

ACT I

Scene 1

(Logan sits in front of his computer with a box of photos and letters next to him. He is talking to Candie over Skype, because he has just hired her for advice.)

LOGAN: Did you see that one? Okay. Go to the next page. Page 3. And scroll down to the third row of pictures. The fourth thumbnail. That's her. That's my favorite picture of her.

CANDIE: She looks a little skinny to me. A sad set of boobs.

LOGAN: Are you kidding? She's perfect. I bet if Leonardo da Vinci got out the tape measure for a painting or a sculpture, he would just ... he would be like, "Mona Lisa, get your beaver face back in the closet." And then Olivia's face would be in the Louvre. (He realizes he can do this with a little digital manipulation.) I am going to blow this up and print it out.

CANDIE: So you're a connoisseur of Renaissance painting, then, as well as opera and classical music?

LOGAN: I ... Sure. Uh huh.

CANDIE: I see. And what do you do for a living?

LOGAN: I thought you were an advice-giver, not a third-degree-er.

CANDIE: I'm sorry. I like to get to know my life advancement and social balance advising clients. After assessment, I often find that I can do more meaningful work in my other capacities, such as confidence and awareness visualization coach, cyberpsychosexualcognitiveimmersivetalk therapist, or tarot reader. But we can take things slowly. We will move at your pace.

LOGAN: I am an independent contractor.

CANDIE: Wonderful. And what exactly do you need my advice on? Would you like to begin posing your questions?

LOGAN: Well, how am I supposed to know if you give good advice?

CANDIE: There are a number of testimonials on my website.

LOGAN: You could have made those up yourself.

CANDIE: So how would you like to resolve this trust issue?

>>>LOGAN: (Thinks for a minute.) If you were a mountain lion, and you saw a gazelle and a bear, which one would you try to attack for food?

CANDIE: The gazelle. Always go for the more ambitious. Plus, bear meat is fatty and tough.

LOGAN: Steak or chicken?

CANDIE: Steak at a restaurant. Chicken at home.

LOGAN: Death by fire or death by drowning?

CANDIE: Neither. I keep a cyanide tablet hidden inside my locket at all times.

LOGAN: That's really smart.

CANDIE: I know. I can get to it with my teeth if my hands are tied up. Now. Do you feel prepared to continue with your session?

LOGAN: Yes. I do.

CANDIE: Wonderful. What can I help you with?

LOGAN: So you saw her, right?

CANDIE: Yes. You had many pictures and links to share with me.

LOGAN: Okay. Now get this. She's my neighbor.

CANDIE: Uh huh.

LOGAN: She's like, for real famous, kind of, and she's my neighbor. She lives right above me. And guess what? She's my friend now.

CANDIE: And you want some guidance to turn the friendship into a relationship.

LOGAN: Well, it's already a relationship. I mean, a friendship IS a relationship, right?

CANDIE: That's correct.

LOGAN: Okay. Right. So what do I do?

CANDIE: About what?

LOGAN: About my friend!

CANDIE: Is she ... uh ... Well. (A clearing of throats, of sorts). What kind of attention or need is your friend demanding from you?

LOGAN: What should I do if she comes over again? (Beat.) She came over today. To my house. I didn't know where to put her!

CANDIE: ... How big was she? Life size? Or pocket friendly?

LOGAN: Life size! Because, I mean, she was at my door! Like, really really her. And she wasn't, like, a "little person" or – or a pre-adolescent. I didn't know where she wanted to sit or what she wanted to drink, or where I should sit or what to say or what to do. Oh my God. She totally thinks I'm a D-O-L-T.

CANDIE: I get the sense that you don't have company very often. That social interactions might be perhaps a bit stressful for you?

LOGAN: (Beat.) I have a lot of friends.

CANDIE: I'm sure you do, Mr. Blake. Can I call you Logan? I like to be on a first-name basis with my patients. You can call me Constance.

LOGAN: Call me whatever. She brought me things. Her things. (He lifts up a box full of papers and notebooks and diaries.) She wants me to put them on the Internet for her on a secure site that no one can read. I'm supposed to scan things, but I'm not supposed to read. She said she doesn't trust diaries anymore because anyone can read them. But if she burns them, she'll lose them forever.

CANDIE: What is the nature of your relationship with this woman again?

LOGAN: She's my neighbor. We met on the elevator.

CANDIE: And?

LOGAN: And she sings into my vents.

CANDIE: Huh. So what is it about her then? How has she ... what's the phrase? ... grabbed your goat.

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 come back, and she'll just, burst into song. Like, her voice will explode into my bathroom.

CANDIE: From the vents.

LOGAN: Yeah. And the first time I saw her, on the elevator, she was humming the song, and I knew it was her. Standing **right** next to me. And she looked completely different from how I thought she looked, cuz I thought she would look more like a bird or a peacock, but she doesn't. She looks perfect.

CANDIE: And is she aware? That you listen?

LOGAN: Sometimes I think she's singing just for me. (Beat.) But if I had to speak completely linearly and not at all co-centrally, then I would have to say that, no, she does not know that I am listening. (Beat.) But I love the way she sings for me.

CANDIE: And you want to know what to do, when she comes over?

LOGAN: I just ... I don't have guests very often.

CANDIE: Why not?

LOGAN: I just ... don't like it.

CANDIE: Okay. That's fine. You're entitled to your likes and dislikes. It does seem to me that you have some unwarranted anxiety though. I know a few good tricks if you'd like to relax right now.

LOGAN: Okay. But what should I say to her? What should I do? If she comes over again.

CANDIE: Well...perhaps you could try some of the standard stock phrases. Such as "How is your day?" "It's so good to see you again." or "Come in. Don't worry about your shoes."

LOGAN: Uh huh. Okay.

CANDIE: Maybe you could try watching some movies. Do you like movies?

LOGAN: Yeah.

CANDIE: Look at what they say in the movies. Take some notes.

>>>LOGAN: "Silly rabbit. Tricks are / for kids."

