

Dying Young in San Francisco  
An Interactive Play in Three Acts  
by Branson Stowell

Before the curtains raise and the lights go on, a Host comes out to greet the audience to explain how the play is going to work.

Lights dim. Host enters stage right or stage left.

Host

Welcome! Welcome everyone! What a beautiful crowd we have tonight. My, you're a great-looking bunch. You *must* be from Los Angeles or Greece or somewhere fabulous like that. You certainly can't be from San Francisco. Either way, welcome to our show. I'd like to thank our lovely hosts for allowing us to use this space and I'd like to thank you all for lending us your ears, eyes, and minds for this evening. You heard me correctly! *Your minds*. Yes, as you'll soon find out, this isn't like most plays that you've been to before. Sure there's a stage (*gestures stage*), there are lights (*lights flash*), and actors (*several actors come out to wave*) But when it comes to the story, we're going to need a little help from.... (*looking around the he audience*) you! (*picks stranger*) Yes! You ma'am/sir. You look like a good captain for this ship. Why don't you just follow me up here and I'll give you your lines (*hands them a thick book*) and there you go— I'm only kidding! The understudies would be *furious*. Anyway, we will need help from all beautiful people out there and, judging by this audience, that means everyone. We need your minds sharp, so please refrain from wine during the performance and/or just give it to me and I can hold it for you for a small sippage fee. Anywho! What do I need your minds for? You might ask. I assumed this was going to be the perfect opportunity for a ninety minute nap! You might think! Well, while we aren't going to force anyone to do anything, this play thrives off participation. The way this works is simple: there will be several moments in the play where a character may need to make a decision that will affect the course of the play. Then, you as an audience will be given a choice between two separate pathways which will affect this decision. I'll give you an example. Can I get some actors out here! (*Amy and Eric come out*). NO! Not you two— Oh, fine fine. Come back. Okay. And scene.

Amy

Welcome to the Tea Hut!

Eric

Thank you! I heard there was something different about this place.

Amy

Well you heard right sir. Here, our teas are known for their magical abilities. In fact we have two distinct flavors. One, our Black Tea, is fantastic because it gives you the ability of super productivity, completely erasing your sense of time! It's said to be perfect for studying or daunting work projects.

Eric

Sounds incredible!

Amy

Yes, but it causes you to speak in a foreign accent for several hours.

Eric

Oh, strange. And the other?

Amy

The other, our White Tea, we call the Alice in wonderland tea, because it fills your mind with endless creativity and inspiration.... But it also causes you to shrink to about half the size.

Eric

Ah, well after reviewing those options, I'm going to have to decisively go with—

*Eric turns towards the audience and Amy freezes. The host returns.*

Host

Hello? This is the part where you *participate*? Ah, how could I forget! Underneath your seat, you'll find a small parcel. Inside the parcel are different labels. You're welcome to open the first one - number one? It has the picture of a teabag above it. Now, be careful to NOT open any other sections of the parcel until you're told to do so. You will know when to open it because of this indicator over here and if that's not working, perhaps the fact that the actors are staring out at you - the audience - for help is a sign they might need some assistance. Now you should see two different "options". Choose one and hold it up! Go on! Everyone please. Take your time. Well not too long. You'll get about eight seconds to make a decision. Okay? Everyone chosen? Now we'll take a rough assessment of votes and --

### **Black Tea**

Eric

I'll take the Black Tea please!

*He drinks it and immediately dons a foreign accent.*

Eric

A'v got tae gae! A neit tae clean ma whole room an pick up a pint o milk before the lasses come around tonicht an A canny have the place a richt mess.

### **White Tea**

Eric

I'll take the white tea please.

*He drinks it. The lights go dim. Someone from offstage brings an oversize coat and he shrinks down.*

Eric

Wow! I feel like I could write Shakespeare. If I can make my way back up to my desk...

---

Host

Got it? Simple enough. Now again, this play requires a bit more dialogue with the audience, so please, interact with it. The decisions you'll be making may seem ordinary, but they will affect the story in ways you may not expect...

*The actors leave and the lights dim. The host comes center stage. The background begins to light up as we see a deep blue set piece representing the sky. Stars start to twinkle.*

Let yourselves be transported. Close your eyes and imagine you're in a far away land.... A land called... San Francisco. Yes. You may think you know this San Francisco, but it's a bit different than you'd expected. It's a city so alive and so dead at the same time. It's a city of dreams and of nightmares. Where life and death intertwine in this beautiful tango of time.

*As the lights from the stage bring the world of the play out of darkness, we see two men entering a diner and sitting at a booth. The host moves to stage left. The one closer to the audience, Everett, is stirring his latte, seemingly stuck in his thoughts. He's a raven-haired twenty-something of a sleight build. Next to him is his flamboyant friend, Troy of a similar age, but of a shorter and more average build.*

*Troy gets up and makes his way to a till which is positioned upstage, where the "Checkout" would be if this were an actual diner. He speaks to Amy, the only person seemingly in charge. The glow of the cheap lightbulbs hanging overhead give the room a gloomy look. There may or may not be a few other patrons sitting in the background. Amy seemingly replies to Troy's request, and gives him the signal to "hold on".*

It's a cool October evening. Just about eight forty five. There's a small diner north of here a bit, where people of all walks and ways come to gather when life has cast them away. The rain pours gently outside.

*She grinds a new pot of coffee. From offstage left, lights occasionally penetrate the room, in reference to the passing traffic outside. The window has a spattering of water droplets, indicating the poor weather outside. Center stage right, there's the entrance, a jukebox, a waste bin, a basket of treats for passerby's, and a few curious knick-knacks, including a small ceramic bird. The booth is set up at an angle to stifle seating.*

*It appears that Everett and Troy are seated as far downstage as possible, with at least two other seats further upstage. Stage left, there's a door to the kitchen as well as various different cooking and cleaning paraphernalia - a hot plate, a coffee pot, a grinder, a few cloths for cleaning.*

*Near the coffee pot is a Mystical or Spiritual book turned upside down to save a spot. Amy's phone is also plugged into this wall. There's a small hole where orders can be received and processed, but it seems like no one is on the other side. Light-hearted music plays throughout the restaurant. Everett goes to see what music they offer on the jukebox, but ends up returning to his seat shortly after.*

And on this night, some lost souls have indeed found their way into this place to ponder some of the greatest mysteries that life has never solved.

Troy  
Isn't coffee just *dirt water*?

Everett  
What?

Troy  
I mean it's like dirt that you pour water over.

Everett

It's not dirt Troy, it's ground up beans that are grown in exotic lands, shipped overseas, and roasted. There's a whole process involved! They have a destiny. Don't be so dismissive. *Dirt water*. Pff!

Troy

I want you to know it's deeply upsetting that coffee beans have lived a more elegant life and traveled more than I ever did.

Everett

Well, you did that to yourself! And more than that, you did it to both of us. You had to take me with you!

Troy

Are you still bitter about that?

Everett

What I'm still bitter about is that you took me away from the love of my life. We had plans! We were going to spend our lives together.

*Troy rolls his eyes.*

Troy

Oh, Everett, get over it already! How long has it been?

Everett

A month! Not even that long.

Troy

Everett! A month is *a lifetime*, let me tell you. That was the exact amount of time I was working at my last company and it sure as hell felt like forever!

Everett

That's because you're a terrible worker.

Troy

I'm not a terrible worker. I'm an under appreciated visionary! Those people didn't appreciate me enough. I was working on cutting edge technology, at the forefront of innovation.

Everett

I thought you were a salesman!

Troy

I was! I sold cryptocurrency wallets. Best damn digital wallet peddler west of the San Francisco Bay - and that's saying something.

Everett

What's a.... digital wallet?

Troy

Well it's a --- I mean, it's kind of a—. Listen, you probably wouldn't understand Everett. And that's no dig at you! But it's beyond you. You may have moved out here in search of artistic passion, but I moved out to cash in on the tech boom! You may have had dreams of creating masterpieces in art collectives, but I wanted to tap into my inner capitalistic wunderkind! I mean, I at least got my foot in the door with the big corporate giants, what did you ever do?

Everett

I'm a tax consultant.... I don't know where you're getting this art stuff.

Troy

Well, whatever. The point is, as frustrated as you are at your failed romance, think about the opportunities I'm missing out on!

Everett

Again, BECAUSE OF YOU! We could both be happy as a clam, but you and your sorry ass had to take us both down because you felt like a failure. And now you're sitting here, just spouting confidence! I don't understand you. I should have never moved next door....

*An Old Man walks in. The lights flicker a bit and the music changes to something a bit more contemporary.*

Troy

Everett, I'm sorry to say, but we don't get to choose our neighbors...

*He takes the seat next to Troy. Troy turns to him briefly.*

TROY: Good evening sir.

*Everett thinks about the phrase. The man doesn't even react. The man carries several foreign-language newspapers under his arm. He lets out a loud yawn.*

Everett

Yes. Actually, we *kinda do* get to choose our neighbors.

Old Man

Kafe, pliez.

*Amy nods and grabs the pot to refill all their glasses. The music seems to agitate Everett. He gets up and goes back to look at the jukebox again. Troy follows him over.*

Troy

Whatcha gonna play?

Everett

Does it really matter? Amy's the DJ anyway, right?

Troy

Should we play an old *narodnaya pesnya* for our friend here?

*Amy is reading from her book when she glances over. With her head slumped in her palm, she calls out to him.*

Amy  
Please don't scare the customers Troy.

Troy  
I'm not! I'm helping Everett.

Amy sets her book down temporarily to look at her phone. She scrolls through music

Amy  
What do ya wanna listen to Ev?

Everett  
Play that song. The one that pairs with rains like these. The one that takes me back to another time, another place. A world where I could go back and change one decision. One simple decision and my life would be completely different. Play the song that we danced to. The one where her—

*Amy cuts him off.*

Amy  
(*skeptically*) Mmmhmmm... Yeah yeah. I got it. The sad-sack song.

Everett  
HEY!

*Amy scrolls through her phone and taps on a song. A sad, slow-dancing, contemporary song plays. Troy throws his arms up in exhaustion.*

Troy  
Everett, you've gotta STOP with this sad-sack act! It's pathetic man!

*Everett ignores him and continues pouting over the jukebox. Troy puts his hand on Everett's shoulder and they begin to dance. There's a levity and humor to it as Everett knows the dancing will inject humor into a sad situation and defuse Troy's frustration.*

Troy  
Everett, be a man of action! Do things! Don't merely complain,.

*They dance around the stage. Amy glances over occasionally. Eventually, Everett dips Troy into a dramatic pose who knocks into the chair of the Old Man sitting next to them. The old man looks startled.*

Old Man  
(*to Amy*) Vat is DIS? Vat av yoo DONE? I KANNUT FOKUS WITH YORE EVIL MAGIC WOMAN...

*The Old Man quickly grabs his belongings and storms off stage.*

Amy  
(to Troy) WHAT DID I SAY?

Troy  
Amy— I'm helping Everett— he—

Amy  
No, that's it! OUT. Both of you—

Everett  
Amy, It was my fault. I— I got caught up and—

Amy  
I have one policy. It's a simple policy! DON'T SCARE the customers away! I don't think you both have come to realize this, but I have a life! I have things I *need* to pay for. I have to leave here and go home to a shitty apartment in the outer sunset on the far as hell other side of town just to wake up five and a half hours later to leave and do it again. I do that day after day after day and then i'll spend my elderly years marveling at my consistency. But until that happens, I don't want the stress of you two weighing down on me, so OUT!

Everett  
We're done dancing. I promise. No more customer interactions. Please don't make us leave.

Troy  
How can she?

Everett  
Don't push her. Please ignore him!

Troy  
No, like actually. What's she going to do?

Everett  
FINE. Kick him out. I don't care. Let me sip coffee in peace.

*Amy simmers off and backs away.*

Troy  
All I'm saying is, your heart is broken, you feel sad, but all you're doing is complaining! I think if you think about it enough you'll figure out a way to get better!

Everett  
I thought you were the ideas guy? Now I'm the ideas guy.

*Troy eyes Amy from across the room and makes a disgusted face. Everett slaps him on the arm.*

Troy

I'm merely lending you some of my genius. *I'm going for a smoke...*

*Troy exits stage left. Amy stares at Everett for a while before she begrudgingly refills his coffee cup. He returns to his chair.*

Amy

You need to talk to him. He's out of control.

