(Evan toasts Beth and she exits. After struggling with the placement of a sugar cube, Evan loses interest in his castle. He picks up a robe of Olivia’s and smells it. He lies down with the robe crumpled over his face, breathing in her scent, which has started to fade. Then he sits up and flings the robe across the room onto the area where Olivia died. A sudden beep from Olivia's computer makes him look up. 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 death has rendered a hole inside my soul. The world burned brighter with you in it. All that is left to fill me are the hollow sounds of your notes trapped in plastic and polish.

EVAN:

Who the fuck is *this* guy?

NOTE 2:

Olivia! I love your voice so much! I think you’re 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 .... feel free to use our cleansing mineral hot springs and our 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 … I have heard you are making extended travel through Bulgaria. … Opportunities to teach and perform…

(He trails off and stops. His eyes grow wide as he reads another 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….. Phillip.” … Phillip. Who’s Phillip?

(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 my dream is to share this passion with the world. I believe that music has the power to transform and to heal, to unify and to transcend the petty banalities of everyday life. I suppose you can say I am a little bit dramatic, too.

For now, I will leave you with one of my favorite poems, which I believe is expressive of the mystery and depths of great music. This is Sonnets to Orpheus 9, by Rainer Maria Rilke.

EVAN:

I gave you that poem!

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. 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.)

EVAN:

You’re a beautiful wretched conniving transcendent stinking deceitful slut. I hope you know that.

(He toasts her with a swig of whiskey and then 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 area of the death begins to move. It fills out and Olivia stands up, dressed in the robe, or in her performance gown. 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. 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

(This scene occurs after Beth tells Evan about the detective, and Evan has already done some of his own searching.)

(What I want to get out of this scene: Evan is perhaps a little less bitter/a little more vulnerable. He has been searching through her files already, and has found the letters, but doesn’t understand them. The scene should probably be a little shorter, too.)

(Detective Samuels clears off a spot for himself to sit. 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 his ass down.) What do you want to know? Why are you here?

DETECTIVE:

I’m just trying to puzzle this out. Lovely girl, from everything I’ve heard about her. Had her whole life in front of her. And then …. this. It’s a puzzle to me. I can’t figure it out, and I don’t have all the pieces.

EVAN:

Hmmph. (Adding a sugar cube to his castle.) Maybe you should check underneath the couch.

DETECTIVE:

It’s funny, isn’t it? We think a person is as close as our flesh, but then it turns out, we knew nothing. Everybody remains a mystery.

EVAN:

What are you? A philosophy major?

DETECTIVE:

I was, actually. I wrote my dissertation on the audience perspective imposed on women.

EVAN:

Is this what all philosophy majors do? Become detectives?

DETECTIVE:

Hey. I’ve seen some stuff I wish I could unsee. Crimes of passion. The violence of a lover. Now I’m not saying that that’s what happened here. But, well, it’s hard when it does happen. …Hey. Did you know Olivia was seeing a psychiatrist?

EVAN:  
What?

DETECTIVE:

She had a standing appointment every Wednesday evening.

EVAN:

(Confusion.) I … was not aware of that.

DETECTIVE:

Any ideas what might have been troubling her so much?

#####

///////

Scene 6

(Beth and Evan hang out in Evan's apartment. Evan is in an increasingly confused place. Beth tries to clean Evan's apartment.)

EVAN:

Beth, I will not allow you to clean my dishes. Please don't clean my dishes.

BETH:

I'm beginning to think that there are things living in your sink.

A mini kraken. Borne out of food bacteria.

EVAN:

I'll battle it down tomorrow.

BETH:

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

EVAN:

(Sniffs himself and smiles deprecatingly.) 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.)

BETH:

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

EVAN:

Olivia wanted to clean the carpet once. She thought she was allergic to it. Like it was making her throat itchy.

BETH:

Oh. (She sets the robe aside and goes to sit down by Evan, again 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 too shy to get in touch before. 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 the cat, looking super sad. I didn’t know cats could look sad... I don't think this one needs a response.

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.

EVAN:

Look. The Magic Flute show went up last night. They posted a video of her rehearsing with them. She was Queen of the Night.

BETH:

Why would they post that?

EVAN:

One hundred and seventeen people have liked it. She likes it, too. She also likes the reviews.

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:

That's why 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? Maybe 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 didn’t have reason to be jealous of her, Beth.

BETH:

(Beth looks up at him.) I didn't?

EVAN:

I mean, just because you're not acting. Nothing's wrong with that. Why don’t you act, anyway?

BETH:

BETH:

Thank you.

EVAN:

(Looks back at the computer.) They printed this article about her in the alumni magazine. It’s a nice picture of her butt. It's a nice picture of her but they got some stuff wrong. They said her favorite artists were x and y. That's not true at all. I'm going to write to them to change it. Do you think it'll be good idea to tell them to talk more about her personal life, too? It's just ... such a detached article. And I think it could be longer.

BETH:

I thought we were going to try to do other things today. Like, watch a movie.

EVAN:

Oh. Right.

BETH:

Why don't you put the computer away?

EVAN:

It's okay. I can watch the movie 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, so much stuff came up. Olivia had so many messages come in today.

BETH:

(Reaches out and closes the laptop.) Let's just — 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're god damn doing this.) We should make popcorn.

EVAN:

Right.

(As the light falls on Beth, Evan cannot help but glancing at the closed laptop. Sometimes he touches it, strokes it. There are some background noises of television tracks and popcorn popping. Finally, Beth has fallen 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 hers, but instead of coming out of the computer, it comes out from the bathroom. From behind him.)

