olivia abruptly stops singing.) I'm sick of all those people, trying to listen and steal my voice. If I sing, I will only sing for one person.

LOGAN:

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I won't make you sing anymore. Your voice is a secret. I think you're right. Only very, very special people should get to hear you sing.

EVAN:

I don't care. I really don't care. I just want to be with my lover. We'll have a house. With a garden. We'll live by the coast. We'll be happy. (A bitter note enters.) With our towels and our china and our...dog. We'll be happy.

LOGAN:

(A little more confused and hesitating.) I just want you to be happy...I think you deserve to be happy. You sing so nice. You're so nice. I want to make you happy.

EVAN:

I was supposed to get married today. *Today* was my wedding day. (Shares a spiteful look with Olivia.) Can you make me a bride? I need to get to the church. I need to -

(There is a sudden noise and Evan's computer screen goes blank. Olivia goes still. Evan turns his computer back on and tries to log in again.)

EVAN:

The account's been blocked. Huh. (To Olivia.) Well, I don't know what to do now. They blocked your accounts.

(Olivia turns to him, but her face is stiff as a mask.)

EVAN:

What do you think we should do? Any ideas? (Beat.) Come on, Liv. Can I get a little help here?

OLIVIA:

Hello, friend. I'm so glad you're here. Thanks so much for stopping by my page.

EVAN:

Olivia. Snap out of it.

OLIVIA:

Thank you so much for your devotion and loyalty. You seem like a very loyal fan.

EVAN:

Liv. It's me. Come on. Let's go back to the house by the ocean. We can ... we can make dinner. We can play with the dog. Whatever you want, we can do.

(Olivia gives him a confused look and begins to scratch at the right side of her head. Evan pulls her hand away.)

EVAN:

Don't do that. Stop that. Come on. Tell me what to do.

OLIVIA:

(Slumping onto the ground.) Stop talking about me. Stop looking at me. Stop thinking about me. Stop wanting me. Stop waiting for me. Stop masturbating to me. Stop re-naming me. Stop manifesting me. Stop creating me.

EVAN:

(Tries desperately to get the computer to work and to break into her accounts again. He picks up a phone and dials the customer service account.) Desist...Deceased...Desist...Diseased. ...Come on! Come on! (He jerks the computer so hard that it blanks out.)

(Olivia covers her face with her hands and moans, tangling her hair over her face. Evan comes over and shakes her.)

EVAN:

Tell me what you want me to do! Tell me how to make you happy!

(Olivia falls still. Slowly, she looks up at him. Her face has fallen away and now there are only empty holes for eyes and no mouth. She extends her hands out to him, offering him the gun.)

End of Scene 6.

Scene 7

(Logan sits at his computer, building things for Olivia, and waiting for e-mails.)

LOGAN:

I can build you a wedding. I'll make a church, and Phillip can be your judge, and there'll be doves, and pigeons, and swans and cake. ...What kind of cake do you want? ...Do you like chocolate? I'm going to ask you. (He begins composing an e-mail, when a KNOCK on the door disrupts him. He stops for a moment, then continues typing. There is a second KNOCK. He stops talking and stands up. The Internet shadows fade away. He walks out of the bathroom, and his house is fairly normal, very barren and minimalist. He opens the door a crack.)

BETH:

He- Hello? Sorry to -

(Logan shuts the door again and leans against, trying to gather his thoughts and decide his next move.)

BETH:

(From outside.) My name's Beth. I live upstairs. I just wanted to talk to you. ...I brought you cake!

LOGAN:

(Makes a face, uncertain whether he is magic, or she is a witch. He whips the door open again.)

BETH:

Hi. I'm so sorry to bother you.

LOGAN:

Hello.

BETH:

I actually, um ...I was wondering if you could help me.

LOGAN:

Me?

BETH:

Yeah. You.

LOGAN:

(Takes a deep breath.) My name is Logan. It's nice to meet you.

BETH:

| I'm Beth. Can I come in?

LOGAN:

Okay.