CANDIE: Yeah. Like that. Nice job. We're nearing the end of our session now, but we can continue, if you would like to learn some mantras for anxiety control?

LOGAN: It's almost eleven. That's when she sings.

CANDIE: I see. Well, then. Let's just do a quick visualization. Close your eyes and take three deep breaths.

LOGAN: (Takes three quick sharp breaths.)

CANDIE: Deeper. You really need to feel the oxygen go to your brain.

LOGAN: (Takes three longer breaths.)

CANDIE: That's good. Now, focus your mind on your heart center. Channel yourself to the place you feel most safe and secure. What do you see there? What color is the flame of your inner chakra of light?

LOGAN: I see purple. No, lavender. A lavender iguana.

CANDIE: Oh. A spirit animal. How wonderful. Let your spiritual animal be your guide next time you encounter the dark pit of anxiety, the boiling vat of uncertainty. Take deep breaths and focus your energy onto your purple iguana. And let him be your guide.

LOGAN: Lavender.

CANDIE: Lavender. (Beat.) All right then. Our time is up. Your credit card will be charged within the next business day. You can make your next appointment on the appointment wizard application. Don't forget to cancel with 48 hours to avoid a no-show fee. And remember, (insert her slogan) when life is a lemon, it's up to you to find the "-aid." Other services offered include confidence and awareness visualization coaching, cyberpsychosexualcognitiveimmersivetalk therapy, and tarot readings. Accuracy not guaranteed. See you next week!

LOGAN: Bye! I –

CANDIE: (Hangs up.)

LOGAN: – enjoyed talking to you...

LOGAN: A lavender iguana. A lavender iguana who sits on my heart. And he'll lead me to you. (Picks up picture of Olivia.)

(Behind him, her singing begins to float in through the vents. He crouches closer to listen.)

End of Scene 1

Scene 2

(EVAN and OLIVIA's bedroom. Olivia undresses and gets ready for bed, rehearsing a song as she does so. She moves out of the bathroom and into the living room, putting her earrings away. As she rests her hand on the jewelry box, she seems to grow lost in thought. Evan enters. He's just returned from work.)

EVAN: You know what really gets me about cupcakes though? There's no good way of holding onto them. You always look like some continental prat. They're like, finger food, except finger cake, and they're just not very good.

OLIVIA: We don't have to have cupcakes. Relax.

EVAN: I just want to make sure you never think another absurd thought about cupcakes ever again. (Kisses her.) Hello.

OLIVIA: Hi. How are you?

EVAN: Good. Looks like our ad campaign is about ready to roll out, and I'll have just enough time off to focus on the wedding and the concert.

OLIVIA: That's good.

EVAN: How was your day? Did you get the invitations out?

OLIVIA: Um. No, actually. I was running back and forth all day between students and rehearsals. So I just – ran out of time. I had breakfast with Beth today though. She said she'd be thrilled to make our cake. So. Your cupcake nightmares are over.

EVAN: That's awesome. We'll have awesome cake.

OLIVIA: I'm sorry about the invitations.

EVAN: Oh, don't worry about it. I can drop them off tomorrow.

OLIVIA: You don't have to. I'll get them out.

\*\*\*EVAN: (Laughs at her sincerity.) It's okay. Don't worry about it. (Evan pours himself a drink.) Nightcap?

OLIVIA: No thanks.

EVAN: What's wrong? You seem kind of down. Did rehearsals not go well? (Comes by and rubs her shoulders.)

>>>OLIVIA: No, it was fine. I'm making progress with the aria.

EVAN: Oh good. What's wrong then?

OLIVIA: Nothing. I'm just – Long day.

EVAN: Tell me about it. (Kisses her along her neck.)

OLIVIA: (Artfully disentangles herself.) I think I'm just going to go to sleep. I'm tired. (She gets into bed.)

EVAN: Okay. (Shrugs it off and finishes his drink, puts some things away.) Hey. When we're married, do you think we should get our initials carved into some kind of rubber stamp? (Moves away from her and does some other stuff.) 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. All the properly married people do.

OLIVIA: (A small laugh.) That's an idea.

EVAN: It's a great idea.

OLIVIA: If you say so.

EVAN: Maybe we should take a trip. Get away for a while. I'd like a break, too, after I get this project done.

OLIVIA: We're already taking a honeymoon.

EVAN: Just a small trip. A day trip. I feel like I almost need to catch up with you. (Beat.) We could go back to Port Townsend. Hang out on that little beach behind the inn again.

OLIVIA: You hated Port Townsend.

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

OLIVIA: I liked the ocean.

(Evan gets into bed, too. Olivia watches him get settled in.)

OLIVIA: Sometimes I feel like it doesn't matter where you go. You'll never be completely free.

EVAN: But it's still a vacation, right?

OLIVIA: Yeah. I guess so. (Beat.) One of my student is tone deaf. You know, the little six-year-old girl? I play her three ascending notes and she thinks they're descending. We had the kids' recital with all the other classes, and she sang louder than anyone. Most of the kids are a little shy, but she loved it. She could barely stand still she was so excited.

EVAN: She was singing from her heart. Just like you.

OLIVIA: Do I? I think I sing from my stomach now.

EVAN: (Thinks about it.) Diaphragm. It's your diaphragm.

OLIVIA: No. I think it's my stomach. That's where all the tension is before I get on stage. And then, when I start singing, everything melts away starting from my stomach. But when I'm not singing, all I want to do is fill myself with food. I ate three hot dogs today.

EVAN: Hot dogs? You? Ms. Rainy Day Vegetarian?

OLIVIA: Don't judge me. They smelled so good. You wouldn't believe how good they smelled.

EVAN: Did you get toppings. You got toppings, right?

OLIVIA: Everything I could.

EVAN: Good. I'm happy for you. I think everyone should be free to enjoy their hot dogs. The only person holding you back was you.

OLIVIA: Evan.

EVAN: What?

OLIVIA: Nothing. (Beat.) I love you.