Everett gets lost in thoughts. He gets up after a moment and makes his way downstage.

Everett

Honestly, Amy I hardly knew the guy! I just happened to live next to him. And why? I fell for the gorgeous apartment! That was my damn mistake. I thought to myself! Wow! An actual one-bedroom apartment in San Francisco? And it's only fifteen-hundred dollars? I mean that is absolutely outrageous, but simultaneously the best deal I've ever come across! And it was on the market for so long. It was too good to be true. Well, you know what? That's because of him! The guy living upstairs literally tanked the property value. Everyone who met him couldn't escape fast enough. He was loud, he would drink late into the evening, and he was heard crying to himself nearly every day at some point in time.

Amy

How did you not figure this out earlier?

*Amy looks over and checks his phone.*

Everett

I'm oblivious. The sad thing is: Gwen knew. God I miss her. She — she could tell from the minute that we moved in that something was wrong. She said she heard Grey's Anatomy re-runs on loop when she walked by his door.

Amy

Hey, don't knock Grey's! All I'm saying is that the guy is lost. Seems like he could use a little guidance, you know? He may end up destroying both of you...again.

Everett

Gwen could always talk to him... She was the only one that talked to him in our complex. She would know what to do with him if she were here!

Amy

Well bring her here! We need the help.

Everett

That's it!

*As soon as she said that, an olde man (Jim) and a woman (Alice) in large, stylish, but soaked jackets come into the diner and hang up their coats. They pay no mind to Everett and take a seat at the bar.*

Amy

*Look at em' Ev, what could they be so damn happy about-- (to the couple) Hello!*

*Amy returns to her duties at the counter. Everett grabs his coffee and makes his way downstage, wistfully staring out the window. Jim looks over a menu, slouched into the palm of his hand. Alice holds up her fingers in an attempt to solicit Amy's attention.*

Amy

Yes?

Alice

What do you recommend?

Amy

Recommend?

Alice

Yes. Like, I'm sort of weaning off of a keto thing. I'm officially slash unofficially gluten *resistant* and beans, nuts, pecans, and Jicima makes me bloated. Also, nothing... *bland*. I'm really against this whole new age, raw, granola, bland is the new black thing... You understand me?

*Amy just stares at her blankly before taking a rip off her e-cigarette.*

Amy

*How about Caesar Salad?*

Alice

*(pensive) Hmmm.... Could I do it without the croutons?*

Amy

Perfect! We're all out anyways.

*Amy heads offstage right towards the kitchen for a moment. Everett continues staring out the window. He looks back at Alice sitting at the counter. He proceeds to get up and walk around stage as he speaks, changing his attention from the audience to the patrons*

Everett

*(referring to Amy and Jim) How nice for them. Really. I mean it! I mean what a happy looking duo. I would've loved to take Gwen here. Oh, Gwen. If only Gwen were here. Just bring her here, she says. Well I sure as hell wish I could! She would've... well she would've hated this place. To be honest, I don't even like it here. It's like, one of those hip new, diners that's purposefully trying to be quaint and old in a hipster way! It just seems fake. Gwen would agree. (he chuckles) The funny thing is? I bet she's not even that far from here? We only lived about a mile away. You know what? Our favorite restaurant strip was just down the street from here. Sweet spots too. Even in the sourest of moods, she could be talked into going somewhere on that street. Ah, I just wish I could bring her here.... Just bring her here.... Just bring her here...*

*Everett begins looking behind him. He looks at Alice and Jim and looks back. He looks at Alice and Jim and back again. He repeats this cycle again and again and again. Troy reenters the scene to an energetic Everett.*

Everett

You want proactive? I'll show you proactive Troy!

*Everett goes back to his seat, flips his menu over and begins writing something on it in crayon. Troy follows him over.*

Troy

Ah, so my genius did rub off! You're welcome then!

Jim

Excuse me honey, I'm going to make a call.

*They sit at the booth. Jim makes an exit.*

Alice

*(to Amy)* Are you? You're not... Amy Vanderwick, are you?

Amy

Whose asking?

Alice

I— I heard you worked here, but I never assumed it would be true. You're the supernatural, right? The psychic?

Amy

I'm actually a medium sweetie. Very common mistake. I don't really do predictive "anything", so don't be thinking I can do anything that requires clairvoyance.

*Alice leans back in her chair to think for a moment. At the booth, Troy and Everett look over and Troy shakes his head. Everett smacks his arm.*

Alice

So, like horoscopes and that sort of thing?

Amy

NOPE NOPE! See, that's where I don't really— you really want to have your horoscope read?

Alice

No - sorry, I actually wanted to connect with someone. Someone who's gone now.

Amy

Well now you're speaking my language sister.

Alice

It's my.... *(lowered voice)* husband.

Amy

Ok. I think he just went that way...

Alice

No! Not him. He's my.... Well he's my new husband. The man I'm looking for passed away! Well... do you think you can help me?

*Moments later Jim returns. Alice quickly changes the subject.*

Alice

Oh, Jim! They always said San Francisco was cold! I never expected it to be like this?

*Jim looks perplexed.*

Jim

I mean, it's October dear... And it's not that cold out. I don't know what you expected.

Amy

*Your food will be out in a minute.*

Jim

Sorry I took so long, I was making sure we stuck to the itinerary. I checked in for our flights!

*Jim lets out a big yawn.*

Alice

Darling? Was that a yawn? It's barely past eight.

Jim

Indeed. I mean, Wine Country sure takes it out of ya if you know what I'm saying! *(to Amy)* You know what I'm saying!

*Amy rolls her eyes. Jim leans over and gives Alice a kiss. At the table, Troy and Everett weigh in on the encounter quietly. Amy delivers a round of drinks to the couple.*

Everett

Did you hear that?

Troy

That he was checking in for their flights?

Everett

No! The bit before that. With Amy!

Troy

Oh yeah. I mean, what is she expecting? Amy is no miracle worker. Besides - these people are BORING! I want to hear about your proactive plan.

Everett  
I want to help her.

Troy  
*Of course you do.* Everett, every time you intervene, you're messing with the flow of the universe. Do you understand? Can't you just daydream about doing shit instead of doing it?

Everett  
No! That's apart of my plan. If I help her, she'll help me.

*Everett stands up and heads over to Jim's seat subtly. Troy tries to grab his arm and calls after him. Alice turns around briefly and gives him a look before going back to her meal.*

Troy  
Everett! We JUST got in trouble for this

*Everett doesn't heed any of his warnings. He sneaks Jim's wallet from his back pocket and pulls out a card. He takes the card somewhere offstage. Then, he returns to the booth. Staring Troy right in the eyes, he pulls out the wallet and tosses it behind Jim. After a brief pause Jim looks around and goes to retrieve the wallet. He begins shuffling through it and panics.*

Jim  
Shit.

Alice  
What, what is it?

*Amy brings the food over.*

Amy  
Here you go, anything else?

Jim  
I don't suppose they still do the washing dishes thing for money?

Amy  
Even if we did do that, my friend, the only dishes I know of right now are yours and your lady's. Don't know that your dishes are worth nineteen dollars a wash.

Alice  
Jim? Did you lose something?

Jim  
Nineteen dollars? For what? God, this city just robs you! That's a damn crime. I'm sorry dear, but I'm going to make sure I didn't leave it outside.

Amy  
(staring at TROY) *No you didn't.*

*Troy let's out an annoyed gasp at the accusation she's made. Jim gets up from his seat and heads back offstage.*

Alice  
But Jim, your food!

*Everett leaves the booth to come and sit next to Alice, who doesn't react.*

Alice  
Oh well. Honestly, he's being ridiculous. I can cover for us if need be. I *hate* when he gets macho like this!

Amy  
(*to Alice*) So what was it you were on about? That thing about me.

*Alice leans in to her.*

Alice  
I need your help! Can you help me?

Amy  
I mean, it depends on what you're expecting. If you think I can snap my fingers and have some zombie version of your ex-husband—

Alice  
Eric.

Amy  
Right, Eric. Anyway, if you think I can resurrect Eric, you have another thing coming for you.

Alice  
No, no no! It's not like that. I just want to be able to... talk to him.

*Everett now seems fully tuned into their conversation, he starts nodding along. He manages to be subtle enough to not have Alice notice. Troy spreads out in the booth into a fully relaxed position.*

Amy  
What for?

Alice  
We have unfinished business.

Amy  
Seems pretty finished to me! Isn't that your new husband in there?

Alice  
Yes, but it's different. Eric and I— We were *soulmates*.

Amy  
Soulmates, eh?

Alice  
Yes. All I ever wanted was to tell him I love him. So, I need your help. Please! Can you help!

Amy  
*(takes drag on Juul)* I mean.... I can yes. If I can find him that is. Eric... what?

Alice  
Eric McAllister. Originally from Lincoln, Nebraska. Lived in Crocker-Amazon for years. We had a house in Portola after that.

Amy  
Ah, so this whole tourist thing is an act?

Troy  
*(to Everett)* Did we know Eric McAllister?

*Alice nods. Everett just shrugs and leans into the convo.*

Amy  
Ok. Eric McAllister. So is that the message?

Alice  
Is what? What the message?

Amy  
Just... You love him?

Alice  
Well I mean I'll have a lot more to say when I see him.

Amy starts choking from laughter.

Amy  
Unfortunately, that ain't how it works sweetheart.

Alice  
What do you mean?

AMY: Well, I'm the medium. That means that *I'm the one with the ability to see these people. I'm the one who connects to them, and I'm the one that communicates with them.*

Everett  
It's bullshit, right?

Alice  
But. How? So... I can't see him?

Amy  
Nope.

Alice  
But you can?

Amy  
Yes, unfortunately. It's a curse.

Alice  
So... you see dead people?

Amy  
All the time.

Alice  
*All the time? Like now?*

Amy leans close to her and looks back at Troy and Everett. She points a finger at Everett.

Amy  
There's one right next to you right now.

Alice leaps up from her chair. Jim re-enters the room at the exact wrong moment to find his wife paralyzed with fear.

Alice  
A what—???!!

Jim  
Honey! What's wrong?

Alice  
Oh nothing dear.

*Amy comes over to check on them.*

Amy  
You were saying?

Alice  
THANK YOU FOR THE LOVELY MEAL MADAM.

Amy  
Madam? Pfff.

Jim

Listen, Alice baby, I've got news that isn't exactly going to surprise you. My old rich friend, the wallet, has appeared to skip out on the bathroom visit. So I'm stuck looking even further back for it. I think I'm going to go back to the hotel and make sure I didn't leave it there, so I know before our flight!

Alice

Really Jim, if you are tired, just go to bed. I can handle this. I have my own card.

Jim

Thanks for understanding. I'm sorry! I love ya!

Jim runs out the door. Troy re-enters and pulls out a notepad. He starts to jot down some notes. Alice tries to eat her meal in peace, but keeps looking to her left towards a very amused Everett. She looks over at him several times. At first he's annoyed.

Everett

Yes?? Can I help you?

Alice goes back to eating her meal.

Alice

I'm so sorry.

Everett

It's no--- wait, you can see me?!

Amy and Troy rush over surprised!

Amy

You can see him?!

Alice

Yeah, of course. He's got that ghoulish complexion and that sort of somber look weighing his face down - I could tell he was a ghost from miles away.

Amy

That's just his look.

Everett

CAN YOU HEAR ME?

Alice Um... I think my brother in Cape Town heard you! I'm having a hallucination, my hearing is crystal.

Amy, Troy, and Everett all look at each other mystified by what they're seeing in front of them.

Alice

What? Everyone can see him, can't they?

Amy  
No. And trust me, plenty of people wish they couldn't.

Alice  
I don't understand.

Troy  
Looks like you've got some psychic in you.

Alice doesn't respond.

Troy  
Excuse me, ahem! I said: LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE GOT SOME PSYCHIC IN YOU!

Alice doesn't respond still.

Amy  
I don't... I don't think she can see you...

Troy takes a moment to wave his hand in front of her face to see if she responds. He tries a few things.

Troy  
That's tragic.

Everett  
I know, I'm sorry--

Troy  
Well, I mean she's the one you should feel sorry for. She doesn't get to witness any of this pure glory.

Alice  
Who are... who are you talking to?

Amy  
The ghost.

Alice  
I thought *he* was the ghost.