(He opens the door for her, and Beth steps inside. She finds the shrine that Logan has made for Olivia.)

BETH:

Did you know Olivia?

LOGAN:

Yes! ...No. But I know her now.

BETH:

She was my friend. I miss her.

LOGAN:

(Trying to connect with her.) She was my friend, too.

BETH:

It's her wedding day today. She was going to marry my friend Evan. Evan's my best friend, but he won't open the door for me anymore.

LOGAN:

It's okay. Don't be sad. (Reaches out to touch her but unsure what to do. Settles on patting her head.) I'm going to make a wedding for her. And for him. We'll have a really good wedding. And you brought cake! So we'll have cake! Is it chocolate? Does she like chocolate?

BETH:

That's the thing. There can't be a wedding. It's too late for that. Because she's dead.

LOGAN:

But she's still here. I mean, she's not *here*, but she's out there. Sometimes, she sends me letters.

BETH:

They're not from her. They're from Evan. I was there, when he wrote to you.

LOGAN:

No, because, see? She resurrected. I helped her resurrect. I built her a studio, and a house, and I'm going to build her a wedding. And then she won't be sad anymore.

BETH:

(Shaking her head.) That was very nice of you, but I'm so sorry. That wasn't her.

LOGAN:

But — But she —

BETH:

Do you remember? The night she died?

LOGAN:

(Swallows.) There was a gunshot. It woke me up. My bed was shaking and I thought there'd been an earthquake, or an atomic explosion. But there wasn't. But in a way, there was. Because she died. And they carried her body out in a black bag and put her into an ambulance. I watched them. From the window. (Suddenly very shy that he has talked so much.)

BETH:

I heard the gunshot, too. And Evan came and knocked on my door. He was covered in her blood. He was sobbing. I couldn't understand what —

(A loud pounding begins on the door. Both Beth and Logan are startled.)

EVAN:

Let me in! I need to talk to you!

BETH:

Evan! (She gets up to open the door, but Logan grabs her jacket.)

LOGAN:

I don't want him in my home. He sounds angry.

EVAN:

I know you're in there! I need to talk to you! I need you to help me with something.

BETH:

He needs help! It's okay. He won't hurt you.

(Beth opens the door and Evan barges in, holding the gun. He shoves her aside without really noticing her.)

EVAN:

Are you Logan?

(Logan protects himself with a pillow or climbs underneath the kitchen table. He nods.)

EVAN:

I need your help. They took her away from me. They took her away from me. How could they do that? I need her back. I need you to help me get her back.

BETH:

Evan. You look... (She hurts for his haggard look.)

EVAN:

Can you do that? Can you get her back for me?

(Logan nods his head furiously. Beth watches this and snaps out of it.)

BETH:

What are you doing with the gun, Evan? Why are you scaring him?

(She pulls him away from Logan, who scurries out from under the table.)

LOGAN:

(Mostly to himself.) I didn't say you could come in. You both need to leave now. No one invited you to come in.

EVAN:

(Squinting at Beth.) Beth? What are you doing here?

BETH:

I came here to save *you*! What are *you* doing?

EVAN:

They took her, Beth. They took her from me again. I need to get her back.

BETH:

No! No! You don't need her back. She's gone! She's dead!

EVAN:

Don't say that, Beth. Don't you dare say that!

BETH:

Look at this! (Moves over to Olivia's shrine.) Look at these photos. Look at this article! "Opera singer, 27, ends life!" She's dead!

EVAN:

(In a softer and deadlier voice.) Stop saying that. (He holds up the gun, not really knowing what he's doing.)

LOGAN:

You can't — You can't do that in my home. Nope. That's not allowed. You have to leave now. I want you to leave now.

BETH:

(In an even voice.) She took her own life. She took her life with that gun. Don't you remember? Her brains on the carpet? Her blood soaking onto your skin when you tried to pick her up?

EVAN:

Stop it! Shut up!

BETH:

She wanted to leave you, Evan. She *chose* to leave you. So why can't you just let her go?