#####

EVAN:

Was I a good man to her?

BETH:

(Startled.) What do you mean?

EVAN:

Was I good?

BETH:

You were wonderful.

EVAN:

But. Not good enough.

BETH:

You were wonderful.

EVAN:

How did I not know then?

BETH:

None of us knew. No one in their wildest dreams would ever have imagined it. Look at how shocked everyone is. Her parents hired a detective!

EVAN:

What did I do wrong?

BETH:

You didn't do anything wrong. You didn't.

(She raises a hand to touch him, but then changes her mind. It is not her place to touch him.)

BETH:

It's not your fault, Evan. I swear to you. None of it is your fault.

EVAN:

She never told me. She never told any of it to me.

BETH:

Maybe she just couldn't.

EVAN:

Maybe I didn't listen. That was all she ever wanted. For people to listen.

BETH:

Evan, don't be so hard on yourself, okay? It's not your fault.

(Evan starts to cry. Beth is uncertain how she fits into this particular moment. She squeezes his hand, but there is like a force field preventing any further intimacy.)

#####

BETH:

I should go. I'll come back tomorrow, okay?

EVAN:

Wait. Please don't go. I'm sorry. Please? Stay?

BETH:

("Do I get myself into this?") Okay. I'll stay.

EVAN:

Thank you.

(She sits down next to him again. Neither knows how to proceed.)

EVAN:

Do you want to play cards?

BETH:

(At the same time.) Let me clean up a little.

(Beth gets up and engages herself in sweeping or some other cleaning activitiy. Evan watches her, then watches his hands and feet. Beth eventually finds herself standing in front of The Stain. She doesn't know what to do about it.)

EVAN:

Sometimes I hear her, you know? Singing in the bathroom. She's all over the place.

BETH:

Maybe you should have that garage sale. Or, you know, start to get rid of some of her things.

EVAN:

I know. I'm just, so tired.

BETH:

Go to sleep, then. I'll be here.

EVAN:

You will?

BETH:

Yeah. I won't leave you.

EVAN:

Thank you, Beth.

(Some time passes and Evan is asleep on the couch. Beth covers him with a Navajo blanket. She sits down on the ground next to the couch, or maybe on a loveseat. Soon she is asleep as well. Some unearthly music begins to waft into the air. Evan wakes and sits up.)

#######

(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.

MALE FIGURE:

(Begins 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 eat her out. Then kisses his way back up.)

MALE FIGURE:

I can't get enough of you.

FEMALE FIGURE:

I want you 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 trying to scrub me out. Rub me down with bleach and alcohol.

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. Shock and disbelief slowly turn into joy.)

You're home.

(Lights out.)

End of Scene 6

SCENE 7

(Logan sits inside his bathroom, waiting for his session to begin. The floor of the bathroom is full of red rose petals and half-burned candles. He plays with them as he waits. Finally, his Skype phone rings.)

CANDIE:

So sorry I'm late. I'll be happy to extend our session by ten minutes today, for no extra charge, to make up for this delay in our start time. How are you?

LOGAN:

I can see your boobs.

CANDIE:

Oh! Oh. (Adjusts her surprise to a professional suaveness.) And does this bother you?

LOGAN:

(Considers it. Shrugs.)

CANDIE:

This camera...got a little off-center. There we go. That's better.

LOGAN:

Your bra is pretty.

CANDIE:

Thank you. So. 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:

What would you like to talk about?

LOGAN:

(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 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 analgesics 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.

(\*Note: Talk about space.)

CANDIE:

So, let's talk about the girl again. Your neighbor.

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. She's going to become very famous. 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 Thomas are.

CANDIE:

And to what purpose, may I ask?

LOGAN:

I can see your boobs again.

CANDIE:

You got me onto the edge of my seat, I guess.

LOGAN:

Do you do all of your sessions undressed?

CANDIE:

It depends on the type of session, but here. I've got a sweater.

LOGAN:

Do you do a lot of different sessions?

CANDIE:

I'm very diverse in my approach toward helping clients achieve personal fulfillment. Speaking of which, let's get back to you. What's your purpose in burying yourself inside her profiles? You say you want to stop wanting her, but what do you get from trailing her on the Internet?

LOGAN:

I get...to see what she's doing.

CANDIE:

How does that make you feel? Watching her life evolve as yours, in effect, stagnates?

LOGAN:

What do you mean, stagnates?

CANDIE:

You willingly become a passive observer, rather than an agent.

LOGAN:

That's not true.

CANDIE:

How so? What do you do, lurking behind your computer monitor, that creates any impact on your interpersonal relationships?

LOGAN:

I have a lot 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.

LOGAN:

I don't want to talk about the elevator.

CANDIE:

Okay. Well, now that she's no longer here, you can't run into her in the elevator anymore, can you? It would seem you no longer have to wrestle with wanting or not wanting to see her.

LOGAN:

It doesn't matter where people go. They're always here. (Motions at his computer.) You can always see them.

CANDIE:

But don't you think you should stop trying to see her? It's like scratching a mosquito bite, isn't it? You only make it worse.

LOGAN:

Not scratching is the worst.

CANDIE:

I'm confused about what you want from this woman. What do you hope to get from her?

LOGAN:

Nothing. I don't want anything from her.

CANDIE:

Yet I sensed some codependency last time we talked. You seem to have taken her departure rather hard.