Everett  
I am. Not a ghost! Just dead.

Troy  
Hey!

Alice  
Well then who are *you* talking to?

Everett  
Troy!

Alice  
Who's Troy?!

Amy  
The annoying one.

Troy  
See if I tip you again!

Alice  
Wait, what is going on here? Please, for the love of everything holy will SOMEONE tell me what's going on here.

Amy jumps over from behind the counter, dragging her Joule with her. She stands in between Everett and Alice. She grabs their hands and places them against one another. She then grabs their heads and does it again. She's amazed. Everett and Alice dust themselves off. Annoyed at her actions.

Everett  
So, you're not psychic?

Alice  
What? No! I mean... I always felt like there was a ghost of a baker living in my childhood home that would come and eat all our cookies and baked goods at night. I even held a seance to try and communicate with it, asking it to please replace some of the goods it would take. Then one night, I found my Dad passed out in the kitchen in his boxers with cookie crumbs all over the floor.

Everett, Troy, and Amy all look at each other.

Everett  
*So, you're not a psychic?*

Alice  
NO! If I was, do you think I would be here trying to talk to her. (getting frustrated) *You're not a ghost?!*

Everett  
I'm dead! I am a dead person! You are communicating with a dead person, but... do you see that guy outside (*she shakes her head*)? For whatever reason, I'm the only dead person you can see.

Amy

It appears that you may have powers similar to myself... except they only connect you with Everett, which is the equivalent of buying a TV that only show C-SPAN.

Everett

Come on Amy! At least I'm the exciting part of C-SPAN.

Alice

There are other dead people nearby?

Troy

YES! Ugh. Why are we still talking to her?

Everett

Yeah, my friend Troy is right here.

Alice

You're messing with me.

Alice begins to put her hands out to feel for Troy. She puts her hands all over him as he starts to run away and she chases him.

Amy

I'm afraid they're not. You see dear, there are two worlds. There's the world of the living... our world, and then there's, well, their world. And certain people, like myself and a certain number of other individuals are able to see and communicate with these people. We sort of serve as the de facto bridges between their world and ours. Usually, us mediums have this ability to connect with all of them, some stronger than others. Some figures are more (*jabbing Troy*) more vibrant than others. Evidently, you have some kind of smaller bridge of link to Everett, and only Everett. I don't know why that is, but you are certainly seeing and feeling ghosts.

Alice

(*her hands on his face*) I think I can feel him. Troy!

Troy

Oh, you think?

Everett

(chuckling) Put your hands a little lower.

Alice

Can you feel him?

Troy moves and socks Everett in the arm.

Everett

Yes... (rubs sore arm)

Alice

Why can I see you and no one else?

Everett

I don't know! I didn't even believe in ghosts until I became one.

Amy

Don't look at me! I don't understand most things in this world.

*Alice goes to lean against the booth. The phone rings and Amy goes to answer it. Troy pulls Everett over for a second.*

Troy

What are you doing?

Everett

I have a plan.

Troy

Yes, I've been waiting to hear this genius plan for damn near ten minutes now.

Everett

I was thinking—

*He notices that Alice is right there.*

Everett

Could you give us a minute please?

Alice

Be my guest!

*Alice slips away to look at the music selections.*

Everett

I want Gwen back, right?

Troy

Correct.

Everett

And Gwen is alive and I'm dead, correct?

Troy

Yes, the principal problem.

Everett

My plan is to convince someone to kill Gwen so that she can also be dead and join me once again!

*Troy stares at him blankly.*

Troy

So, murder? You want to murder your fiancée?

Everett

No! God no! That's horrific. Don't speak like that. Besides, you and I already know, we can't alter fates here. Our ability to actually interact with the living is the equivalent of a strong breeze. But, someone else from that world - now that's a different story!

Troy

Her? The lady who can't see me? The one who looks like she cries at animated kitten movies and avoids taking public transit at night? You're going to convince her to murder someone.

Everett

Would you stop using that word! That's the wrong word! I prefer reunite!

Troy

She's not going to do it Everett! She's not. Just because she's the one non-medium you can talk to, doesn't necessarily mean that she's putty in your hands.

Everett

No, but she wants something. She wants to speak to this Eric McAllister.

Troy

Yeah, and Amy's got that covered.

Everett

Amy's going to do what Amy always does and pretend that she's talking to Eric, collect a fee and leave. We can *actually* find him and talk to him.

Troy

There are *a lot* of dead people in this city Everett. I don't want to sift through a million people looking for one.

Everett

I feel for her. She wants to connect, like I do. And I think she and I could help each other out!

*Troy looks over at Alice who's innocently sifting through songs on the machine. She giggles at a few of them.*

Troy

Good luck!

Everett

I need your support on this! You can find anyone in this cities. You have all those dead former clients who have connected you to this vast market of people!

Troy  
What? No! This is your stupid thing! Don't drag me into this!

Everett  
I wouldn't be there if it weren't for you.

*Amy returns. Alice goes to pay the bill.*

Alice  
So, you can help me find Eric?

Amy  
Sure kid. It'll cost you though.

Alice  
How much?

Amy  
Let's say 200. Since you're a friend.

Alice  
I--- Well, if that's what it is.

*Everett bursts over.*

Everett  
I'll do it for free!

Alice and Amy  
You will?!

Amy  
Now, now, Everett! I don't think you need to be---

Everett  
I'll do you one better, I will find him and be your personal liaison.

Amy  
Everett? What's gotten into you?

Troy  
Everett as the genius idea of convincing this girl to KILL Gwen so that he can be back with her!  
In exchange, he's going to find Eric.

Amy  
Everett! Are you--- What's gotten into you?

Alice  
What? What's going on?

Everett  
Listen, I think we should talk outside.

Amy  
He's---

Everett  
Trying to help you!

Amy  
I--- Troy! Talk some sense into this man. I can't believe this!

Troy  
I thought *I was* the crazy one Amy.

*Amy looks flustered. She takes a strong hit off her Joule.*

Everett  
Look Amy, if I can't find Eric tonight, then you can help Alice, but in the meantime, I think you should give me a shot. Aren't you on shift here anyways?

Amy  
(*sighing*) You're crazy as hell. But, whatever kid. Shoot your shot. I think you've lost your damn mind.

Alice  
So, you.... You'll really help me?

Everett  
Yes! I just need a small favor from you as well. Come on outside, I'll tell you about it.

*Alice puts on her coat and begins to make her way out. Everett leads the way.*

Alice  
Bye Amy! I'm sure I'll see you soon.

Amy  
Oh, I'm not missing this. I'll be seeing you very soon darling.

*Alice and Everette exit. Amy and Troy both take shots she pours for them.*

Amy  
You told him to be proactive!

Troy  
I gotta give him credit, he came up with a plan!

Amy

How's he expecting this to work? Even if she falls for it, he has to find Gwen AND this Eric fellow.

Troy

Well he keeps freaky amounts of tabs on Gwen at all times. And as for Eric? Well... I might help him (*takes another shot*).

Amy

What? Why? That's not fair! You can find anyone!

Troy

I know, I know. It's annoying. But he pulled the whole guilt card on me and I— I— I caved! What can I say?

Amy

Stand up for yourself man! You're supposed to be the stubborn one! You're the ideas guy, remember?

Troy

I know, I know. But I have to at least support him in this. Even though I have a strong idea that this *isn't going to* turn out well.

*Slowly fade lights to black.*

---

## Scene 2

*Everett and Alice stroll around outside. The background is a simple street scene with a single lamppost near center stage. He shakes off his umbrella.*

Everett

Looks like the rain finally gave.

Alice

Perfect timing too. I think the streets are prettier when they're all wet like this. Eric loved that about this city.

Everett

What happened to him, if you don't mind me asking?

Alice

He caught a horrible sickness. It wasn't cancer, but it might as well have been. I think it, combined with his heavy self-medication of drinking all contributed to his very early demise. He was a real social animal. Worked in finance, and let it waste away on his personal pain relief. It's a shame too because I was in Alaska at the time working on an animal research project, so I— I couldn't be there for him. Not in the way I should have been.

Everett

Oh man, I'm so sorry.

Alice

So you can see how... how I'd be eager to connect. What about you? What happened to you?

*They come to a bench, where Everett takes a deep sigh and takes a seat. She comes around and joins him.*

Everett

You remember my friend? Troy?

Alice

Yes? The invisible one I can't see?

*As Everett tells the story, Troy comes back for a bit of a re-enactment. No actual furniture is needed, but for comic effect, it appears like a projected dream off to the side.*

Everett

Yeah, that's the one! He was my neighbor when I moved into my last apartment with my girlfriend Gwen. Seemed like a completely normal guy. Noisy at times, but I never much interacted with him. Well, one day a few months ago, he got laid off from his most recent job. I guess he was kind of awful at his position. Anyhow, it definitely affected him. You can't hear him, but the guy basically moved out here because he thought he was the next Elon Musk. Nevertheless, he was horribly depressed. So much so that it made him hate life. Well one day, I

was coming home for a quick nap, because I'd slept terribly the night before and also Gwen wanted me to bring her water bottle to her after work. Well, I go inside, take a nap, get the bottle. As I'm walking down my steps, Troy decides it's an opportune moment to take his life. He jumps out the window and hits us both just the right way so our heads smack against the chairs. And voila! Dead as a doorknob. The next thing I know, I'm here... watching my own funeral.

*The dream sequence dissipates. Alice stands up and hugs Everett.*

Alice

I'm... I'm so sorry Everett!

Everett

Hey, you didn't do anything! The real shame is, we were engaged to be married in a few months time.

Alice

I wondered how soon it was supposed to be... Have you... visited her since?

*Everett looks coy at this.*

Everett

Well, I'm a bit ashamed to admit, but - up until about two weeks ago - every single day!

Alice

Well, how could you not? I'm sure that Eric spent a great deal of time to find me. At least you knew where she was.

*Everett pivots. He grabs her hand and invites her up for conversation.*

Everett

Listen, Alice. I'm going to help you find Eric. I think we're both in a similar position right now and can be really beneficial to one another.

Alice

You... you want me to find Gwen for you?

Everett

Yes.

Alice

And you.. you want me to pass on a message to her?

Everett

Yes! well, kind of.

Alice

What?

Everett

I want you to help reunite us more literally.  
Alice  
What are you saying?

Everett  
I'd like you to kill her... if possible...

*At this request, Alice starts backing away slowly. She thinks the whole thing is abhorrent. She looks around to make sure she's safe.*

Alice  
You- you- you're no ghost! You're a demon! You're some kind of demonic illusion sent to convince me to murder an innocent woman!

Everett  
Listen Alice I— ow, ow!

*She starts swatting at him, he backs away, being buffeted by her strikes.*

Alice  
Demons can't feel!

Everett  
Yes! I can feel you. Ouch!

Alice  
Well good! You deserve to be punished. Where's my cross....

*Alice examines her bag in search of a cross. Troy comes strolling onto the scene.*

Everett  
Alice, this is—- oh, look who made it?

Troy  
Ah! I see you've told her your plan.

Alice  
You're not tricking me, demon.

Everett  
She's taking a little extra convincing.

Troy  
I see,

Alice  
Who is your friend huh?

Everett

*(gestures to him)* He's right here!

*Alice begins smacking him too. She pulls out a cross and begins whacking him with it.*

Troy

Ouch! Ouch! Everett!

Everett

Stop! Alice, stop!

*Everett grabs her by the shoulders and looks her in the eyes.*

Everett

Alice, I'm not a demon. I'm a human, just like you, who had the love of his life forcefully taken away from him prematurely. I just want to have her again.

Alice

You're asking me to *kill* someone.

Troy

Wow, she's a thinker....

Everett

I know. I wish there were a better way. I wish you could just take me with you, but you can't. I hate that this is the way it's supposed to be. I hate it. But think about it.... If you weren't already with Jim... wouldn't you have wanted to reconnect with Eric? Knowing that there is a life after death.

Alice

I certainly wouldn't have DIED to do it.

*Everett turns to Troy for support as she picks up all of the things that fell out of her purse in the process of hitting them.*

Everett

Help me out here!

Troy

The way I see it Everett, you have two choices. *(He picks a green leaf off of a tree and a red leaf off of a tree. He holds up the green leaf first)* Either you tell the truth. That you're a completely selfish person whose only leverage is that you're the only one who can really ever connect her with Eric. Or *(holding up red leaf)*, you lie. You tell her that you were kidding and that you meant everything metaphorically.