EVAN: I love you, too. (Kisses her hand.) We're going to be so great together. Oh, that reminds me. The arts editor at City Scope agreed to cover the concert. Do you want to look at your schedule tomorrow and see when you can do an interview?

OLIVIA: Sure. I'll look at it tomorrow.

EVAN: You should post the new recording to the web site too. Do you want me to do it?

OLIVIA: No. I'll do it. Tomorrow.

EVAN: Okay. Good night. (A pause.) Port Townsend. I'll look at my schedule and we'll take trip, okay?

OLIVIA: Okay. That sounds nice.

(Evan kisses her.)

EVAN: Sweet dreams.

OLIVIA: Good 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. She kisses his forehead and tucks the blanket over his shoulders. Then she gets up and walks around the room. She takes out a gun out of a drawer and a sheet of paper and a pen. She pauses a long time over the note she is writing, but then she doesn't write very much. Finally, she simply sets the paper down and 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

(Stage lights soft and different from reality. Amniotic music gentle as waves, with the occasional shriek of a gull or some other creature to emphasize the dangers of this particular surreality. Olivia is seated in a small pool of light in the middle of the stage. Evan stands behind her, watching her a moment before walking over.)

OLIVIA: (Looking up.) You made it.

EVAN: You didn't leave a note. I had to ask the front desk if they saw you.

OLIVIA: I left a note. By the lamp.

EVAN: Oh. I guess I missed it. How long have you been out here?

OLIVIA: Not long. Just since the sun started creeping up. It's so beautiful here. It's like we're sitting at the edge of the world. We could just jump in and go nowhere.

EVAN: You really didn't pay attention in geography class, did you?

OLIVIA: Shut up. Just sit with me. (Pats the spot next to her.) It's so nice to get away.

EVAN: From me?

OLIVIA: No. From the world, silly. Why would I need to get away from you?

EVAN: Last night wasn't the most pleasant, was it?

OLIVIA: We had a fight. That will happen, you know.

EVAN: So you didn't wander off at daybreak to get away from me?

OLIVIA: (Shakes her head and takes his hand.) I did not.

EVAN: Oh. Cool.

OLIVIA: Is that what you thought?

EVAN: I didn't really know what to think.

OLIVIA: So you came out looking for me?

EVAN: Had to try. Right?

OLIVIA: Well, I'm glad you did. Sorry I didn't put the note somewhere more obvious.

EVAN: That's okay. Listen. I'm – I'm sorry. Your voice is your art. It's entirely your thing. And I shouldn't try to interfere or meddle with it. I feel really stupid. I can't believe I said your music was like your secret Italian lover.

OLIVIA: Who...what was it?...lived in my closet, ate snails, and talked in trills?

EVAN: There was alcohol involved.

OLIVIA: It was stupid.

EVAN: I know it was. And I'm sorry.

OLIVIA: It was stupid because, can't you see how much I like you?

EVAN: You're very forgiving. Have I ever told you that? That might be one your best attributes.

OLIVIA: (Laughs a little.)

EVAN: Why me? I mean, I'm just a guy. I don't have anything special like that. An art, or a gift. I'm just – I'm just a blip.

OLIVIA: You're lucky. You're lucky you don't have a thing.

EVAN: What do you mean?

OLIVIA: Maybe my music is like a lover, but it's the lover that never gives back.

EVAN: What are you talking about? You're amazing. Everyone knows you're amazing. You're going to be a star one day.

OLIVIA: I just like to sing.

EVAN: I know. And I don't want to take that away from you. I want to be part of it with you. (Beat.) I want to be part of your future.

(They share a look as they both realize that the future is coming for them. Olivia slowly turns away from Evan, and loops back to the beginning.)

OLIVIA: It's so beautiful here. It's like we're sitting at the edge of the world.

EVAN: (More stilted this time. As if he is outside of the scene.) You really didn't pay attention in geography class, did you?

OLIVIA: Shut up. Just stay with me. It's so nice to get away.

EVAN: From what?

OLIVIA: From the world, silly.

EVAN: What's so bad about the world?

(OLIVIA is silent.)

EVAN: What did you write in your note?

OLIVIA: Which note?

EVAN: You know which note.

OLIVIA: Nothing.

EVAN: What did you mean to write?

OLIVIA: "Dear Evan..."

(Three knocks at the door.)

EVAN: That's the part you did write. What did you mean to write? In the part you did not write?

OLIVIA: "Dear Evan... what?"

(Four knocks at the door. The lights on the stage flood back and we see Evan's dishevelled apartment. He is seated on the ground in front of his computer. Perhaps his balls are hanging out or perhaps they are not. That is up to costume and design. But Evan is in a rather rumpled kind of state.)

BETH: Evan, are you there? It's me! It's Beth!

EVAN: (Gathers himself back together, shuts his computer, and opens the door.) Beth! Hey! How are you?

BETH: Hi. (Sigh.) It's good to see you. I'm glad you're back.

EVAN: (Looks around the apartment.) They cleaned it all up. It's different. But it's home?

BETH: How was Port Townsend? Was it good to be there?

EVAN: I never went. I thought I would. I had her ashes in the backseat. I got to Arlington and booked a motel room instead. Didn't leave it for two weeks.

BETH: Well, give it time. Maybe you'll feel more ready to make the trip in a month or two.

EVAN: She has whole albums of that place on Facebook. Every trip we took there. She looked happy.

BETH: (Nods.) I brought your mail key back. (She hands him the key and a stack of letters and cards.) There were flowers, too. These came yesterday. (Takes out the bouquet from her bag.)

EVAN: (Reading the outside of the envelope). "To Olivia."

BETH: I feel very touched, you know, seeing how much she meant to her fans. Not just to her students, or her peers, but people who just happened to hear her sing, and it made a difference in their lives somehow. I think that's what she wanted, you know?

EVAN: (Reading card.) "You're gone now. But I needed to write you. Because you sang with more of a bang than anyone I've ever seen. Life ain't no thang, but yours was a thing. I miss the way your titties shook when you sang."