LOGAN:

It's okay. I think...(listening for music)...I think she'll come back.

CANDIE:

But what will be different when she comes back?

(The music begins to come out of the vent again. But it sounds more like a tortured whistling, like the whine of machinery.)

LOGAN:

Everything.

End of Scene 7

SCENE 8

(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 the 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 say anything. 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 her robe, which stops the flickering light or sound.)

OLIVIA:

You're so good to me.

EVAN:

I would never leave you. Especially not now. You're the one who left me.

OLIVIA:

Don't dwell on that, baby. Just try to forget it. We can't be happy unless you forget it.

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. Swept into the sea.

EVAN:

Stop speaking in riddles to me. 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. It was when we were walking by the marina, 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. 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). And that's 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 don'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. He physically recoils from her.) 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...this isn't who she is.

OLIVIA:

Who am I then? Am I Carmen? Am I Aida? Am I La Tosca?

EVAN:

No. No. No.

OLIVIA:

Who do you want me 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 fades away or 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. Evan gets some time to recuperate. 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.

EVAN:

No, it’s not. I need her back. (He opens his computer and we see a shadow of her in the background.) I need to see her.

BETH:

(Places a hand over the computer to stop him.) No.

EVAN:

What?

BETH:

Can't you see you're torturing yourself? You have to let her go.

EVAN:

But she was just — (He motions to the bathroom, but doesn't say anything to Beth.)

BETH:

I'm taking this. (Hugs the computer to her chest.) Don't try to stop me. It's bad for you — how much time you spend on this thing. And, we're cleaning. (She stands up.) We're cleaning right now.

EVAN:

(To himself.) She was here. I touched her.

BETH:

(Kneeling and furiously scrubbing at the ground.) She wanted to go. Just let her go.

EVAN:

(Eyes closed and concentrating.) I touched her. I smelled her. Lemongrass and sage. Lemongrass and sage. Her voice, right in my ear. I could feel her breath on me.

(Olivia walks out from the bathroom, soaking wet?)

BETH:

(To herself.) What are you holding onto her for anyway? She left you. She abandoned you!

EVAN:

She was wearing that black thing.

(Olivia puts on a black negligee thing.)

EVAN:

She was so sweet.

(Olivia comes over and puts a hand on Evan's shoulder. He takes it absent-mindedly.)

BETH:

(Has started throwing away the dead flowers and pouring dirt over the stain, creating a large grave.) Help me, Evan. I'm going to cover up this stain.

EVAN:

She'd just been singing in Bulgaria, and she wanted to go back to the beach.

(Olivia caresses his hair and his face.)

EVAN:

(Responding to Olivia.) We can go back to the beach. We can stay all night at the beach. We'll bring French fries, and argue about the Place of Art in our lives. (He pulls her close to him.)

BETH:

There. (Wiping off her hands.) It's gone. She's gone.

(She places a single flower over the grave. Or a rock.)

(Evan brings Olivia around the couch and stands up, touching her face and her hair.)

BETH:

Evan, should we say something? Do you want to say something to her?

EVAN:

No. I’m okay.

BETH:

I feel like, this is when we say things.

(Evan brings Olivia around to the grave.)

BETH:

Olivia. Wherever you are. I hope you rest in peace.

(Evan and Olivia hold hands and look at the grave that Beth has made.)

End of Scene 8.

Scene 9

(Beth steps into the detective's office, holding Olivia's computer to her chest.)

DETECTIVE:

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

BETH:

You said I could come find you, if I thought of anything, or had anything to show you.

DETECTIVE:

Of course. Have a seat.

BETH:

(Takes a breath.) I don’t know how your investigation is going, but Evan is not guilty. Here. This is Olivia's computer. I know that everyone thinks she was so happy, and her life was so perfect, but it wasn’t. She was messed up. You'll see. If you look in her computer.

DETECTIVE:

So, you’ve ... looked through this?

BETH:

(Uncomfortable about violating Olivia’s privacy.) Well, I — she — 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.)

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.

BETH:

Then is the investigation off?

DETECTIVE:

In some ways, yes, but we’ve also found some suspicious … threads we’ve been trying to follow.

BETH:

What do you mean? What threads?

DETECTIVE:

I’m sorry. It’s all classified information. Thank you for the computer, though.

BETH:

Evan didn’t kill her! He would never have hurt her! He loved her so much. So…freaking … much.

DETECTIVE:

(Smiles at her sympathetically.) Love’s a tricky thing, Miss. Beaseley. I’m sure you’re aware. Like I said, I don’t think Mr. Richardson intended any harm to his affianced. But the battles between men and women … they are never clear, and they never end.

BETH:

I just don’t want him to have to go through an investigation.

DETECTIVE:

I won’t be questioning him again. But I have been trying to get in touch with him. About a thing we talked about. He hasn’t gotten back to me. How is he?

BETH:

Oh. I think he’s okay. He’s doing better. He went back to work today.

DETECTIVE:

Good. Glad to hear it. Probably best for him to move on.

BETH:

Mmhmm. He’s working on it. He’s moving on. … If you’re not — If you’re not looking more into Evan, what *are* you looking into? I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have asked.

DETECTIVE:

No, no. Miss Holland-Pryce was your friend as well. I understand. I’m mostly just following up on a few things about her around the Internet.

BETH:

Oh. Like on her web site, and with her fans?

DETECTIVE:

Well, you know how crazy the world is today. We’ve just got some opera fanatics in love with the death of the prima donna, and then there are the spectators, always gathering around the circus like a gaggle of vultures.