### **Green Leaf**

Everett

Here's the deal Alice. I know it's impossible for you to understand this, but Gwen isn't happy right now. It's been a while since I've been gone and she's gotten worse with each passing day. I know what I'm doing may seem very selfish right now. Perhaps even downright cruel. But,

once she knows that I'm waiting, she's going to thank you! She might even do it herself once you explain that this is how it works.

Troy  
You went with the truth, huh?

Alice  
I'd rather not be involved. Even if what you're saying is true.

Everett  
Alice, please. Don't you want to speak to Eric? Don't you want him to know how you felt?

Alice  
I will wait until Amy is free!

Everett  
Amy will scam you! She's lies to people all the time to take their money. I can give you exactly what you want plus PROOF. So, come on. Whaddya say?

Alice  
I'm not going to— —

Everett  
Just—- let's connect with her first! See how she's doing? Maybe you can hear it from the horses mouth herself? What do you say?

### **Red Leaf**

Everett  
Alice! You didn't think I was serious, did you? Come on! I don't want you to literally kill her. I want you to connect us. I need her to have a rejuvenation, a rebirth! In order for that to happen, I need her to have a metaphorical death. Then and only through your assistance, can we reconnect.

Troy  
Nice. The whole metaphorical lie bit. Classic.

Alice  
Everett, you just said earlier you wanted me to kill her.

Everett  
That was all a turn a figure of speech! You didn't get that? It's not— I wouldn't ever want harm to befall her. You heard the way I was talking about her. I just need you to get close to her. To be nice to her. "Kill" her with kindness so to speak.

*Alice looks extremely suspicious.*

Alice  
A figure of speech? Do you think I'm stupid?

Everett

No! I don't. I'm the stupid one for using that phrase. I fumbled my words and I said things I didn't mean. Alice... I— I just need you to get close to her. Serve as my mouthpiece. You help me and I'll help you! What do you say?

---

Alice

Well. I mean, I have to say, you've shaken my trust in you... severely. And I really don't want to help you.... But I came to San Francisco with a mission. I wanted to find Eric. And if that means finding your poor ex-fiancee, then I suppose I will have to play along.

Troy

IT WORKED?!

Alice

But I'm watching you! Both of you!

Troy

Uh huh. Well, Everett! I think our works cut out for us. Tell her we found Eric.

Everett

You found Eric?

Alice

He found Eric?

Troy

Well, no.. I haven't... I was making that up Everett. We just tell her we're finding Eric. Then we pretend. For all she knows I'm Eric.

Everett

We're not cutting corners on this one Troy. This woman is on a mission and I'm stopping at nothing until she's reunited.

Troy

*Really?*

Alice

What's going on?

Everett

He's... dragging his feet. He's being lazy.

Alice

Oh come now. Isn't he the reason you're here? He should be jumping at any opportunity for redemption.

Troy

YES. I KNOW. The GUILT GRAVY goes on THICK. You told her Everett?!

Everett

Yes! I told her. Of course I told her. Everyone needs to know that you screwed up. You owe me one.

Troy

Everett, come on! When I said, come up with a plan, I meant to move on! Find your niche! I'm looking too. We didn't have the greatest purposes in life. I was a miserable salesman of a hip, tech product, and you were a... like... aspiring banjo player, who hated going to work everyday.

Everett

I was a tax consultant and I actually liked it.

Troy

Careful Everett, we want her to trust us. She needs to know we're honest,

Alice

Not to interrupt your very inclusive conversation, but I'd like to know where I can find Eric.

*Everett and Alice both stand side by side staring at Troy. Alice looks confused.*

Alice

What are you— What are you doing?

Everett

He's right there. I'm just doing the thing where I put a lot of pressure on him with us both looking at him.

Alice

Right.

Troy

Okay, I will make some calls. Got it? But after this, I want no more guilt... okay? Can we agree to that? If I help you... you free me from this feeling of unending shittiness?

Everett

Fine, I won't mention it again.

Alice

Well... what did he say?

Everett

He agreed!

Alice

Perfect! So... now what?

Everett

In order for this to work... We need to find Eric you need to get a bottle of booze. Preferably straight Gin. Sloe gin if you can find it. But Hendrick's will do just fine if you can't

Alice

What? What's that for?

Troy

I'm good boo, but thanks.

Everett

Not for you. *(to Alice)* Go to the store down the street and if you have extra time, head back to Amy's. We'll come get you when we find out more.

Alice

Wait— okay. Are you sure you'll find him in time? I leave tomorrow you know.

Everett

Troy's the best damn ghost hunter I know.

Troy

When you put it that way, it sounds weird...

Alice

Okay. Fine.

*Alice comes up to Everett's face.*

I don't trust you ONE BIT... but... thank you.... For your help.

*Alice exits stage left*

Troy

What, what WHAT are we doing?

Everett

We're reuniting lost loves. Me and Gwen. Her and Eric.

Troy

But what about me?

Everett

We're making use of you! You always felt under-utilized. Isn't that the whole reason you jumped off our building? And guess what? Now you're pivotal! What more could you want?

Troy

I don't know! I don't have a purpose Everett. That's why I'm struggling with this whole venture in the first place.

Everett  
I'm giving you a purpose! Now who do we call.

Troy  
I don't know anything about the guy, do you? How am I supposed to find him?

Everett  
I— I heard he worked in baking or banking?

Troy  
Baking or banking?

Everett  
Yeah one of those.

Troy  
Well I'm gonna go out on a limb and say it's "banking", because I've never heard the phrase, "I work in baking" or "I'm in the baking business".

Everett  
What about bakers?

Troy  
Bakers don't even say that! Okay, so he's a finance type.

Everett  
She said he was real social!

Troy  
Okay, I know I guy... Tony. He's hob-nobbed with all these big-money types. I can give him a call and maybe he'll be at this place.

Everett  
Okay! Cool.

Troy  
Come on, let's get walking though. If he lets us in, we should at least be close to him if possible.

*Everett and Troy begin to walk towards the exit. Everett throws his arm around him.*

Everett  
Now that is the gumption you've been bragging about all along. I love to see it!

Troy  
Ugh. I wish we still could use Uber. I can't deal with your smug face for the next six blocks, I'll collapse.

Everett  
As long as it's not on me.... again.                   **End Act 1.**

## Act 2

### Scene 1

*The curtains rise, the lights reveal a cute little streetside diner. The stage is arranged as such that the stage right third comprises a cutout of the restaurant. In that cutout is a small table for two with a candle on it. At the table sits Gwen, Everett's girlfriend, alone wearing a black dress, looking a bit melancholic. The nighttime street scene looks like it extends far to the back. As if they're coming up a hill in the distance, Everett and Troy emerge.*

Troy  
Are you using Google Maps?

Everett  
No. Mine doesn't work.

Troy  
Mine either. Damn. Being without navigation is probably going to make this whole afterlife thing a lot longer. Also Uber.

Everett  
Hey, all this walking is good for your legs!

*Troy puts his notepad down dramatically.*

Troy  
This isn't even where the club is! It's by the waterfront! *(pointing to notepad)*

Everett  
Yeah, yeah. This is on the way though.

Troy  
Everette, your sense of direction is not aided by—

*Troy notices the restaurant front and sees Everett with his eyes glued to the windows.*

Troy  
So THIS is what this was about?

Everett  
Do you think she can see my face imprint?

Troy  
No and if she did it would inspire her to never communicate with you again.

Everett  
What if I breathe my name on the glass, like this?

*Troy yanks him away.*

Troy

Okay creepy. Are you trying to scare her?! That's what any grieving lover wants to see two days after their loved one dies.

Everett

What is she doing here so quickly? I mean, I know she has to eat, but why's she dressed up so nice? Can't she look more sad?

Troy

I think she's always looked sad. What, do you want her to be crying in public?

Everett

Yes! How do we make that happen?

Troy

OK psycho, come on.

Everett ignores him and opens the door. The open door catches Gwen's curiosity as she can't see any distinct cause. Troy slams it shut.

Troy

Hey! What do you think you're doing?

Everett

Me? I just told you I was going in there! (*He pulls it open*)

Troy

And do what exactly? (*closes it*)

Everett

... (*opens it*) Figure out why she's not at home mourning!

Troy

Yeah, you're making this whole thing a lot about you (*closes it*).

Everett

Cause I'm the one who died! (*opens*)

Troy

And yet, a lot of people are affected! Not just you (*slams the door shut*).

Everett

But I miss her! (*he pulls the door open, Troy grabs the other handle*)

Troy

Well, you're going to see her shortly if you stick to your plan!

Everett

I just want to listen to her.

Troy

I thought you're going to kill her!

Everett

I am! Well- I won't.

*During their exchange, the door continues to swing wildly. Gwen, a bit freaked out, calls over her waiter, Bill.*

Gwen

Excuse me, but I think your door is broken. The...wind keeps blowing it open.

Bill

Very sorry madam. Allow me.

*Bill goes over and both Troy and Everett drop the handle. As Bill pokes his head outside, he puts his arm out. Troy and Everett begin blowing on him to simulate wind. He really forces them to blow a lot. He returns inside.*

Bill

Well, I think it's more of a light breeze, but unfortunately it's wafting the scent of one of those hot dog stands along with it!

*Troy wipes hot dog crumbs from his face. Everett glues his face to the door.*

Everett

Do you see it? I can't tell if she's wearing the rose necklace I gave her last Christmas or that silly daisy one her sister got her! I have to go in and find out! Can you see it?

*Troy looks inside*

**Rose**

Troy

Yes— I see it

Everett

Ok, I'll be right back! Go get Alice and tell her we've found Gwen!

*Everett runs inside. Troy yells after him.*

Troy

But! But! I— she can't see me!

Everett

Get Amy too then!

Troy  
Ugh, fine! Hurry your ass up though,

*Inside, Everett quietly sits in the chair next to Gwen. He looks at her longingly. As he reaches out to touch her hand, she looks at the menu.*

Everett  
What are you doing here Gwenny?

*She collapses into her palms. She can't hear him but their thoughts are in sync.*

Gwen  
What am I doing here? I should just go. I can't be out in public right now.

Everett  
I know you haven't fed Copernicus... You always forget.

Gwen  
I feel like I'm forgetting something too.... Ugh! Maybe I'm just hungry.

Everett  
He sure is... At this rate, I'll be seeing him before I see you.

Gwen  
Everett....

Everett  
Yes! Can you hear me Gwen?

Gwen  
... would've remembered what it was. He had a memory like...

Everett  
... an elephant.

Gwen  
... I don't actually remember what he had a memory like, but something with a really good memory.

Everett  
Aw babe. I wish you could see me.

Gwen  
I wish you were here.

Everett  
Every day.

Gwen  
Every minute.

Everett  
Every second.

Gwen  
I know it seems silly to talk to you know... Knowing where you are... or rather, not knowing where you are. But you— you were my best friend! You were always there for me. You got me. We had this amazing ability to —

Everett  
Riff off each other.

Gwen  
—Remember random celebrity couplings.

Everett  
That too, I guess. I suppose that kind of goes with what I said anyways.

Gwen  
If this is how hard it's going to be... then, well then I don't know how I can do it.

Everett  
I know babe, but don't worry! We're going to be together soon, don't you worry. It's going to be... well it's going to be just like this. Except you'll be listening to me. Well, one can only hope. Either way, it's just going to be you and—

Gwen  
Dante!

*All the sudden another man comes into the restaurant and is escorted by the waiter. Everett looks visibly pissed off. The man is dressed in a nice suit, wearing a scarf and tussling his hair.*

Dante  
I'm sorry I'm late. Traffic was murder going through downtown.

Everett  
Dante?! What the hell are you doing here?

Gwen  
That's okay. I wasn't feeling that hungry anyways.

Dante  
No, no, no. You have to eat! That's why we're doing this because we need to get you out of the house and get you fed.

Gwen  
You don't have to take care of me, Dante. I'll be okay.

Dante

Gwen, I'm a doctor. I'd be breaking my hippocratic oath if I did anything *but* take care of you.

Everett

Yuck. Please go back to Berkeley from whence you came.

Gwen

I— I should leave. I don't know that I'm up for this...

Everett

Tell him Gwen! You need to grieve.