BETH: Oh.

EVAN: I don't get it. Am I supposed to rap this? Who sent this?

BETH: I – I don't know. I found them outside your door. I kept them in water.

EVAN: (He admires the flowers.) Pretty. (He chucks them in the garbage.)

BETH: I'm sorry about those. There really are people mourning with you right now, though. I meant what I said. Everyone's taking her death really hard. Did you know they changed her web site into a memorial?



EVAN: Who did? The web site I made? Or the music school's?

BETH: Her personal one.

EVAN: That's the one I made.

BETH: It's a memorial page now. People have been leaving her notes, and posting pictures and stuff. I was on it this morning. It felt – It was strange, but it also felt good, you know? Having these people – these strangers, really – to mourn with me.

EVAN: They changed it into a memorial?

BETH: You should look at it. Read some of the notes. She meant a lot to people.

EVAN: Yeah.

BETH: I posted some pictures, too. Of the trip we took to the San Juans. That was our first time all hanging out together, remember? I was really nervous, actually. You guys seemed so cool and big-city-ish, and I'd only been here a month. Olivia was so nice, though. She said I had to experience more of the redeeming qualities of the west coast.

EVAN: You're not in Kansas anymore, Toto.

BETH: She was so happy to be on the ocean. She said it was like the edge of the world.

EVAN: Yeah. She said that.

BETH: And then the whales came out of the water. It was so perfect. Three whales and three of us. And Olivia said that whales are guardian animals, family ancestors connecting us to the spirit world.

EVAN: I think that's only if you're Hawaiian.

BETH: She was one of those people, you know. She burned slightly brighter than the rest of us. But she was so warm with her light. I never would have thought – But then I should have known, and I ... I'm so sorry, Evan. I told myself I was only going to talk about happy things. Like you really need to listen to me blab on and on right now. God. I am so –

EVAN: Relax, Beth. It's okay.

BETH: I am so sorry.

EVAN: I know. (Stares hard at his computer.)

BETH: Oh, I brought you some food, too! Beef stroganoff. Just heat it up at 350 for thirty minutes.

EVAN: Thanks, Beth. That was so nice for you.

BETH: It's nothing. I just want to help. I have to get to work right now, but, if you need anything, anything at all, I'm right across the hall.

EVAN: Do you want to ... eat beef stroganoff tonight?

BETH: Sure. Of course. Let's do that.

EVAN: Okay. Thirty minutes. Three hundred and fifty. I'll make a salad, too.

BETH: Sounds good. I'm glad you're taking care of yourself, Evan. I'm glad to have you back in the building.

(They hug and Beth exits. Evan looks off into the distance for a moment as he lets his mind wander. Then he remembers what Beth said about the web site.)

EVAN: (Jumps off his seat and over to his computer, where he goes to the web site that he made for Olivia.) I can't believe some fucker just hacked my site. Unbelievable. This is ... (A beat as he is struck by the sophistication of the web memorial.) ... How did they pull this together?

\*\*\*Probably doesn't all need to be spoken. Expressed without words would be great.

(As he scrolls through the web page, the voices of the notes are read through voiceover or by shadows behind a screen. Actual figures/identities are unseen.)

NOTE 1: (Female voice) I was checking your website for new recordings and I realized what had happened. This made me so sad. I've never met you or even seen you on stage, but my friend gave me your CD last year and I listen to it often. I will listen to it again today and say prayers for your loved ones. I'm sorry you were in so much pain.

NOTE FROM TEACHER: (Male voice) Olivia was the most talented of all my students. Her loss is not only a personal one to me, but a shame for the entire musical community.

NOTE 2: (Female voice) I went to middle school with Olivia. She was in the school musical and I was her understudy. I remember watching her and thinking, damn, she's going to be Sarah Brightman one day. But now she's dead. Dead and buried and gone. It just reminds me that we should never ignore someone else's pain. What the world needs now is kindness and love.

NOTE 3: (Bad male singing) "When the wind is blowing in your face/And the whole world is on your case./I could offer you a warm embrace./To make you feel my love, ... The storms are rolling on the raging sea..."

EVAN: (Winces and switches to something else.)

NOTE 4: (Unisex quote generator voice.) Like a bird singing in the rain, let grateful memories survive in time of sorrow.

NOTE 5: (Female quote voice.) Death leaves a heartache no one can heal. Love leaves a memory no one can steal.

NOTE 6: (Male quote voice.) When someone you love becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure.

NOTE 7: (Advertisement voice.) FIND YOUR TREASURE ON THE HIGH SEAS. CLICK NOW TO WIN A FREE CRUISE IN SUNNY FLORIDA KEYS.

EVAN: What?

NOTE 7: RESTRICTIONS APPLY.

EVAN: (Clicks something to make the ad go away.)

LOGAN/TIMOTHY: (Perhaps in a digitally distorted voice?) When the bullet went through you, it also went through me. It ripped through my dreams and lodged itself into my heart. My heart bleeds because you are gone. You took my breath, my soul, with you.

EVAN: "Love, Timothy-Timone." ... Who?

LOGAN/TIMOTHY: I know I haven't known you long, but the letters we've exchanged and the time we've shared have meant so much. I feel like I have lost my soul mate. Now that you are no longer here, I can only direct my questions to the air and look for your response in the raindrops or the wind.

EVAN: Who the hell is this guy?

(He types some stuff into the computer and does a search. A whole bunch of other sounds of messages rushing in or files opening flood the room. Evan has entered a different email account of Olivia's.)

EVAN: Liv2Sing. She has another email?

>>>TIMOTHY/LOGAN: Thanks so much for writing back to me. I'm very touched you would take the time to correspond with me. I agree with you. [Madame Butterfly] is touching, but [Manon] is the most tragic of the librettos. Opera is a strange world. The only achievement waiting for the heroine is death. The only freedom is found in death.