BETH:

Evan gets Olivia’s fan mail now. He answers them for her.

DETECTIVE:

(Beat.) Say. You live in the building, too, don’t you?

BETH:

Yeah. I live across the hall from them.

DETECTIVE:

Have you ever met one of the neighbors? A Logan Blake? The third?

BETH:

(Thinks about it.) I don’t think so … Why?

DETECTIVE:

Nothing. Seems like you’ve got quite a computer genius inside the building. That’s all.

BETH:

Is he … Is he the one in 3F? The unit right below Evan and Olivia?

DETECTIVE:

I’ll ... have to check that out.

BETH:

I’ve heard about him. They say he never comes out of the apartment. He gets all kinds of parcel deliveries. And he stuck a note to the door once. I think was him. It was like, “Men of MiceDirect: You must bring the mice directly to my door.” … Are looking into *him*?

DETECTIVE:

(Waves her off.) No. No. I just found him an intriguing figure. That’s all. Thanks for bringing the computer by for me, Miss Beaseley. It was lovely to see you again.

BETH:

(Studies him thoughtfully.) Did you have a message for Evan? Did you have something to tell him?

DETECTIVE:

Uh…yeah. Tell him I’ve got something for him. From Phillip. He can give me a call if he wants.

BETH:

Okay. I will.

DETECTIVE:

Yeah. Let him know I’ve got some info about Phillip.

End of Scene 9

Detective’s journey.

* + Hired by Olivia’s parents
  + Goes to the neighbors first, Beth, ie.
  + Talks to Evan, goes in strong at first, talks some feminist theory, listens to some music and they get more intimate, closer. Detective realizes Evan really loved her. Maybe Evan asks him to look into some people for him??
  + Beth shows the detective the computer. He says he’s not worried about Evan anymore, but maybe he’s worried about this guy phillip who might be Logan, there is some digital necrophilia going on. Something that Evan put him on the trail of.
  + So maybe he thinks that he and Evan are working together to some capacity.
  + Tells Beth to bring him a message because Evan’s not getting back to him. He’s called multiple times. He’s knocked on the door.

Scene 10

(Beth stops by at Evan's apartment. Olivia's things are piled around the grave that Beth built for her, and Olivia sits blank-faced on the couch.)

BETH:

Evan! Are you there? I’ve got good news. … Evan?

EVAN:

Hey Beth! I’m so glad you stopped by! (He gives her a hug. Which makes her very happy.)

BETH:

Hi! You seem cheerful. Did it feel good to get back to work?

EVAN:

Eh. Work was work. But look! I cleaned!

(He motions to the clean house. Maybe Olivia’s things are not on the grave, but simply put back into their rightful places. The apartment, however, HAS been cleaned up.)

BETH:

This looks wonderful. Oh, Evan. … I’m so glad you’re turning a corner. We should celebrate. We should eat cake. (Remembers the cake in her freezer.) Or, I mean … cookies! We should bake cookies!

EVAN:

That sounds good. We should have dinner. I’ve got beef stroganoff. Huh? Huh?

BETH:

Perfect.

EVAN:

Sit down. Sit down. Doesn't the space look great? I — rearranged a little, too. Now, I'm no interior designer, but I'd say, this is catalogue worthy.

BETH:

(Smiles and relaxes a little.) I could see this in a catalogue. (Takes a seat on the couch, other side of Olivia.) So, was everyone glad to see you back?

EVAN:

Oh! I don’t even think they noticed me! (Opening a bottle of wine.)

BETH:

(Chuckles as she reaches for something over Olivia.) I’m sure they noticed you.

EVAN:

I gotta tell you, Beth. I really owe you one. I’m taking care of the cooking tonight. You sit back and enjoy the wine.

BETH:

Why, thank you.

(Evan exits into the kitchen, and comes back carrying a rake. He slowly combs the dirt over Olivia’s grave, causing her to rise from the couch and come over to him.)

BETH:

What are you doing?

EVAN:

Oh. I’m just waiting for the stroganoff to heat up.

BETH:

But —

EVAN:

A garden takes a lot of tending, doesn’t it? (He picks up a watering can and begins to water the grave.) It takes a lot of time and nurturing to keep those flowers alive.

(Olivia begins to run her hands along his back and his sides.)

EVAN:

But they sure are beautiful when they bloom.

BETH:

Hey, Evan. Why don’t you come sit down and we can finish watching that movie. The stroganoff’s going to need like, thirty minutes, at least.

EVAN:

Sure! Great idea! (To Olivia.) I know. You missed the first half. But don’t worry. I’ll get you up to speed.

BETH:

Who are you talking to?

EVAN:

Oh. Nothing! Let me grab the stroganoff and we’ll eat.

BETH:

(Looks around the room more suspiciously.)

EVAN:

(Runs back in empty-handed.) Still got another thirty minutes for the stroganoff. All right. Let’s watch that movie.

(Olivia sits down next to him and he places a hand on her knee.)

BETH:

I got so excited I forget to tell you. The detective’s closed the case. Well, kind of. He’s not looking at you anymore, at least. And he doesn't think you had anything to with it. He’s looking at some stuff on the Internet or something. But he had a message for you. He said to call you about Phillip.

EVAN:

Phillip? Olivia’s composer?

BETH:

Huh?

EVAN:

You know Phillip, right? He’s a fan. We’ve been talking to him. About doing a composition piece.

BETH:

We?

EVAN:

(Smiles to make up for it.) Yeah. We. Phillip and I.