Dante

Please Gwen, it's just dinner. If for no other reason, do it *for me*. I had to perform two life-saving procedures today to save the lives of these dying girls.

Everett

Where were you when I needed that? Huh?

Gwen

Really? Oh, please sit.

*Gwen gestures to sit in the chair that Everett is sitting in.*

Everett

Sorry bud, seat's *tak*—

*Dante actually proceeds to sit his entire body on Everett who lets out an exasperated sigh. Everett is stuck. Gwen notices his weird posture. Bill returns to take their order.*

Gwen

Are you alright?

Everett

NO!

Dante

I think so... why?

Bill

Ready to order?

Gwen

Well, it's just that you're *squatting above your chair*. It doesn't look terribly comfortable.

Bill

Our special tonight is a New England lobster bisque—

Everett  
(*struggling to speak*) She hates bisque...

Dante  
Hey, you're from Maine, right? That sounds good to me. We'll try two of those.

Everett  
Idiot! Now, get off of me.

Bill  
What about to drink? A bottle of wine for the table?

Gwen  
Are you— are you sure you're okay?

Dante  
What about a bottle? Are you up for it?

Everett  
NO! SHE'S TOO SAD TO—

Gwen  
I guess...Are you?

Dante  
I'm up for anything!

Everett  
Except standing!

Bill  
Evidently!

Everett  
FOR THE LOVE OF—

Dante  
We'll get a bottle of your Chardonnay please.

Bill  
Right away sir.

Everett  
STAND UP!

Bill  
Would you like another chair sir?

Dante  
No, why?

Gwen  
See what I was saying Dante? You're kind of *squatting*.

Dante  
Oh, I see! No, no thank you—

Everett  
WHAT?!!

Dante  
I think I'll be okay.

*Bill leaves and Everett tries to squirm free.*

Dante  
You see, I think physiologically, what's happening is that my hamstrings and quadriceps have completely stabilized after finding joint stability along my patella. It's just what happens when you have strong legs you stand on all day!

Everett  
OH GIVE ME A BREAK.

Gwen  
Well, suit yourself then.

*Bill comes back to pour drinks. Outside, Troy and Amy and Alice return.*

Troy  
This is the place! (Amy nods).....Tell her this is the place.

Amy  
This is the place.

*Alice goes up and looks through the window.*

Alice  
Wait... is that Everett under that... man?

Amy  
Yep.

Alice  
Wow! That looks—

Amy  
Unsurprising.

Troy  
I knew it from living next to them for so long. I could smell it on him.

Alice  
I was going to say painful.

Troy  
Eh, depends on how you look at it. Could be enjoyable!

Alice  
And is that the girl?

Troy  
Yes.

*There's a long silence.*

Troy  
AHEM, YES! Dammit!

Amy  
Fine, yes! Geez man! I only have a fifteen minute break and I'm spending it here.

Troy  
TRUST ME, I don't want you here either, but this idiot!

Amy  
Let's not call her an idiot!

Alice  
Call who an idiot?

*Back inside, the wine is poured and a glass clink gathers the attention of the outsiders. Everett looks like he's going purple from a lack of breath.*

Dante  
I'd like to propose a toast—

Gwen  
Oh no, Dante, you shouldn't—

Dante  
Should I stand up?

Everett  
YES, YES DANTE!

*Dante stands up and raises his glass! Everett quickly scrambles away, catching his breath on the floor.*

Dante

To Gwen! You've fallen on rough times. You live in a dark world right now. But there are good people around you. And no matter how dark your thoughts get, I want you to know how *brehtaking (deep exhale from Everett) you are* both inside and out. I will be here for you no matter what. I know that sometimes I can be a bit heavy, but just know it's because I care about you.

*Gwen smiles genuinely. She stands and clinks his glass.*

Gwen

Thank you for getting me out of the house Dante. I owe you one.

Dante

How about next time, I pick the place?

Everett

*(catching breath)* Next time?

Gwen

Sure.

*They sit down and Everett stands up. He angrily points a hand.*

Everett

YOU SUCK DUDE! I don't care that you're a *Doctor!* What kind of a sleazebag offers to take a guys wife out for dinner THIS CLOSE TO HIS DEATH? Ever heard of a grace period.

Dante

I have to say, I didn't mean to make you go out tonight as I'm sure you're still struggling... But I figured you'd want some company.

Gwen

You were always the nicest guy in Berkeley—

Dante

I'd like to think I still am! *(they laugh)* And, just so that you know, I thought Everett was a great dude.

Everett

DUDE?! YOU tiny, little, spineless, bottom-dwelling—

Bill

Lobster is here to steal your heart madam!

*Bill places the bisques in front of them.*

Everett

Oh yeah, she hates Lobster bisque too, you stupi—

Gwen

You know... normally I *hate* Lobster Bisque, but I think with the way I'm feeling right now... It's nice to have a taste of home.

*From outside, everyone else just cringes watching.*

Alice

Rough.... What is she doing with that guy?

Troy

They're just friends from college... Everett overreacts about these things.

Amy

He's a babe — she's trading up!

Troy

Amy, even though it's true, we can't say that!

Alice

Well, I mean he is handsome, successful, and... living!

Amy

The total package.

Troy

Okay yes, he's a complete babe. I want to make a sweater out of his chest hair

Alice

He's got very lovely hair as well

Troy

I just said that.

Amy

Not him you children. The hottie in the vest!

Troy

*The waiter?*

Alice

Oh, Amy! That's— well I... I see that too.

Gwen

Wow, this bisque is delicious.

Everett  
What?

Bill  
Anything else?

Amy  
Where do I start?

Troy  
Ew.

Alice  
Isn't your break over yet Amy?

Dante  
You look absolutely beautiful by the way.

Everett  
Are you kidding me? That's it.

Gwen  
Thank you. You clean up well yourself Dante.

*Bill leaves. Everett heads for the exit.*

Amy  
Alright, my show's over.

*Amy leaves. She pats Troy on the shoulder on her way out, looking over for Bill as she goes.*

Alice  
Wait! How will I understand... him.

Troy  
I'm literally going to flick your head in morse code.

Alice  
I swear if you mess with me, I will drown myself, just to come out of the sea and kick your ass.

*Troy sizes her up. They see Everett approaching and back up into the space stage left. They act innocent to what they've just witnessed.*

Troy  
I'll take those odds.

Everett comes outside and collapses into Alice.

Alice  
Hey... that looked rough.

---

### **Daisy**

Troy  
It's not the Rose you dummy. It's the daisy.

Everett  
Come on, let me just check it out.

Troy  
Everett... she can't hear you! What are you going to do? Go in there and move some chairs around? Draw your name out in her spaghetti? You're going to drive her to the brink of madness? Then she'll end up killing herself!

Everett  
...You... you really think so?

*Everett backs away from the restaurant. Troy puts his hand on his shoulder.*

Troy  
No. Can you imagine explaining that to her once she gets here?

Everett  
Well we'd blame it on you of course.

Troy  
ME? You know I have a reputation to uphold to. I can't just be fodder for every bad decision you make!

Everett  
Yeah, well you're also the reason I'm stuck in this mess.

Troy  
Listen. You and I both know that I didn't mean to kill you. If anything, you should apologize to me for attempting to stop me.

Everett  
You know good and damn well that's not what I was doing! I was leaving my house. How was I supposed to know that the man living above me was an emotional wreck, bound for self-destruction at all costs?

Troy  
That's because you were too self-centered to listen! Didn't you ever wonder, 'gee, my neighbor sure is sobbing a lot, maybe I should go check on him?'

Everett

I can't be responsible for that! Maybe you're just an emotional person.

Troy

And you're telling me Gwen never said anything?

Everett

*Oh don't pit this on me now!* You did what you did. I can't be expected to keep emotional tabs on my neighbors

Troy

Well then stop blaming me! Yes, I acknowledge that I should've looked before leaping out of the window. I should've done a lot of things differently. At the end of the day, I was unhappy. I made a rash decision. As I was descending towards - what I assumed would be the pavement - I felt instant regret. It was horrific. I felt like I had lost a game and instead of rolling the dice again, I just smashed them to bits. That's something I have to live with.... ironically. And I don't need you and your insensitive ass to shovel your guilt down my damn throat.

*At this Everett is silenced. He feels a rush of guilt run over him. They both take a moment to cool down. Just as they're about to resume conversation, the waiter, Bill approaches Gwen.*

Bill

Terribly sorry madam. But are you sure you wouldn't like to order anything yet?

*Everett and Troy run towards the window.*

Gwen

No... I..... Is this a big mistake?

Bill

Is sitting at a table for half an hour by yourself, drinking a liter of water, and crying intermittently as to scare away every nearby customer a *mistake*?

Gwen

No, no. Is... *being* a mistake?

Bill

Is being—

Gwen

Why did I come out tonight?

Bill

I was beginning to—

Gwen

How long will a broken heart last?

Bill  
Since you haven't ordered, you can just—

Gwen  
Is it really possible—

Bill  
Possible! Probable! As soon as you leave—

Gwen  
— that the three piece jumbo shrimp is *really* for two people? I mean how is that supposed to work... *garçon?*

Bill  
Bill.

Gwen  
Last time I checked, there's no easy way to *divide three*—

Bill  
Madam— please—

Gwen  
And! Are three shrimp *really* suited for two people? If not, this charge is absolutely egregious! I mean, do you people really think that I will—

BILL  
—-Going to have to insist that you—-

*At this point, Dante comes on scene, he pushes Everett over whose pressed against the door. Everett picks himself up.*

Dante  
Stay right there you delicate flower!

Everett  
Oh geez. Is that... Dante?

Dante  
You fragrant piece of art.

Everett  
WHAT?

Dante  
You effervescent butterfly dancing a top the rooftops of the heavens!

Bill  
I'll come back in a minute... (*Bill exits*)

Everett  
HE'S NOT EVEN MAKING SENSE!

Gwen  
Oh Dante, I thought you were a Doctor, not a poet.

Dante  
My lady, I am a man who wears many clothes... Sometimes it's a Doctor's coat, sometimes it's a poet's... pants.

Gwen  
...yeah... Listen, Dante, I'm probably just going to go home. I don't feel right—

Dante  
Well that's just because you haven't eaten!

Gwen  
Well yes, but also because I'm sad.

Dante  
Gwen, you HAVE to eat something, understand? You could put your own health at risk if you don't.

Troy  
He's probably right. I mean, look at her. I'm hoping that he gets her some damn wings or something.

Everett  
What? You can't support him. He sucks.

Dante  
Gwen? Doctors orders!

Troy  
Hard to argue with that.

*Everett slumps into the wall as Dante takes a seat across from Gwen. Bill shows up.*

Bill  
Have you two *reacquainted* yet? I... I went ahead ma'am and took the liberty of placing your jumbo shrimp order... with an extra shrimp to save you the stress of having to cut the third one.

Gwen  
Oh thank you!

Dante  
Oh, I'm sorry but that won't do.

Gwen  
Why—

Bill  
But sir—

Dante  
—You see, we accept the consequences we're given. If three shrimp is what fate has laid before us, three shrimp it is. Inevitably, that leaves us with two — and only two options. I eat two shrimp or she eats two shrimp. There will be no "split" third shrimp. That merely circumvents the difficult conundrum lying in front of us. How lovely would it be if there *were* four shrimp? How lovely would it be if compromise *was* on the table? How nice would that be? Well life isn't like that. It's full of difficult decisions. Yes or no's! And each decision comes with consequences and repercussions that will inform our future decisions. There cannot be an easy way out, there cannot be a simple compromise, we must choose a fate and live with its consequences. Our fate had three shrimp, something we must reconcile on our own terms. Four merely gives us a free pass.

*There's a long silence while Bill shakes his head at Dante. Assessing the situation, Gwen jumps is.*

Gwen  
We'll take the shrimp however they come - thanks!

Dante  
Don't worry! We won't be paying for those.

*Gwen smiles and starts to eat her food. Dante snacks on bread. Outside, Everett is going crazy.*

Troy  
Listen, can we just go find Eric and move on? We can always tell Alice she's here afterwards!

Everett  
Afterwards? No way! And allow this to progress further?

Troy  
What are you going to do? Go in there and rip the tablecloth off the table? No. It's just not feasible. On the other hand, we can find this Eric McAllister fellow in a matter of minutes!

*Everett steps aside to think for a moment. He needs to remove himself from the situation.*

Everett  
*How exactly* are you going to do that again?