Liv2Sing: Yes, that is the strange twist of the operatic stage. The diva is the goddess, the prima donna, the very center of everything. Perhaps because of this, she is never allowed to live. One day I would love to see a different ending to the story. Perhaps even to perform in it, if that isn't too much to wish for. I'm very interested in the music you're writing. I would love to hear it, if you're ready to share.

DISTORTED VOICE: I want to eat your pussy out and suck your juices dry, you dirty, sexy whore...

DISTORTED VOICE: Put my cock in your mouth ... Put my cock in your mouth ... Put my cock in your mouth ...

Liv2Sing: Please don't apologize. I know it's very hard to share work that is in progress. I'm always very shy about that too. In making music, we expose our souls. And even if people don't understand how to read it, it still feels like there are parts of me that must stay hidden. That don't belong in daylight. That nobody should see.

OLIVIA: (Steps onto the stage behind Evan.)

DISTORTED VOICE: Damn, girl. You hot. You can sing opera to me all night long. When you hit those high notes, I just want to close a hand over your throat and feel it hum in my fist. Let me see you sing again, girl.

DISTORTED VOICE: (Good female singing voice?) "...I'd go hungry. I'd go black and blue./ I could make you happy, make your dreams come true./There is nothing that I wouldn't do./ To make you feel my love..."

(Voices and sounds meshing to add to a conjuring trick. Or bring in a clear, crescendoing Olivia singing voice that helps make the connection for Evan to conjure her.)

(Olivia reaches a hand out and touches Evan's shoulder. Evan jumps in surprise and looks back at her, grabbing her hand. They freeze and hold the gaze a moment. The lights change to the strange memory/digital lights over Port Townsend. Evan slowly stands and moves away from Olivia.)

EVAN: You're back.

OLIVIA: You brought me here. (Beat.) You shouldn't have. You shouldn't go digging in the past.

EVAN: What else am I supposed to do?

(Olivia moves around the room a bit. They move around each other, Evan keeping a safe distance, from which he can observe her. Perhaps some distant music can go up here, or appropriate music that connects him to her. Unless we use the loud noise before this. In which case, it should be silent here.)

OLIVIA: You can't live in the past, Evan. You can only live for tomorrow.

EVAN: (Laughter.) Really? That's what you want to tell me?

OLIVIA: (Shrugs and sits down.) We're at the edge of the world here.

(Evan watches her a moment.)

EVAN: You left me nothing. Do you realize that? You left me nothing.

OLIVIA: Shhh. (She looks back at him.) We can't stay here long. Let's just ... let's just be together.

EVAN: You want to be with me? (He steps closer to her.)

OLIVIA: Of course I do, baby.

EVAN: You want to be with me. You want to marry me? Travel the world with me? Spend your life with me? (He closes the distance between them as he asks these questions.)

OLIVIA: I just want to be with you.

EVAN: (He takes her chin in his hand and gazes into her face a moment.) You beautiful liar. Who the fuck are you?

(He lets her go and sits down next to her. Behind them, shadows and lights of a shifting world/identity bloom and sweep past.)

OLIVIA: Remember when you used to ask me what it was like to step on stage? You thought it was good therapy for my nervousness. And I said it was like a transition, when I'm neither myself nor the person I'm supposed to be. I'm in between. I could be anyone.

EVAN: And who are you?

OLIVIA: Who do you want me to be?

(Evan has no response for her. She gets closer to him and touches his face. Perhaps she gets up on her knees so that she is taller than he is.)

OLIVIA: Shhh. Rest your head on me, sweetheart. There, there. It's going to be okay. Just because I'm not with you... That's no reason to ...

(Evan pulls away from her, distrusting of her. She changes her stance, to fit his mood.)

OLIVIA: Hit me. You know you want to. Curl your fist up around all that darkness inside you and smash it across my face. You want to hear the bones crack in my cheek. You want to hear my eyeball rip out from its –

EVAN: Stop it. (He grabs her shoulders or pins her down on the ground.)

OLIVIA: Dear Evan. (Gently touches his cheek.) Dear, dear Evan.

EVAN: No.

OLIVIA: Evan, who is so dear to me.

(He gives in to the touch of her fingertips on his face. But then he remembers he has other things on his mind.)

\*\*\*EVAN: Who's that guy who writes you? Do I know him? Why do you tell him things?

OLIVIA: Can't you just leave people to their whims and machinations? Can't you just be a little more accepting? Not everyone can be perfect. Not everyone can be you.

EVAN: That's bullshit. Cut it out.

OLIVIA: Do you think you're better than them or something? Do you think you're different? Do you think I picked you out from a crowd for your impeccable grooming and your glowing pristine heart?

EVAN: I don't know what you're harping on about.

OLIVIA: Or maybe you think we're soulmates. Like God or some higher power stole a piece of your rib and made me just for you. Created me to fit along your breast bone. The missing piece of the puzzle.

EVAN: Seriously. What are you talking about?

OLIVIA: But here's the thing. You're not special. You're just like all the rest of them.

EVAN: Are you done now? If anyone here is airing out grievances, I think it should be me.

OLIVIA: What? Did I leave a stain on the carpet?

EVAN: How could you – !

(He pushes her down again, but this time she fights back. They continue the next lines in a tussle, like the beginnings of a rape.)

EVAN: Don't you know what you're doing to me?

OLIVIA: All you ever wanted was to control me. Dress me up like a doll and loop me through your keychain –

EVAN: All I ever wanted ...

OLIVIA: ...Keep me in your pocket like loose change.

EVAN: All I ever wanted was to love you!

(Beat.)

OLIVIA: (Changes back to her sweet self.) Oh, baby. I love you, too. Oh, dear Evan.

(Evan pushes her away and sits up holding his head, laughing-crying, until he can gather his thoughts enough.)

EVAN: When exactly did you become insane?

(But she's no longer there, and he's alone.)

EVAN: Olivia?

(Lights go back up to normal. Evan realizes his surroundings and stands back up. He is able to conduct himself like normal, but looks around for a moment as if to check the perimeters. He shuts the computer, goes over to her armoire, and picks up the letter.)