BETH:

Oh. So did you meet him?

EVAN:

No. We’ve just been sending messages back and forth. Hey! Let’s watch that movie!

BETH:

Okay.

(She looks over at him. Evan notices, and pulls his hand away from Olivia to rub his belly. Then he touches his computer that is sitting nearby, placing it on his lap.)

BETH:

I thought we were watching the movie. Are you going to, like, check e-mail or something?

EVAN:

No. I’m good.

BETH:

Oh. Okay.

(More movie watching. Evan strokes his computer, and looks over at Olivia with a reassuring smile. She smiles back at him. Plays with his hair.)

BETH:

(Pauses the movie.) So. Tell me more about this Phillip guy?

EVAN:

Oh. Phillip? There’s not much to tell? He’s a baroque rock-and-roll artist. Very talented. He sent me some pieces he created on the computer.

BETH:

And he wants to write a song? Using Olivia’s voice?

EVAN:

That’s what he says.

BETH:

Have you heard from him recently?

EVAN:

(Thinks about it.) I don’t know. I don’t think so.

BETH:

Evan. The detective mentioned this guy’s name. Not in a bad way. But maybe, maybe there’s something more to it than that. You know how there are all kinds of predators hanging around the Internet.

EVAN:

I’m sure it’s nothing to worry about, Beth.

BETH:

Are you still looking at Olivia’s fan mail? *Are* there any weird ones cropping up?

EVAN:

(Looks thoughtfully into the distance. He’s kind of forgotten about the fan mail stuff.) You know. I haven’t checked in a while. It’d probably be a good idea to do that. (Glancing at Olivia.) Right?

BETH:

I think so. Maybe. Do you sign in with her account or something?

EVAN:

Yep. I just need to … Wow. Fifteen notes. I guess that’s not *that* much. But… (His voice dulls.)…it’s a lot. … Do you really want to look at this now?

BETH:

Yeah. Here’s one. “We just wish to express our condolences to your family and friends. What a terrible loss ….” “Your memory lives on in your song.”

EVAN:

(How does he react to that?)

BETH:

Here’s one from Phillip! It’s titled “Apologia.”

EVAN:

(Reads this one eagerly because he knows Phillip treats Olivia as if she is alive.)

Oh, good! This will be good. “Dear Olivia. I am so so so sorry, but, my name is Logan, and I am writing on account of my friend Phillip.”

BETH:

Logan?

EVAN:

“Phillip won’t be able to write a song for you anymore, because, actually, 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. 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. 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.”

…Í

Wow. What a weirdo.

BETH:

Yeah. (Something really weird IS going on.)

EVAN:

Well. (Snaps the computer shut.) That’s the end of that, I guess. Well, that’s good, too. Making music would be much too demanding for her right now.

BETH:

Excuse me?

EVAN:

I mean, making music WAS so demanding for her. … Maybe if she had spent less time making music … if she had spent more time resting …

BETH:

Don’t think about that anymore, Evan. Just let the past go. (She realizes that she has grabbed his hand, and she looks down at it shyly.)

EVAN:

You’re right. (Squeezes her hand.) You’re always right, Beth. I’m so glad I have you around.

\*(Not sure what note to end this scene on.)

* More time spent on Beth’s realization.
* Something about it made it seem like Olivia is Evan’s secret.
* Or Beth could overhear him talking to Olivia.
* I think he knows that she died. And now she is only coming back for him.
* He’s double-thinking. He knows she isn’t there. But he would just rather that she was. So he knows he’s doing this double-life thing
* Good place perhaps to have Beth’s perspective of Evan talking to air.
* A very different place for Evan. Woo hoo yay a crazy. Everything is great. Everything is super great. Right??? Too big of a step for him??
* More of a sedative place? Rather than a frantic place?
* His ability to function after this is very questionable? Is he already too broken that there’s anything left to fight for him, when he goes to the underworld?
* More control in that same vein (as the last scene), with a slip up. He needs to be aware of trying to control and exist in these two worlds, but it’s getting harder and harder to balance it. He’s living with two worlds at the same time.
* How the computer physically also represents the connection. The computer is the ouji board. Having the computer’s presence on stage. Reminder that Evan’s mental state is being facilitated by the computer.
* What does this scene do to Beth? How does this scene push Beth? How will she pull Evan out of this realm? And, does Logan have any part in saving Logan?

What could Beth do to help him? She could never fucking back to this apartment.

EVAN:

Beth? Beth? Where'd you go? ... Oh, well. I guess it's just you and me tonight. (He sits down and kisses Olivia's cheek. Her face goes from blank to smiling as a little life enters her.) More popcorn for us. (He feeds her a piece of popcorn and settles back on the couch.)

(The lights from the television flash on their faces, and Olivia's face goes back to blank, just like a mask.)

EVAN ON HIS WEDDING DAY

(He has dressed Olivia up in her wedding dress and he is wearing his tux.)

EVAN:

Today's the day. Our dreams come true today.

OLIVIA:

(Smiles slowly at him.)

EVAN:

You make such a beautiful bride.

OLIVIA:

EVAN:

Remember, in Port Townsend? I got down on one knee. I said I was doomed to love you, so, if you could put me out of my misery, would you please just marry me?

OLIVIA:

EVAN:

No? You don't remember that? That's okay. It doesn't matter.

OLIVIA:

EVAN:

Almost time to get to the church. Are you ready?

OLIVIA:

EVAN:

What do you mean, you can't? Of course you can.