Troy  
I have a guy—

Everett  
Tony?

Troy

Yes, Tony. And he happens to run a joint where a lot of these guys hang out.

Everett

How do you know Tony?

Troy

Oh Tony? He and I go way back! We knew each other when we were living.

Everett

No— I didn't say how long. How do you *know* Tony?

Troy

He was a — I mean, more generally— He— he was one of my clients. I mean it's not important, the details, because that's really between he and I.

Everett

You never liked your job much and from what I've come to learn about you, you didn't have many friends. Somehow you have one dead friend who you've kept in touch with into the afterlife?

Troy

Friend.... Might be an interesting interpretation of our relationship. I might be inclined to say that friend is a bit presumptuous. But he's a contact—

Everett

Who you've spoken to since dying?

Troy

I... reached out.

Everett

I can already see the details aren't sussed out. I'm getting Alice now. You'd better straighten things out with your man soon.

Troy

What, are you going to have Alice murder Gwen over her dinner? How do you think that's going to play out?

Everett

I don't know... It doesn't seem that crowded here.

Troy

Oh you're right. My mistake. There's really no one else there, except for the tiny little detail of THE DOCTOR she's on a date with.

Everett

She's not on a date! *I just died!*

Troy

That was like *weeks ago*.

Inside, Dante stands up and makes a dramatic gesture towards Gwen before sitting back down.

Dante

So... how are you feeling?

Gwen

To be honest, I'm still kind of shaken. I mean, everything happened so suddenly that I... haven't have time to process anything. It was really... unexpected, obviously.

Dante

I'm so sorry. I promise you Gwen, if I was there, I would have saved Evan. I considered him as much a friend as you.

Gwen

It's, uh, Everett.

Dante

Him too, yes. But enough about them. I don't want to dwell on a painful subject. What about you? What do you need?

Gwen

I don't really know what I need, to be perfectly clear. I haven't had a good sense for the direction of my life lately and it makes me anxious to think about all this shit. I guess I just need time.

Dante

Time for what?

Gwen

Time to process. Time to move on.

*At this Everett slams his fist on the door. He points back to Troy as he exits.*

Everett

Figure out the Eric shit NOW! I'm going to get Alice.

*Troy calls after him and tries to stop him, but gives up. He makes his way over to an old phone in the upstage left corner.*

Dante

I think, and this is my opinion as a friend, that you need a distraction. A period to just work on you!

Gwen

What?! What do you mean?

Dante

I mean, treat yourself! Go on a trip. Get your hair fixed. Read a book! *Write a book*. Watch all eleven seasons of the Office on repeat. Do whatever it takes to allow yourself to grow out of this like the beautiful flower you are. Yes indeed, you currently sit in a pile of hopeless ashes. But alas, like the great phoenix or the soft winter lily, you will rise again, more vibrant and voluptuous than before!

Gwen

More... what, was that last one?

Dante

Vibrant? (*Quickly changing subject*) Listen, Gwen, who's taking care of you right now?

*Bill re-enters.*

Bill

Hello! Is there anything else I can do to take care of you?

Dante

Ah, so *you think you're up to the task, do you?* You sweet-talking salacious sycophant!

Gwen

(*Ignoring Dante*) Maybe more bread?

Bill

(*to Dante*) What? More bread? Ok.

Dante

I'll take a double scotch on the rocks. Please. And use the stuff that will prove you're a man. None of this pansy 10 year stuff. The real stuff. Make it smoky... Like I like my women.

*Gwen notices that his tone has become noticeably more aggressive.*

Gwen

I'm going to use the ladies room. I'll be back.

Troy

Well this seems to be crashing entirely on it's own! Perfect.

*She leaves and Bill leaves. Dante starts taking selfies with his phone. In the corner, TROY makes a call.*

Troy

Hi. Tony? Yeah, yeah. It's me Troy! Troy? I saw you just a few weeks ago? We used to work together? Well.... You were actually my client. HEY! *No, no, no, no. CHILL.* I'm not.... Well... what If I told you that I *was* that Troy? YEP. YEP. YEP. Was it really that bad?..... Tony?... Are you still there? Tony? Tony?.... OKAY, YES! Listen! Tony, listen! Would you please listen to me? I need to know if you have a Mr. McAllister there? Eric McAllister? He's a finance guy... You do? YES! See, can I just-- Wait! Tony! Don't be a jerk. I just... Uh huh.... Yeah, no I get that you're

upset... I can see why that would be upsetting.... You said what? Are you really? Are you really going to hold that against me? TONY. Listen, I'm just going to pop by your establishment to say hi to Eric.... ERIC. Tony! Don't— He and I are friends, we go way back. TONY— DAMMIT!

*While in the ladies room, Bill comes back to deliver Dante his scotch.*

Bill  
Here you go sir. Your scotch.

Dante  
*Who the hell do you think you are?*

*Bill seems shocked.*

Dante  
Are you trying to make a move on this poor woman? You know her boyfriend just died?

Bill  
No...I'm... just waiting on her.

Dante  
Waiting, huh? Waiting for what? To date her? Well guess what bub? You gotta get in line.

Bill  
Didn't you just say... *her boyfriend just died?*

Dante  
Yes. So please for the love of God, show some respect.

Bill  
But— — nevermind.

*Bill walks away. Elsewhere Everett returns with Alice.*

Everett  
See! It's right here!

Alice  
What, what?

Troy  
Oh, you found her...

*Everett drags her over to the window.*

Everett  
She's right in there!

Alice  
She looks.... masculine...

Everett  
No, not that clown. That's— where'd she go?

Troy  
To the bathroom! I've found Eric by the way.

Everett  
Oh yeah?

Alice  
I didn't say anything!

Troy  
You think you might want to tell her that we've found Eric?

Everett  
Not yet! I wanna assess the situation here again first.

Alice  
What's going on? Is there another ghost here or something?

Troy  
God this is annoying.

*Gwen re-enters the scene.*

Gwen  
Hey, sorry about that. I... I needed a minute.

Dante  
Hey, don't worry about it. I— let me apologize. I should've waited before pressuring you to enjoy yourself out in public here. I feel like I've put you in a weird place so... early after everything that's happened. I guess I just wanted to cheer you up. Make you happy, you know? I think that's where my heart was. But I get the feeling that I've just made a huge mistake. I've made an ass of myself and... I should have waited a while. I can't say I know what it's like to be in your position. Who can? Either way, just know that there are *certain attentive men* who crave your attention without your best intentions.

Gwen  
Dante that's sweet of you— wait, what? What are you talking about?

*Bill comes up behind Gwen and Dante tries to continue, while secretly conversing with Bill.*

Dante

Of course... and I don't want you to LEAVE. I just think I've been OUT of it lately and I just needed to EXIT THE ROOM.... metaphorically, of course.

Gwen

Metaphorically... right... I think, and perhaps I'm projecting, but what you're trying to say is that you're encouraging me to let myself out every once in a while. To that, I absolutely agree.

Dante

Well if you need help, just let me know. I guess that, more than anything, this is supposed to be a gesture to say that, I'm there for you.

Gwen

Thank you... and I think I'm already starting to feel better. I think the healing process starts now and I'm glad you're here with me.

*At this, Everett falls to the ground and Alice catches him.*

---

Everett

I mean, now I kinda want to kill him.

Troy

C'mon, let's get Eric. We can leave her here with Dante.

Alice

Everett... That must hurt.

Everett

We can't— we cannot leave her here with this... this... weirdly nice... asshole.

Alice

Leave here for where?

Troy

TELL HER EVERETT.

Everett

*(sighs)* We've found Eric, I guess.

*At this Alice jumps for joy. She wraps her hands around Everett who's stuck wallowing in his own pain. Troy tries to keep him balanced.*

Alice

Where?! Where is he? When can I see him?

Troy

Yes, *when?*

Everett

Well, you won't be able to *see* him. But you can speak with him soon.

Alice

Well let's go! Right now.

Everett

There's no way I'm leaving Gwen here with *this guy* right now.

*Alice takes a deep breath as she circles in her head the right way to approach the situation. She accidentally keeps bumping into Troy.*

Troy

I could kill both of you right now! I'll go get Eric myself!

Alice

I think I'll do it.

Everett and Troy

What?

Alice

I said, I think I'll do it.

Everett

Do what?

Alice

You know? (*makes cutting neck sound*)

Troy

Wait, what?

Everett

Really?

Alice

If you have Eric, I will absolutely help you. But I'm not doing anything illegal until I hear from him.... And I mean the REAL him, I wanna hear something only he'll know. No frauds.

Everett

Deal... but how are you going to?

Alice

I know the perfect location... It's a... popular spot. It's where I think I'd die if I could.

*Alice leans in and whispers in Everett's ear. Troy leans in as well.*

Troy  
How cliché! How gaudy!

Everett  
(to Troy) Shutup!

Alice  
Excuse me?

Everett  
Not you it's—

*Inside, Dante and Gwen are wrapping up their meal. Bill approaches them with the check.*

Bill  
Thank you both for a rather riveting experience...

*He leaves the check on the table. At first Gwen picks it up, but Dante grabs it out of her hands quickly.*

Dante  
Excuse me sir! I believe you've made a mistake on our bill.

Gwen  
What? Dante, I didn't see anything.

*Bill comes back with his head hanging low. He lets out a huge sigh. '*

Bill  
Sir—

Dante  
Very sweet of you Gwen, but I see his note here... (*holding up the bill*) "Have a nice night! Hope to see you again"? Are you sick, my friend?

Bill  
Sir— it's just—

Dante  
I mean... in a public forum?! Are you completely daft?

Bill  
Sir I—

Gwen  
Dante, I think—

*Dante stands up and grabs Bill by the collar.*

Dante

I *will not* allow you to abuse this young woman. Do you understand? We will not be paying a cent for the kind of “services” you claim to provide! And furthermore—

*Gwen sneaks him her card. He slowly sneaks away.*

Bill

Yes. Sure. Whatever dude...

Dante

Let's go. I know a great ice cream shop down the street, it's run entirely by women, so there's far less of a chance for the kind of harassment you've had to endure thus far!

Gwen

Dante, that's very sweet of you, but I think I'm just going to head home tonight. I'm tired and I really need a refreshing couple of hours to lounge around in my sweatpants.

*She goes in to hug him and intercepts the check from Bill under the guise of hugging Dante. She peeks over his shoulder as she attempts to sign the check.*

Gwen

Thank you though! Like a million, honestly. I don't know what I'd do without people like you. I actually might be up for this in a couple weeks when I'm feeling better.

*At this Everett erupts. Alice preemptively contains him, but accidentally knocks over Troy in the process.*

Everett

Kill me.

Troy

Already did.

*Alice turns him around. Inside Gwen and Dante say their goodbyes. She grabs him at the shoulders.*

Alice

Let me talk to her. I'll meet you both later, okay?

*Dante exits and Everett attempts to trip him, only to get knocked over himself.*

Everett

Fine. Let's go.

Troy

OH, NOW THAT SHE SAYS IT?

*They exit. Alice strategically heads around the corner. The stage goes dark.*

---

## Scene 2

*As the stage goes dark, all of the furniture and surroundings are pulled away, until we're only left with Gwen waiting by the streetlight. She holds out her hand to check for rain. A single drop. She puts up her umbrella. A deluge dumps on her instantly. She pulls out her phone and grunts in frustration. She holds her hand out as lights shine on her from offstage and then move on right past her. Cars seem to pass her by. Lingered upstage, we see Alice come into view. She takes a moment to notice Gwen's struggle. She checks herself for an umbrella. She has none. Alice grabs a newspaper off the ground. She slowly makes her way towards Gwen holding a newspaper above her head. She, naturally doesn't encounter nearly as much rain as her friend. Eventually, she makes it all the way next to Gwen who's unaware of her presence. She puts down the newspaper and taps Gwen on the shoulder. Gwen proceeds to panic, whipping her umbrella around and inadvertently soaking Alice.*

Gwen  
I'm SO SORRY!

*Alice spits out some water and moves her hair out of her face, trying her best to compose a smile.*

Alice  
That's alright. I'm sure you didn't mean it. I was just checking to make sure you were doing alright. It's not very nice to see a young woman having to call for attention on the streets like this.

Gwen  
Oh, I'm not— I'm not calling— I'm not a...