EVAN: (Reading.) "Dear Evan..."

(He crumples the letter up and throws it into the corner. Then he goes back to the computer and begins typing, staring intently at the screen. He sends an email to Timothy.)

End of Scene 3.

#### Act 1 Scene 4

(Logan is sitting with multiple computers out. There is some festivity in the air: party music or whatnot.)

LOGAN: (Laughing.) Oh. My. God. Marie, you crack me up. Are you guys listening to this? This woman is hilarious. Oh, boy, Marie Antoinette. You need to start taking your show to Youtube.

(Logan switches to another computer, or to a different place on the couch.)

LOGAN: Okay. I know the jokes are a little bit racist, Izzy-Grape-Pop, but hey man, you just gotta chill, man. We're all here for each other, all right? Now my pal Timothy, he really needs us right now. He's going through a rough patch here. I know he's pretty new to this group, but let's try to figure out how we can be here for Timothy. Because he just lost the love of his life. Okay?

(Logan types something and then sighs loudly.)

LOGAN: Yes, Ferdinand. I know you thought she was the Isabella to your Columbus, and I know your feelings are hurt, too, but she just didn't like the way you came on too strong, now did she? Maybe next time, you should think twice before you send a photoshopped Mona Lisa Bridal Portrait to someone. Goodness. Can we get something to lighten it up in here?

(He switches the music to something more upbeat and opens a can of beer. There are a few other empty bottles and beer cans and takeout boxes around the room.)

LOGAN: Okay. So. Let's review our operations. Daniel Stephen Smith has created a memorial page for the deceased, and we have all left our notes of sympathy. Is that right? (Reviews his notebook.) Gertrude and Marjorie, I am missing your notes of sympathy. Just leave a few lines of poetry or an inspirational quote. Maybe share a story you've heard about the deceased. We want to let the world know that she was loved. All right. Moving on. Daniel has also emailed the local papers to write a profile about her, and he has nominated her for a posthumous award from the Society of Women on Stage. I think a posthumous award would be just the thing to cheer up our old buddy Timothy. So remember to be alert for the date that voting opens. Next issue.

(A knock on the door interrupts him.)

LOGAN: (Pauses.) Well, who could that be?

(He checks his schedule as the door knocks again. He goes over to the door and leans his back against it, surreptitiously peering out the cat eye. Finally, when the woman is turning to go, he rushes to open the door.)

LOGAN: Wait. I'm here! I'm right here! I – Hello.

(He holds himself very shyly and protectively.)

BETH: Oh. Hi. I thought you weren't home.

LOGAN: ...Hi.

BETH: Hi. How are you? Um. My name is Beth. I live up on the fourth floor.

LOGAN: "Come in. Don't worry about your shoes."

BETH: Oh. I'll just – I won't be long. (She doesn't really step inside very much.) Anyway, I'm just here because ... I'm here on account of the tragedy that happened last week. When we lost one of our neighbors in this building.

LOGAN: (Nods. Perhaps he is also excited to know what she is talking about and excited that someone else cares.) I know. Olivia. That was her name. She died. She was my best friend.

BETH: Oh. Ummm. I didn't know you were so close to her.

LOGAN: I mean. She was my friend's best friend.

BETH: Well, she was one of my best friends, too. And, you know, she did mention you once.

LOGAN: She did? What did she say?

BETH: Uh. She said you were one of the most interesting people who lived in this building. And she said you were very talented. And nice.

LOGAN: (Happy but then sad.) I'm sad that she's gone.

BETH: Yeah. Me too.

LOGAN: I – I heard the gunshot. It woke me up. In the middle of the night. And all the police cars and the sirens came. And I watched them, right over here. (Moves to his window) I watched them put her in the back of an ambulance and take her away. She was in a bag, but I knew it was her.

BETH: (Shudders. Or something. Tries to get back to business as usual.) So I'm bringing a card around, to all the neighbors, and I'm also asking for any donations you'd like to make to Olivia's fiance, Evan Roberts. (Perhaps a few sounds from upstairs here, making Beth pause to look at where Evan is.) He lives right above you. But, um, just a few dollars or anything you can spare.

(Logan looks at her hard for a moment, before whipping out his checkbook and writing on this desk.)

BETH: You really don't have to give very much. I know Evan will appreciate anything. Now, I'm not asking for a handout, and I know we're not a socialist building, so really, don't listen to Ms. Widlansky. She is malicious and mean-spirited and –

(Logan hands her the check.)

BETH: Thanks so much for your – (She gets a better look at the check, which is in the vicinity \$5,000) Oh! This is ... a lot of money.

LOGAN: Take it.

BETH: I – Are you sure? I mean, I'm really not looking for hand-outs. And this is ... This is really nice of you.

LOGAN: It's for her.

BETH: Thank you so much.

LOGAN: It's no problem. No big deal.

BETH: Olivia was right about you. You are very nice.

LOGAN: (Shrugs shyly and considers how to phrase his question.) Do you like inspirational quotes?

BETH: I have to get to work soon, so I better keep going, but it was really nice to meet you! Thank you, again.

LOGAN: You're welcome. It was nice to meet you, too.

(He slowly extends a hand to her as if to shake hello, but she has already dashed off on her way.)

LOGAN: My name's ... Logan.

(He slowly turns back to his apartment, where the emptiness is for a moment, overwhelming. And then he forces himself back into his role as the puppeteer maestro.)

LOGAN: Okay, gang. Good news. So it turns out we are not alone in this operation. Isn't it great? (Beat.) There are other people out there who care. There's a whole building of people. All the people around us. (Beat.) So has anyone thought of a very very good comment we can post?

(He sighs and sits down. He drinks the rest of his beer, this time as an angry loner thing, rather than a social party thing. Then he turns on his computer and looks up Constance's web site again. He dials her Skype phone.)

CANDIE: (She answers with a purr.) Hello there, Governer Mc – (She loses the sultry.) You're not my two o' clock.