OLIVIA:

EVAN:

Don't be silly. How are we supposed to get married if you won't go outside?

OLIVIA:

EVAN:

Nothing will hurt you outside. I'll be with you. I'll be right by your side. I won't let anything hurt you. I promise.

OLIVIA:

EVAN:

Don't say that. You know I don't like it when you say that.

OLIVIA:

EVAN:

Stop saying that. It's not true. We're getting married today. Come on. Be happy! Just be happy for once!

OLIVIA:

EVAN:

Urggh! You fucking bitch! You stubborn slut! (He stands up and walks away from her for a moment, frustrated. Maybe he picks up the computer and slams it on the ground or tosses it somehow? When he turns back, all he sees is the dress, laid out on the bed.)

EVAN:

(Beat.) Where did you go?

(Silence.)

EVAN:

Come back. (Beat.) I'm — I’m sorry. I didn't mean it. I was just — I just got a little bit upset, but I'm not mad at you. (Beat.) Come back.

(Silence.)

EVAN:

Please? I — I can’t lose you again. I can’t keep losing you. Don’t you know what kind of hell this is?

(He sits down and falls apart a little more, wrenching at his tie.)

EVAN:

(Something in the sound or the lighting or whatever makes us realize that his fantasy is slipping away a bit. The cracks in his lies are widening.)

No. No. I can’t do this. (He grabs her wedding dress, her robe. He holds it up to his face but realizes that it doesn’t even hold any of her essence anymore.) I won’t — I won’t do this.

(He looks for her around the house. He doesn't find her, but he finds a doll's face or a mask coming out from underneath the grave. He kneels down and begins digging.)

* Maybe this is where he has a more real reaction, something that shows that we can still save him. He knows he is dead, but he doesn't want to deal with it.
* Gavin wants to see him try to be natural in that scene where they’re preparing for the wedding, and a little bit of his frustration that she can’t be more responsive.
* If there is another scene before this that shows a conversation involving them where you see her speaking that reflects the way Evan has been tampering with her profile.
* What he would do if she disappears is that he would open the computer. Maybe he reaches into the computer, and he pulls a handful of dirt.

Scene 12

(This scene occurs after Beth has learned of a stalker who lives downstairs of Evan and Olivia. And after she has realized that Evan has lost it.)

(Logan is sitting in his bathroom on his computer. Perhaps his recent rejection by Candie has pushed him deeper into the Internet for the moment.)

LOGAN:

(Talking to himself on a web site thing… Maybe he’s at the midnight tea party?)

(He hears a knock at the door. He looks up and then ignores it.)

LOGAN:

(Continues chatting and talking. What if he’s talking in two different voices because he has to be two different people???)

(Another knock.)

LOGAN:

(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 it for a moment, trying to gather his thoughts and decide his next move. He opens the door again.)

BETH:

Hi… I’m Beth. …I'm sorry. Were you in the middle of something?

LOGAN:

Hello?

BETH:

Hi. I’m Beth. I live upstairs.

LOGAN:

My name is Logan.

BETH:

I’m so sorry to bother you. I just – My friend? He lives above you, and he needs help. And I thought…maybe…you could help him?

LOGAN:

(Looks at her kind of quizzically.)

BETH:

I brought you some cake!

LOGAN:

(So confused.) It’s nice to meet you.

BETH:

It’s nice to meet you, too! Can I – Can I come in?

LOGAN:

(Opens the door to let her in.)

BETH:

Thanks. (Shyly steps into the apartment. Perhaps there is a picture or a digital painting of Olivia. MICROSOFT PAINT!!!) That’s … a really cool piece of art.

LOGAN:

I made it.

BETH:

She was … this girl … she was my friend.

LOGAN:

She was my friend, too! But, she wasn’t. Not really.

BETH:

She died two months ago.

LOGAN:

I know. I heard the gunshot. It woke me up. It was so loud it made my bed shake. And I thought there was an earthquake. Or an atomic explosion. But it wasn’t. But in a way, it was. Because she died. And they had to carry her body out in a black bag and put her into an ambulance. I watched them. From the window. … Sometimes I think about her blood dripping into my living room. (Suddenly very shy that he has talked so much.)

LOGAN:

Do you — do you want to sit down?

Beth arrives.

Logan is starting to blossom a bit. You’re starting to feel sexual urges again. You have a want for a physical connection again.

They both have a connection to Olivia.

What does Beth want him to do? Delete her? Connect with Evan? Perhaps it is the letters between Phillip and Evan? Maybe the only time Logan is really himself is when he is talking to Olivia? When he dies, especially, he wants to take care of her. She is his god. So he takes her into his own hands. So there is a really rare instance when he is actually the one who sends out the e-mails. The detective would think that he slipped. But for Logan, that is just what he has to do.

Maybe he writes back as Phillip. He wouldn’t say that Phillip is not real, but he would apologize for his friend Phillip. He would just write as Logan, and confess his admiration for Olivia.

EVAN IN THE UNDERWORLD

(When Evan first gets into the underworld, he sees Olivia performing on stage, kind of far away from him. But he can still watch and see her. When she's done, she bows, and he claps loudly for her. A whole chorus of claps rise up and echo around him. He motions towards her, but her face registers no recognition.)

EVAN:

Hey. Hey, Liv.

(She turns to go off stage/back stage.)

EVAN:

Hey, wait for me.