Alice  
I wasn't inferring—

Gwen  
I completely support sex workers—

Alice  
Me too, I love them—

Gwen  
I—

Alice  
—yep....

*Their awkwardness dwindles into silence. After a few minutes, Gwen appears to walk away, but turns back to address the situation once and for all.*

Gwen  
I'm just trying to get a ride out here... like to get home!

Alice  
*(playfully realizing)* Ah, yes. Is your driver lost?

Gwen

Worse actually, my phone's dead.

Alice  
DEAD?

Gwen  
As a doorknob.

Alice  
So you're trying to hitchhike.

Gwen  
I'm actually hoping to find a taxi out here somewhere.

Alice  
Wow, really? That's. I mean, I haven't lived here in a while, but that was always fraught with some difficulty. It's like water in the desert!

*Gwen holds out her hand.*

Gwen  
No shortage of that here. I'm not too bothered. Did you say you haven't lived here in a while? Do you mind me asking where you're coming from now?

Alice  
Oh yes! Well I lived here for about six years. I moved to Chicago after that and I've been there ever since. I haven't even visited. But it always held a place in my heart. So it's nice to be back after all this time...

Gwen  
Why'd you move?

Alice  
The same thing that happens to all of us!

Gwen  
*(sarcastically)* The love of your life died?

Alice  
I was going to say, I was priced out by all the tech bros.

Gwen  
...right that's what I was going to say—

Alice  
But it's funny you say that actually. I did in fact lose the love of my life.

*Gwen is taken aback. She grabs Alice by the shoulders and pushes her against the lamppost.*

Gwen  
STOP. DID SOMEONE PUT YOU UP TO THIS? ARE YOU MESSING WITH ME?

Alice

No! Well... Woah girl, back off. I'm... I'm being serious... were you?

*Gwen releases Alice who finally relaxes. Gwen slumps to the ground in front of the streetlamp.*

Alice

Do you need me to order you a ride?

Gwen

Would you— would you mind?

*Alice smiles and drops down to her level.*

Alice

Sure thing. *(she starts to order a ride on her phone)*

Gwen

So... you're boyfriend or whatever actually died?

Alice

Husband actually!

Gwen

Husband? Shit... Here I am moping about about my boyfriend. When did your husband pass?

Alice

Quite a few years back now.

Gwen

Ugh. Tell me you're at least over it by now!

*Alice winces. Gwen stands up and rolls her eyes.*

Gwen

You know, at my core, I'm a completely rational person. I brush my teeth twice a day - *and floss*. I try and keep up with the news, excluding the fringe outlets. I recognize that my love of massages does not make them a necessity, but rather a frivolity. I know the world is round, climate change is real, and much to everyone's disappointment, Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone and all the extraneous conspiracies are a crock of crap. But for whatever ungodly reason, I can't seem to wrap my head around the fact that this guy who I really only knew for a quarter of my life has met the same fate that we all eventually meet, just a little earlier than scheduled.

*Alice puts a comforting arm around her. She puts away her phone and takes out a flask. She offers it to Gwen, who takes a strong swig off it.*

Gwen

I'm Gwen by the way. *(takes another swig)* What is this? Gasoline?

Alice

Alice! And no. It's Gin. Cheap gin. Takes you back to your college days. Or, maybe you had better standards than me in college.

Gwen  
How'd your husband die?

Alice  
He got sick. Really sick.... Idiot. (*she takes a swig*)

*Gwen starts chuckling to herself.*

Gwen  
*If you think he's an idiot, my guy was literally crushed to death by our neighbor. The coroner told me he'd never seen anything like it. Again, I'm a rational person. I don't believe in "luck", but our neighbor fell on Everett in such a specific way at such a specific angle, hitting him on the head at just the right point that he was gone within seconds. The neighbor of course died too. But then again that was *mission accomplished* for him. He had all kinds of problems we were really unaware of. It's a shame really too. The guy was *nice enough* I think. I mean he was one of those guys who always thinks he's funnier than he is... You know the type? Like puns are a regular feature of conversation? And off-color commentary that ends up doing more harm than good. Not in a creepy way! To be honest, I always thought he was gay. But more in a - I can see why people might... not... enjoy your personality? He *really* wanted to be the next big Mogul. He had some weird obsession with all these Jack Dorsey types. The problem, from what little I knew about him, is that he never found his niche. It's a shame too because he sure was personable! Even if it was in a bit of an obnoxious way. Nevertheless, I guess it finally got to him one day because he decided it was enough to throw oneself off their own roof. A bit gauche if you ask me. Do you *really* need to splay yourself out like that in front of everyone? But I think the whole thing was a lot less bloody than anyone expected, due to the fact that Everett was leaving the house at that exact moment. And (*claps hands together*) he took them both out.*

*Gwen takes a deep swig. Alice senses her opportunity. She repositions herself so she's facing Gwen.*

Alice  
Feels... unfair, doesn't it? Dying young in San Francisco?

*Gwen nods.*

Alice  
I'd bet you'd do anything to just see him one more time.

Gwen  
I'd do anything to go back. I mean, I feel kinda cheated.

*Gwen pulls her jacket over her shoulders. Alice pulls back out her phone and plays it off like she forgot to call the car.*

Alice  
Hey, I'm going to throw out an idea and it's totally okay if you say no... but, why don't we go somewhere with more of a view where we can finish *my other flask*? You seem really cool. (*Gwen looks at her in disbelief*) Okay, well you look like you need to vent a bit before going home? I sure as hell am not going home right now.

*Gwen gets up. She gives Alice a good looking over to make sure this isn't some kind of trick. Alice forces a smile, which seems excessively corny.*

Gwen  
You aren't some kind of killer are you?

*Alice begins laughing TOO hard.*

Alice  
Please? Do you think I could kill you? You've probably got ten pounds on me... of muscle! Pure, well-toned, muscle... I'm just a fragile lamb myself.

Gwen  
Hey, it's a new century. You *could* be a killer for all I know. The glass ceiling for attractive young female serial killers has yet to be broken.

Alice  
Doesn't anyone trust anybody anymore? Damn! People wonder why it's so hard to make friends in this day and age, it's because everyone is so damn petrified about what someone's true intentions are. We've become so damn transactional in our relationships, you can't just ask someone to hang out anymore just because you want to hang out! SHEESH.

Gwen  
Woah. Damn. I was... mostly kidding.

Alice  
Haha. Yeah. Me...too. Me? Kill? Someone? Ha. *(gulp)*

Gwen  
Anyway, I'll go with you. I need something spontaneous in my life right now. As long as I'm home at a decent time.

*Alice proceeds to order a car. She seems a bit dismayed.*

Alice  
Shit, it says seven minutes!

Gwen  
Well, it's not like we have anything better to do.

*They sit in silence for a few moments. Gwen feels for the rain and notices it's stopped, she puts her umbrella down.*

Alice  
Hey, can I ask you a question? Do you believe in ghosts?

Gwen  
Like... dead people whose spirits continue to inhabit earth after their bodies die?

Alice  
Yes. I really didn't think there was any room for interpretation there.

Gwen  
No.

Alice  
Yeah, me neither.... Until I met one.

Gwen  
*Really?* You know, I can honestly just walk home if—

Alice  
No I'm serious. Okay, listen, I didn't think the whole thing was real either. But I'm a betting woman and I figured it's better to hedge the bets in my favor. Kind of a pascals wager for ghosts? Anyhow, I ended up seeking out this psychic who said she could connect you with people who have "departed from this earth". I wasn't really convinced of her schtick at first, but I kept my mind open. Then, I was casually enjoying a meal while some kind of nice looking guy next to me started talking to me. When my husband came in, he didn't see anyone! It freaked the psychic out too because he wasn't even the guy who I wanted to connect with.

Gwen  
Wait, so this psychic connected you with a rando?

Alice  
Well... I don't know how much she had to do with it. But it was fine, like I said, he was a perfectly nice guy! If he were alive, I'd *absolutely* set you two up!

*Gwen starts chuckling to herself, trying to catch herself.*

Gwen  
I'm sorry, I'm sorry! It just... it sounds like ghost Tinder.

Alice  
Ghost Tinder?!

Gwen  
You know, hearing you say it, it doesn't sound like such a crazy idea. I'd swipe right for the right ghost!

*Alice smiles.*

Alice  
How about Casper?

Gwen  
Hmm... A little short... and young... I'd have to swipe left

Alice  
(chuckles) *What about Patrick Swayze in Ghost?*

Gwen  
*Are you kidding?* I would swipe right on *the actual Patrick Swayze ghost*.

Alice  
Okay... bear with me for this one... Bruce—

Gwen & Alice  
—Willis at the end of *Sixth Sense*!

Gwen  
Holy shit. Wait, you think Bruce Willis is hot?

Alice  
In a way I'd never admit to anyone else!

Gwen  
Hell yeah! Everyone watches *A Christmas Story* or *Elf* and I'm still convinced that—

Alice  
—*Die Hard* is the best Christmas movie of all time?

Gwen  
You know they had a quote-along the other week at the Alamo in the Mission?

Alice  
WHAT?! How could I have missed that. I love that theater too. I always stop afterwards for a burrito at...

*She senses Gwen about to chime in.*

Gwen  
Taqueria Cabo San Lucas?

*Alice is a bit taken aback.*

Gwen  
Honestly, I used to love going there for their—

Alice  
If you say Margaritas...

Gwen  
Well, *used to*. I haven't had anyone to go with in a while!

Alice  
I'll go with you!

Gwen  
Perfect.

*Alice's smile suddenly starts to fade as soon as she realizes that this friendship may be short lived. She checks her phone. Gwen peeks over.*

Alice  
Oh, he's here.

*A man pretending to drive a car pulls up. He tips his hat to the ladies.*

Gwen

I don't mean to be rude, but is that a Margaret Keane painting on your phone background?

Alice

It actually is!

Gwen

That is so weird. I was always attracted to her stuff. She always had an interesting perspective on eyes, especially if you believe the old saying, the eyes are the window to the soul.

*They enter the "car", which is now just two seats. Alice's eyes look glossed over as she starts to really enjoy Gwen's company.*

Gwen

Speaking of... HELLO??? Anyone in there? Are you swiping on ghost Tinder? Say... where are we going by the way.

*As they sit, facing the audience, the driver comically holds up random pictures, simulating different San Francisco locations. He's running around frantically and occasionally making car "sounds". He hands them various supplies Uber drivers commonly have including gum and water bottles.*

Driver

Candy?

Alice & Gwen

Sure.

Driver

What kind? I have spicy or sweet?

Alice

Which one is better?

Driver

What kind of a night are you trying to have?

**Spicy**

Gwen

Spicy then!

*He hands them the candy. He then makes a "sharp turn".*

Driver

Sorry ladies, we have a pickup to make.

Gwen

Ugh. We're in one of the shared ones? These take forever.

*The driver seemingly pulls over and a stranger gets in the "car". The stranger can be played by the Driver who is frantically running around. In this case, they're a police officer.*

Officer  
Hello.

Gwen & Alice  
Hello

Gwen  
*(whispering to Alice)* I'm a little drunk.

Officer  
What's that?

Alice  
Oh sorry! She was talking to me, just saying she's a little drunk.

*The officer chuckles. They look over at the girls with a lightly serious face.*

Officer  
It's a good thing you're getting a ride then... otherwise I'd have to arrest you.

*Gwen and Alice look at one another. Gwen starts laughing, Alice laughs along nervously.*

Alice  
Are you a cop? Like actually?

Officer  
Indeed. Technically working too.

Alice  
Wha— how? Why are you taking a ride? Why not use your car?

Officer  
It's San Francisco... even cop cars are hard to park. Heaven knows when I'm not in a rush, I prefer this way! Get to chat with citizens, congratulate people on making smart choices, and I don't have to be around the murderers.

Gwen  
Murderers?

Officer  
Yes. I actually work for the homicide division of the SFPD.

*Alice starts to panic. She briefly stands up to break the fourth wall and yell at the audience.*

Alice  
YOU HAD TO PICK SPICY?

*At this, Gwen and the Officer give her a puzzled look.*

Gwen  
You could've said something....

Alice

So you deal with a lot of shootouts, I suppose? Kind of the rough and tumble type, huh?

Officer

Actually, you'd be surprised. A lot of the culprits I deal with are real innocent types. You'd never guess they'd become killers.