LOGAN: (Stares, looks around for a moment, then whispers.) I can see your boobs.

CANDIE: I – uh – (Changes her uncertainty.) Why? Does this ... bother you?

LOGAN: (Takes a deep breath.) One of Olivia's friends just came to my door. She was very nice. And she smelled nice, too. And I didn't mind having her in my air. But it's just very confusing, because she left so quickly, and after she left, I felt – I felt like my lung was filling with water again and, and you have very symmetrical boobs.

CANDIE: Thank you. But listen, I've only got a few minutes here. I don't take emergency calls from my clients. So I'm going to have to talk to you later. You can always schedule more appointments, though, if you see an opening.

LOGAN: I'm going through a very stressful time right now and I think I would like to upgrade my sessions.

CANDIE: Okay. Great. Why don't you visit my appointment wizard application? And if you do have an emergency, you should call 911.

LOGAN: What you're doing right now ... Is this cyberpschosexualcognitiveimmersivetalk therapy?

CANDIE: It's part of it. Yes. My therapy sessions range from levels red, to red hot. What would you like to sign up for?

LOGAN: Is there a red orange?

CANDIE: We can talk about this transition and whether or not it is fitting with your treatment plan at your next session. Remember that you can only dial me during our appointed time slot. How did you get my screenname just now, anyway?

LOGAN: (Shrugs.) I know some people.

CANDIE: (Through gritted teeth.) I'm going to have to talk to my technician again. (Beat.) Anyway. I've got other clients in need of my services right now. But I look forward to seeing you, at our appointed time slot.

LOGAN: Right. I'll check you later. T-T-Y-L. In a while, crocodile.

CANDIE: (Hangs up.)

(Logan looks around the room for a moment. It is an empty and barren place. He goes over to his closet, or underneath his desk, and pulls out a box. He rifles through a notebook of pages, and then he pulls out a picture of Olivia.)

LOGAN: Where do you go after they take you away?

(There is a sudden incoming-message noise from his computer.)

A READING VOICE (OLIVIA'S OR EVAN'S): "Dear Timothy-Timone. Thank you for your messages these last few weeks. I've enjoyed our correspondences. It strikes me though that I still don't know much about you. Where did you say you saw me perform again? I would love to know more about you, especially as it seems we are becoming close friends. I would love to know who you are."

End of Scene 4.

Act 1 Scene 5

(Beth and Evan are in Evan's apartment having dinner. Beth heats up the food and brings the salad over to the table.)

BETH: So, you had lettuce, radishes, and carrots. I tossed out the cucumbers, but, we still have a salad.

EVAN: (Distractedly.) This looks delicious, Beth. Thank you.

BETH: You're welcome. Eat up.

(Neither of them eat and there is a pause, until Evan remembers to pick up his fork.)

EVAN: So how was your day?

BETH: It was good. I finished doing some errands, and I got to make the scones today. So, they're starting to trust me more at the bakery. Pretty soon I'll get to start making cakes.... (She trails off as she notices that Evan is not listening.)

BETH: Guess what I saw today during my run? Two little toy terriers in this woman's bike basket. It was the most ridiculous thing ever.

EVAN: That sounds adorable.

BETH: They looked like alien muskrats. (No response from him.) I have something for you.

EVAN: Hmm?

BETH: (Takes the card out of her purse.) This is for you.

(Evan takes the envelope without really thinking about it.)

BETH: It's from me and everyone in the building. To let you know that we care.

EVAN: (Looking at the check she wrote.) Beth. This is almost six thousand dollars.

BETH: It's to help with the rent, and the funeral. I mean, I know you've got a great job, but you just put down so much money for the wedding and the concert and now ... I know Olivia was trying to budget and money was kind of tight.

EVAN: Where did you get this? How did you get people to open the purse strings?

BETH: Everyone wanted to help.

EVAN: (Not buying it.) I think you're the only person I know in the world who would decide to do something like this and have the ability to actually do it. Thank you, Beth. This was – This was really nice of you.

BETH: (Shakes her head.) It wasn't just me. It was everyone. We're all here for you. And that guy downstairs? I mean, I know Olivia was kind of friends with him. But he really seems to care about her, and he was really generous.

EVAN: What guy downstairs?

BETH: Oh, you know. That guy. The one who, like, never leaves his unit? He gets all his groceries delivered and all those packages that come in downstairs are always for him. Olivia knew him somehow. I thought he was a little strange – I mean, he IS a little strange – but Olivia said he was nice. Didn't she ever mention him?

EVAN: No. What was his name?



BETH: Logan. I think Blake is his last name?

EVAN: (Thinking to himself.) No. That's not right.

VOICEOVER TIMOTHY-TIMONE/LOGAN/NOTE FROM BEFORE: Thanks so much for writing back to me. I'm very touched you would take the time to correspond with me... The only achievement waiting for the heroine is death. The only freedom is found in death.

BETH: I think that was one of the most beautiful things about Olivia. She never judged people, you know? She was always so willing to talk to you and to listen. It didn't matter who you were.

EVAN: Everyone was the same and no one was worth a thing.

BETH: What?

EVAN: Nothing. I'm just...thinking out loud.

BETH: Are you okay, Evan?

EVAN: Yeah. I'm just ... When love becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure. Right?

BETH: (Relieved.) I think of that one, too. It reminds me of heaven, and storing our treasure in heaven. I have to believe that she's up there now, you know? That her pain is gone and she's at peace. I haven't been to church in years, but I went to church the weekend after she... It helped. Being in church.

EVAN: Hey. Did Olivia ever mention a guy named Timothy to you? I, um, I got a note from him, but I couldn't remember who he was.

BETH: Doesn't sound familiar. Maybe someone she went to school with back in California?

EVAN: Yeah. Maybe.

(Evan stands up from the table and paces into the living room. He stops at Olivia's writing desk, where the jewelry box is standing. His eyes eventually fall on the jewelry box and he fingers the lock, which has become a much larger padlock.)

BETH: Evan?