(He crawls up to the podium and steps behind the curtain as well, but back here, there is room of smoke and mirrors. A bunch of Olivias walk around him, sometimes appearing, then disappearing, then appearing again. At first this is beautiful for him. He is at peace here. But then he finds that he can't get any of them to stop and talk to him.)

EVAN:

Olivia... Are you playing hard to get? ... Hey. … Hey, Hey, What do you say? ... Red light. Red light. GREEN LIGHT. Red light.... Groom to bride groom. Groom to bride groom ... Come on. You'll stop for me, right? Right?

(A knock overhead.)

BETH (off-stage):

Evan? Are you there?

EVAN:

(Calling back out. As he is distracted for a moment, all of the Olivias disappear.) Be right there. (To himself.) Where were we?

(Olivia has ran off but Evan catches a glance of her skirt, turning around the corner.)

EVAN:

Hey. Hey. Stop. Wait for me.

OLIVIA:

(Turns around and smiles brightly.) Hello, friend. I'm so glad you're here.

EVAN:

Olivia, it's me.

OLIVIA:

Please, stay a while. We have so much to explore.

EVAN:

Come on, Liv. Talk to me.

OLIVIA:

For now, I will simply leave you with one of my favorite poems.

EVAN:

(Dejected, he drops a curtain over her and moves away. He turns back around and a sea of white and off-white envelopes fall from the sky. An ocean of voices murmur around him. He bends down and searches through the envelopes, but none of them are addressed to him.)

EVAN:

Why won't people learn to address their envelopes? Why send this all out there just so it all gets lost?

OLIVIA:

(She appears on the other side of the stage. Writing a letter.)

I just want to stop sometimes. I want the world to stop. I want there to be still point. A silence.

EVAN:

No. You stop. I'm not going to fall for this one again.

OLIVIA:

(Beat.) I want you to suck my tits. Kiss my breasts and bite your way down my stomach.

(This gets Evan's attention. He looks up at her.)

OLIVIA:

I want you to put my clit between your teeth. I want the tip of your tongue,

(They have a little sex scene, or almost sex scene, but Evan can't quite complete the coitus, because when he looks into the mirror, he can only see himself there. He lets go of sexy Olivia, who falls to the ground stiff as a board, and he keeps on digging into the Internet.)

* He is searching for her, because he can tell that she is slipping away. In the other scene, it seems like he doesn’t know that he is losing her.
* More of the sense of losing her in the previous scene.
* What we want at the end: Do we want him to find her essence at the end? So we need to find a few ways
* A bright and shiny beginning to it. A lot of bright lights.
* Find a way to make it so that he’s searching for her essence. It’s not clear what he is searching for. We don’t know that he’s looking for her soul. How to solve that?
* Animal in a corner of the cage kind of deal.
* If we keep the arc of her secret/suicide, he shouldn’t give up looking for the secret of her death.
* More sensory stuff. “I forget the way you smell or taste.”
* One thing about the letters: It kind of feels like Evan wouldn’t want to accept the letters when he finds them. Maybe he chooses to reject them afterward because they are not in line with his image of her.
* Also, the letters are physical, not in the Internet realm. Maybe they are burned. But then they are still existing in the Internet world.
* What we need right is what reveals the essence.
* Maybe part of the real world that he’s denying is that he’s trying to burn them, but there are so many around. Maybe Beth is aware of their existence. Maybe he can’t even read them because they are so difficult.
* Talking about smells makes Gavin think about the ties to the physical world. Smells are part of the physical world. You can’t smell or taste a physical person.

Scene 9

(Logan sits naked on his bathroom floor, eating lo mien takeout. He is mid-session with Candie.)

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. That will take care of some things on DSM-V.

LOGAN:

Last night, 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 Elvis Presley was there. Did you know Marie Antoinette was a vampire? Not that vampires are real.

CANDIE:

Doesn’t surprise me.

LOGAN:

I’m glad we’re doing this session all deshabille. I think I’m really getting to know you.

CANDIE:

Yes. I thought this would be a good step. By discarding our layers, we allow ourselves more freedom and openness to sense and to speak. I’m interested to see what we explore in this state. You seem more cheerful.

LOGAN:

Yeah. I am more cheerful, I think.

CANDIE:

Did your neighbor return from Bulgaria?

LOGAN:

No. No, she didn’t. But … I’m not the only one who misses her, you know?

CANDIE:

So you found solidarity? Collusion?

LOGAN:

Immortality. I found immortality.

CANDIE:

… We did agree that vampires were fantasy, correct?

LOGAN:

Oh, yeah. For sure. I’m not talking about vampires. I’m talking about … Yesterday, I got a letter from beyond the grave.

CANDIE:

Did you?

LOGAN:

You know? I like those glasses on you. The rest of you being naked … it really brings out the glasses. Those are nice horn rims.

CANDIE:

Thank you. I got a good deal on these.

LOGAN:

Right. So, I got this letter. From this girl, who died. And it was like, suddenly, everything made sense for me. I understood my purpose. And I felt like … a man. A man beast.

CANDIE:

A discovery of manhood….

LOGAN:

I wrote back, but she hasn’t responded yet. I hope she does. I told her I was super super super excited to talk to her.

CANDIE:

Do you think this discovery comes about as a result of stepping into a societal role? Or is it … a primal victory over latent desires and fears?

LOGAN:

Where did you get your degree again?

CANDIE:

I earned my own degree. Through iTunes University and the Kaplan Academy. The self-directed nature of my study has allowed me to be quite diverse in my work. I have some very high profile clients.

LOGAN:

Huh. I thought maybe you studied with Freud. Do you know Freud?