EVAN:

No! That's not —

BETH:

Let her die! She wanted to die!

EVAN:

That's not true! You're lying to me! You're —

(Logan attacks Evan from behind with a Blunt Object. It could be a wrench, a lead pipe, or a candlestick. The gun goes off with a loud bang. There is a flash of light.)

End of Scene 7.

Scene 8

(The light fades. There is the sound of ocean waves and seagulls. A small circle of light on the center of the stage, shining down on Evan and Olivia sitting on the beach in Port Townsend.)

OLIVIA:

(Smiling and peering out into the distance.) The sun's starting to come up. It looks beautiful. (Nudges him with her foot.) You should write a poem about it.

EVAN:

I'd have a paucity of words to describe this.

OLIVIA:

Oh, you poets. Always working with a paucity of words.

EVAN:

Well, maybe if I bottle it up and write some copy for it so we can sell it. Maybe I'd be able to do that.

OLIVIA:

I was just joking earlier. You know that.

EVAN:

So what if I take my job seriously. I mean, that's my income. Maybe even our income.

OLIVIA:

Our income?

EVAN:

Well, you know. It's not like you're ever going to stop singing. And, who knows?

OLIVIA:

I might stop singing if I keep smoking.

EVAN:

Yeah. And you're giving me crap.

OLIVIA:

I just think you could work harder at it. I mean, if it's something you really care about.

EVAN:

Maybe I just don't have the passion.

OLIVIA:

You can't wait around for a muse all day to light a fire under your ass. I mean, don't *you* want to create? Don't you want to put your words together in some way that will shudder through someone like...like a pebble driving through water?

EVAN:

Have you ever felt that? Reading a poem?

OLIVIA:

No, but that's how music makes me feel.

EVAN:

Well. I guess you'll just always be the more passionate one, of the two of us. It's too bad I'm doomed to love you.

(Olivia pshaws him, and he kisses her cheek.)

OLIVIA:

Look at the birds! They're waking up.

EVAN:

You'll just have to have enough passion for the both of us, I guess.

OLIVIA:

Well, that's putting an awful lot of burden on me.

EVAN:

I have no doubt that you'll carry us through.

(Olivia rolls her eyes.)

OLIVIA:

So now I have to live for the both of us?

EVAN:

Don't worry. I'll help. I'll carry your suitcase.

(There is a moment of quiet.)

OLIVIA:

Do you love me?

EVAN:

Yeah. Of course I do.

OLIVIA:
Even if I sang like a frog, you would love me?

EVAN:
Uh huh.

OLIVIA:
What if I became a drunk, and I stopped taking showers?

EVAN:
Well, I'd have to question why, but yeah, I'd love you.

OLIVIA:
You'd love me no matter what?

EVAN:
No matter what. It's a lovely curse.

OLIVIA:
(She reaches out and takes his hand.) I would never curse you like that. Let's just listen to the waves. Forget about those long-winded curses. Right now it's just us.

(They listen to the waves.)

End of Scene 7.

Scene 8

(Evan lies unconscious on Logan's living room with some trauma to the head. The gun in his hand has gone off, and the bullet has pierced Logan's photograph of Olivia, which is also bleeding. Beth and Logan crouch by Evan's body.)

LOGAN:

Did I ... (Panicked wheezing.) Did I kill him?

BETH:

No. I checked his pulse. The ambulance will be here soon.

LOGAN:

They're going to take him away? In a black bag?

BETH:

No. No. They'll take him to the hospital. And they'll help him there. They'll get him all the help he needs. ... (Pauses and looks up at Logan.) You saved me.

LOGAN:

I did?

BETH:

Yeah. You did. Thank you.

LOGAN:

You're welcome.

(Pause.)

LOGAN:

Is this what people look like? When they're dead?

BETH:

Shhh. He's not dead. He's still with us. Let's wait for him to wake up.

(She reaches a hand out to Logan. He glances at it, and then he takes it. They hold hands, and wait for Evan to wake up.)

End of Scene 16.

END OF ACT II