(Beth walks over to him and finds him intently touching the locked jewelry box. She can't help herself. She hugs him from behind.)

BETH: Oh, Evan, I can't imagine what it's like for you. I can't imagine how you feel or how much it must hurt. I just – I just wish I could take it away for you. I wish I knew how to help you heal.

EVAN: (Straightening up.) Beth?

BETH: (Realizes what she is doing and is suddenly embarrassed and shy. She releases him and steps back.) I'm sorry. Oh Gosh. I'm really sorry. I – (Laughs awkwardly.) – I always was a big hugger, wasn't I? I should, um – Well, I'll just go clean up dinner.

(She returns to the dining table. Evan watches her a moment before he goes over to help.)

EVAN: (After a pause.) She doesn't really care about people, you know. Not really. If she cared, she wouldn't have... she wouldn't have done this.

BETH: I'm sure she was in so much pain. I'm sure this isn't what she really wanted.

EVAN: She left a courtesy note. Do you want to see? Not that you really need to, because it's like not she actually wrote anything. She didn't even try to explain.

BETH: Remember how happy she was? When you got engaged? She was radiant.

EVAN: She didn't even try.

BETH: She must have been in so much pain, feeling like she had to hide it all the time. I should have realized. Talked to her. I knew she was tired but she was also so busy.

EVAN: Don't do that, Beth. Don't take her responsibilities and put it on yourself. She should be the one who's sorry. She should be the one to blame. She should –

(His voice breaks, and so does Beth's heart. Evan catches himself and gazes off at the far wall for a moment, where a flash of the digital world dances across the stage.)

EVAN: Was I good to her?

BETH: What?

EVAN: Was I good to her?

BETH: Evan, you were wonderful.

EVAN: Why did she do it?

BETH: I think that the last thing she wanted was to leave you.

EVAN: I don't even know ... How could she do this? What kind of person could do this?

BETH: I brought some other things for you, too, Evan. (Goes back to her purse and pulls out a stack of handouts, like she has been collecting them for days.) Look. Look at these. I know you feel alone, but there are support groups all over the city for "survivors of suicide." That's what the term is. I've been researching this. Look. There's a meditation group, talk therapy, Letting Go by Letting Live, and a Peaceful Healing mosaic-making class. It's called "Picking up the Pieces." I would sign up for this. This looks really fun. See? They made trivets!

EVAN: Sometimes I think it's better that she's dead. Because if she came back to life, I'd kill her myself.

BETH: You don't mean that.

EVAN: I do, though. I do in a way. (Turns to look at her.) There's something inside of me now. This darkness. She put that inside of me.

BETH: (Holds out a pamphlet to him.) I think it would be really helpful if you checked out one of these groups.

EVAN: You're a sweetheart, did you know that? You're a lifesaver.

BETH: Well, I'll be here. If you ever need any life-saving. Except for, well, (Realizes what she has inadvertently referred to) except for any actual life-saving, because I'd probably just toss you my inhaler because well, that's what saves my life, you know? (Makes a face at herself.) I'm just ... going to head out, I guess.

EVAN: Are you leaving already?

BETH: I've intruded long enough.

EVAN: You're definitely not intruding.

BETH: I can come by in the morning, if you like. Before work or something.

EVAN: Besides, any intrusion is more than welcome right now.

BETH: And I can bring you some day-old muffins! If that's your jam. Or, you can put some jam on the muffins.

EVAN: Please don't go. (Beat.) I'm sorry. I just – I haven't been here at night in a while.

BETH: I can stay.

EVAN: I don't want to inconvenience you...

BETH: I'll stay. It's not a problem at all.

EVAN: (Relieved.) Great. I can pull out the futon for you.

BETH: All right.

EVAN'S MEMORY OF OLIVIA/VOICEOVER: Yes, I do have a boyfriend. And he's very wonderful. So, thank you for your offer, but I'm going to have to decline. (Beat.) The only problem with my boyfriend is that he is sometimes too wonderful. It hurts sometimes, you know? When people are too wonderful. It can make it very difficult...to live with them. (Beat.)

(Beth and Evan set up the futon bed and do their other nightly routines. Beth gets settled on the futon, but Evan wanders around, perhaps gets into bed, but then gets up again.)

EVAN: Hey. Would you mind if I actually ... This is a little weird. I just can't get used to my bed right now.

BETH: Oh. Oh, you want to ... Yeah. Okay.

(She scoots over and makes room for him on the futon.)

OLIVIA VOICEOVER: Yes, I do notice when other women admire my lover. It doesn't make me jealous, though. I guess I'm not the jealous type. It's weird. Sometimes I begin to think about what if my lover was with another woman. And what if the two of them actually made the better couple...

(The lights go off and in the middle of the light, they become somewhat brighter, as if our eyes have adjusted to the dark. Evan tosses and turns in the bed, and finally gets up. He goes to his computer and begins playing Olivia's music, which relaxes him for awhile. But then things get weird and shadows begin to move and stir in the Internet space. Lights on Olivia moving in the room with a gun. Lights off. Lights on Olivia lying supine on the floor. Lights off. Lights on Olivia huddled in the corner. Evan goes to her. But then she is gone. He can't touch her.

Shadows dance and sing past and around him as his memory of her melts into the multifaceted versions of her in the digital Internet world. Music and the Internet noise grow louder around him. The shadows are all her, and she is none of them. He goes to her dresser top and finds the jewelry box that is locked with the padlock, and he fiddles with the lock only to grow impatient, so that he destroys the box instead with a hammer or something. Inside, however, are only some pieces of jewelry and nothing that really matters. It is essentially empty. Her shadows grow larger and faster and they fold in over him. He sweeps the pieces of the box off the table. The shadows converge and then disappear. Evan does some serious-faced placing of hands on the table kind of thing.)

\*\*\*Perhaps this moment actually requires more explicit representation. More Evan-Olivia interaction? Evan trying to drown Olivia? Act out his dark side a bit?

End of Scene 5.

End of Act I