CANDIE:

Yes. He’s a quack. A self-masturbating quack.

LOGAN:

When you say diverse, do you ever….

CANDIE:

Yes. Yes I do.

LOGAN:

...Awesome!

CANDIE:

It will cost you more.

LOGAN:

I assume it’s the Silver package?

CANDIE:

You would be correct.

LOGAN:

What are you doing?

CANDIE:

Transitioning.

LOGAN:

Oh. What should I do?

CANDIE:

Whatever makes you comfortable. Whatever you want.

(Logan looks around his bathroom. He goes to her web page and plays Olivia’s music. He makes himself spiffy.)

CANDIE:

Okay. Are you ready?

LOGAN:

I’m ready.

CANDIE:

Good. Now, take three deep breaths. I’ll do them with you. We’ll do them at the same time. It’s very important.

LOGAN:

Okay.

(They take three deep simultaneous breaths.)

CANDIE:

All right… Close your eyes… What color is the inside of my cunt?

End of Scene 9

(Lights fade but the music that Logan turned on continues playing. It is coming out from Beth’s computer.)

Olivia is the

Concrete scene where he goes underworld is in the shower scene? Ethereal video game scene of the world? — how does the audience see that the blankness of the world.

Scene in the bathroom –-

Making it obvious that Olivia is that world. How do we see that this is digital world? What is the logic of the play? The metaphysics of the play?

Direct opposition of what Evan would see and what Beth would see. Evan would have these very ethereal and emotional issues. There is definitely a moment where we should not longer see the play through Evan’s perspective, but through Beth’s perspective. This is why Scott wants a masturbation scene. And not to have one when Olivia’s in the room.

An idea: Not only is there searching for Olivia’s secrets which can’t be found, but there is the actual computer being Olivia in a way.

Masturbation scene with the computer on his skin. Not an open computer, but a closed one. And he’s getting the warmth of the computer.

How does his relationship with Olivia after her death change him?

How does Evan’s character change? What are the obvious parallels between what pornography does to our brain as what is happening to Evan?

Is there something about having all of the happy memories posted online. Maybe you can just find countless happy pictures of them online. And he is just obsessed with re-living these fragments of memories? And missing the heart of what that relationship was.

What if he actually begins a relationship with Beth and sometimes, but keeps looking at pictures of

Tulpas – pulling them out of her computer. You can create them, but then there is a wall you have to get through, until you develop a subconscious relationship with them.

One thing that clues him into this about her is that his image of Olivia takes on this different characteristic that was completely different from what she was

How does Evan’s journey help up illustrate something we want to say?

Good: Something that he’s missing about Beth. Not that he could be in love with her? But just that they could connect, and sometimes they connect, and sometimes they miss each other. Maybe for a while, he is getting out of the hole because of her.

A disconnection scene: Beth comes in with this bottle of expensive cider, but completely missing each other, etc

Surreal things:

Zen gardening the grave!!!

Watering the grave!

Logan has the ability to tulpa, a skill that Evan wants.

Map on the wall – mapping out Olivia’s life. The information that is Olivia. From the Internet.

Contrasts of surreal beauty and Evan’s shit life

If Evan needs something from Logan, if he needs that skill to become Logan, that would create an actual conflict. Is there actual conflict in the play right now??

Conflict:

The impetus for Evan to alter Olivia’s state is maybe not because to change the memories he has of her to make him happy, but because of the amount of things that come from Logan and other avatars. It comes from a place of possessive behavior.   
  
That could jar Logan because he sees his god being corrupted. Logan’s world would be corrupted. Maybe he finally creates a avatar of himself.

Things that could happen to Logan after he is pushed? How can he self-actualize himself without leaving his house.

Evan and Logan being opposites and almost changing places. Or learning something from each other. Logan has to find her physical being?

What is Logan’s role in the story? How to make his role more prominent?

* He is helping to color the difference
* He represents an Other
* If Evan ends up taking that role, then that is when we don’t need Logan
* We need to see Logan being strong, or being used
* Logan doesn't have attachments in the world. That is why it would be interesting to see him cracked in another way. Something with human relationships between Logan/Evan Logan/Beth.
* Why don’t Evan and Logan meet more directly on the Internet? Should Logan as Olivia and Evan as Olivia has some kind of direct conversation on the Internet? Logan and Evan masturbation scene?
* Everyone wants Logan and Evan to meet.
* Logan should be pushed out of his comfort zone at some point.

Exploring the fact that there is a choice of exposure on the Internet.

Candie and Logan talking about sex earlier from the very first scene. Maybe Candie tries to help him by posing as Olivia, but Logan can be clearer about the fact that he does want to have sex with Olivia.

Candie: And do you ever desire a sexual relationship with Olivia?

Logan: No. Olivia doesn’t have a vagina.

Gives Candie a better role, too. Because she’s actually helping him.

Logan should not have cybersex to Olivia’s music, because it mixes up the physical world and the godly world. First form of intimacy for Logan.

Distinguish between masturbation and cybersex/skype sex. Maybe the sound of Olivia’s music wafting downstairs makes Logan uncomfortable

Do Evan, Olivia and Logan somehow all meet in the digital world? Will Logan have some kind of perspective about Evan getting lost in the ether, and that gets Logan to go outside. What if he sees Evan and Olivia leaves into the Ethernet, and then we shift from the beautiful surreal Internet world to the grim rainy Seattle city world.

Tulpas. You can dismiss them. Useful

The