*Alice's eyes sink in the back of her head. She starts to breathe deeply. Gwen, who is significantly drunk, still finds the whole situation hilarious.*

Gwen

Really? Why do the sweet, innocent ones end up being killers?

Officer

Sometimes they're just crazy. They hear some voice in their head that tells them they "need" to kill someone. Like a deal with the devil. *(Alice gulps)* Othertimes, they use a slower approach where they basically befriend the victim, lead them into an undisclosed area and well, I don't want to horrify you with the gruesome details...

Gwen

Damn. Well you lock them up right?

Officer

*Oh yeah.* We lock 'em up for a while. Prison isn't fun either. It's basically like an all-access whoopass pass.

Alice

That's in mens prisons, right?

Officer

Yes. That's men's prisons. Women's prison's are way worse. It's like an all-access whopass pass *plus* an endless onslaught of emotional abuse. It's horrendous.

Gwen

Well. If they're terrible people doing terrible things, they know damn well what they're getting into!

Officer

I think the saddest thing with these innocent-seeming people genuinely is that they immediately regret what they did after. Not a one of em seems like they did the right thing. They wake up from the crazy, I guess.

*After hearing all this, Alice has a permanent paranoid look on her face. Her lips are tight, The car goes quiet for a moment when Gwen speaks up.*

Gwen

*Could I be a killer?*

Officer

Hmmm.... You? Yeah... unlikely. You ask too many questions!

Gwen

*Damn.* I always thought... "maybe?" .... What about her?

*Alice freezes as the Officer's neck cranes over to face her. Gwen looks over with a drunken, lopsided smirk.*

Officer

Well.... I, I might have to say yes. She's got this glossed over eye look. Innocent on the outside, but kind of a thick layer of guilt sandwiched inbetween. That's what we call the "crime oreo". If you weren't her friend, I'd think she's out to get you.

*They all sit silently as Alice is wide-eyed and on edge. They all stare forward as conversation dissipates.*

Gwen

...She's not my friend.

*The car gets an uncomfortable silence. The officer looks over and chuckles a little.*

Gwen

...Like we just met.... And I don't even know where we're going.

*The Officer chuckles, but sees Gwen unamused. Alice begins laughing loud to compensate. After the short outburst, the Officer turns his attention towards Gwen who hasn't reacted at all since her blank statements. Instead, she sits and her body rocks drunkenly around with the car.*

Officer

Where'd you say you guys were going again?

*The Officer comically moves back to the front briefly to pretend to be the Driver.*

Driver

We're here sir.

*The Officer begins to open the door, but looks towards the two of them for an answer.*

Gwen

I don't know, I—

*Alice covers her mouth.*

Alice

She's very drunk. She's got this very very dry sense of humor that just gets lost in the alcohol. Isn't that right, Gwen?

*Gwen MmmHmms. The Officer continues staring deadpan at them.*

We're going back to her house to have a girls movie night and sober up a bit. Good thing we were responsible!

Officer

Hmmm... Well... you girls stay safe. Avoid touristy areas right now too because it's high crime right now.

*The Officer exits the vehicle. Alice leans back into her seat out of relief.*

**Sweet**

Gwen  
I think sweet will do fine.

*He hands them the candy. He then makes a "sharp turn".*

Driver  
Sorry ladies, we have a pickup to make.

Gwen  
Ugh. We're in one of the shared ones? These take forever.

*They "pull over" the Driver dons the role of Suzanne, an overly excited young woman who will proceed to wedge her way into their plans.*

Suzanne  
Hello!

Gwen & Alice  
Hi!

Suzanne  
Oh my god, I love your bag. Is that Marc Jacobs?

Gwen  
It is actually! Thank you.

Suzanne  
You guys are looking super cute, where are you going? You look like you have your going out faces on and I love it.

Alice  
We are...going... out, but—

Gwen  
We're going out? Oh fun! I thought we were drinking your flask.

Suzanne  
Oh my god, you guys have a flask?

*Gwen reaches into Alice's shirt to grab the flask. Alice tries to brush her away, feeling that she got a little too personal.*

Alice  
Hey! Handsy. We just met, would you mind?

*Gwen hands the stolen flask to Suzanne who takes a swig.*

Suzanne

Wait! You two *just met*? Spill the freakin' tea girls!

Gwen

Yeah, we just met like at the restaurant back there. This nice older lady saved me because my phone died.

Alice

Well, that's not the whole— —

Suzanne

Hold the phone. So you just took a ride from this absolute stranger while getting drunk off her boob flask? (*Alice looks like she's going to intervene*). That is damn hot shit right there! I dig it.

Gwen

Hey, I dig that you dig that!

Suzanne

I'm actually a bit of a vagabond wanderer myself! Basically, I spent all of college trying to figure out what I'm really good at. The thing I came up with was poetry, because you know, people said my captions were straight fire or whatever. Anyway, I ended up studying like all the best poetry, like Maya Angelou and shit. Sorry if I'm rambling, I'm a bit drunk myself. But anyway, I really started liking some of the poets from San Francisco and so I moved out here about six months ago. Now, I live in the marina and I'm a rebeat poet.

Alice

A repeat poet?

Suzanne

No, a *rebeat poet*.

Gwen

What's a rebeat poet?

Suzanne

Like a beat poet that's poems are made entirely of retweets. It's so trendy!

Alice

So... none of your work is original.

Suzanne

No, I do some original pieces. Do you wanna hear one?

Alice

I don't—

Gwen

YES!

Suzanne

Okay, okay. Ladies, prepare to be blessed. Do you want to hear one about Sunsets or Oceans?

Alice  
Very nature-y, huh?

### **Sunsets**

Gwen  
Sunsets!

Suzanne  
*Sunsets... so majestic, so graceful! If you look at the city, so see a place...full - of people! And charm. No one wants to feel harm. Especially thanks to big Pharm-a-logical. Let's not let reason be our downfall, this city is a so-called Pair - a - dice? Roll it twice! Lose the days and lose the nights! And yet, don't forget, the majesty of the sunset.*

### **Oceans**

Gwen  
Oceans!

Suzanne  
*Oceans....a.k.a. the sea... a.k.a. apart of me, the part that's free, the part you want to see...  
drown*

---

*The car "slams on its breaks" and all the actors fly forward accordingly. There's a moment of silence while Gwen and Alice process the poems. Alice looks flabbergasted. She puts her face in her palms and shakes her head in disgust.*

Alice  
That was--

Gwen  
—beautiful. (*slurring her words a bit*) You're a damn artist. I should know. I work with them all day.

Suzanne  
Oh my god, no you don't! You should totally hook me up!

Gwen  
Well, I actually work in a museum... next to artworks.... But I mean, if there's ever an opening there for you, that could be a good thing.

Alice  
Hold on, how would that...

Suzanne  
Wait, where'd you girls say you were going? Do you think I could join you?

Alice  
Actually we—

Gwen  
YES! Hell YES. I don't see why not. Come on Alice! We have room for one more.

Suzanne  
Or do you guys need like... alone time for whatever you're doing?

Gwen  
HA! Are you kidding? Haha alone time! No, in fact it would help to have another pair of eyes around to watch out for... I don't know... killers!

Alice  
FOR CRYING OUT LOUD.

*The actor playing Suzanne runs back around to the front of the car.*

Driver  
Suzanne! This is you!

*They quickly run back around changing back into character.*

Suzanne  
UGH! Well. Sorry girls. I guess we're here already! Oh well. Rain check for next time!

*She leans over and kisses both on the cheek. Then exits.*

---

*After a few moment adjusting, Gwen leans over to check on Alice, who seems fried by the company. She puts her arm on her shoulder to comfort her.*

Gwen  
You meet the coolest people in these things, right?

*Alice has her fingers massaging her temple as she looks over at Gwen.*

Alice  
Have you ever... done something impulsive? Like made a rash decision on the spot?

Gwen  
Ummm.... I'm in this car with you! *(Alice moans)* Why? Do you have to make one?

Alice  
*(through her teeth)* Kinda. *(to driver)* Are we close yet?

Driver  
10 minutes.

Gwen  
Just do it then! As long as it's something you won't regret.

Alice  
I can't figure that out yet. I've never done it before.

Gwen  
Well my personal philosophy? You should at least try it out! Give it a brief shot, you may end up liking it.

*Alice cranes her head towards Gwen, leans back and shrugs to herself.*

Alice  
Hard to argue with that logic!

*Gwen pats her on the leg and the lights fade out. End Scene.*

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### **Act 2 Scene 3**

*As the light fade from the previous scene, a makeshift club scene is set-up. It follows the same setup as the restaurant, so it could be re-appropriated with different decor. As with the restaurant, the club takes up a good section of stage left. The background and stage are littered with boxes and more industrial looking exterior. It suggests a near-water alleyway. The background is of a bay-facing waterfront, where the moon reflects off the water. The entrance to the club is an old wooden door with an openable section for someone to peek out. Inside the club is dim or hidden by a scrim at the moment. If dim, the actor(s) would be frozen inside to begin. Everett and Troy come strolling in from stage right*

*Everett is nipping at Troy's heels who's evidently not enthusiastic about going to meet with this guy.*

*They stop in front of the door where a sign saying "Tony's" hangs on the door.*

Everett  
Okay! This must be it.

Troy  
*Well...* Let's not jump to conclusions! I actually think-- I think he's closer to Ocean Beach. This probably isn't him.

*Troy attempts an about face, Everett grabs him and turns him around. He crosses in front of him and looks back with a smirk as he prepares to knock himself.*

Everett  
Well it's certainly worth a shot!

*Everett knocks on the door.*

Troy  
No! Wait! It's not— I have to go!

*Troy attempts to make an exit, but Everett catches his collar. The tiny face door opens and a gruff man pokes his head through. He surveys the scene and squints as he tries to see Troy with his back to him. He turns his attention to Everett, who corrects his posture to seem more established.*

Everett  
Hello sir!

Tony  
*(squinting at Everett)* Are you dead?!

Everett  
...Yes... how else would we be interacting with you?

Tony  
Hmmp. What about your friend?

Everett  
I don't know what's gotten into him. He's not usually like this around crowds. Look! I'm looking for a guy you might know named Eric McAllister? Is he in your club?

Tony  
McAllister? What do you want with McAllister? You know you're the second bastard tonight who's looking for that moose-hoofed Gordon Gecko-quoting smart-ass.

Everett  
Yeah, I actually just want to talk to him about his ex wife. I guess she's in the city right now. *During their conversation, Troy tries to casually walk away. He drops his Juul/cigarettes while walking away and quickly turns around to grab them. He's spotted.*

Tony  
HEY! YOU! *(to Everett)* Wait one sec, pal? I'm talking to HIM.

*He comes around to the outside of his club. Troy hears him and quickly gathers his things. He comes charging after Troy, turns him around to face him and Troy panics.*

Tony  
AH HA! I knew it . LOOK WHO IT IS! IF IT AIN'T TROY BOY, the SCAM ARTIST! YOU'RE DEAD, you know that?

*He holds Troy up by his collar and makes as if he's going to punch him. Troy flinches and tries to block any incoming hits.*

Everett  
I thought we already established that...

Troy  
*Please!*

Everett  
Wait, what's going on here? Can we see McAllister?

Tony  
I'm going to make him wish that he could die all over again!

Everett  
What? I thought you two were "old friends"

*Tony increases his grip on Troy, bringing him close to his face.*

Tony  
That sounds like some shit he would say! Shit he's said to me time and time again. GO AHEAD. SAY THAT SHIT TO MY FACE! SELL ME THE BULLSHIT YOU USED TO SELL ME.

Troy  
I...(struggling) can't.

Tony  
SAY IT! SAY THAT SHIT.

Troy  
*That shit.*  
*Tony goes for a punch, but Everett catches it, then attempts to forcibly separate them.*

Everett  
What the hell? What's wrong with you two?

Troy  
*Me?*

Everett  
Evidently you did something worthy of pissing this guy off!

Troy  
Tony is just upset because powers beyond our control, powers of *the universe* really, had happen to bring him into a world of misfortune. And when you bring an already bitter, premature curmudgeon into such place, you get Exhibit A.

Everett  
I see. But can we please just pop inside to—

Tony  
Powers of the Universe?! Really? Powers of the Universe? How about you're a lying bastard who purposefully misled everyone into destroying their lives.

Troy  
I never made you smoke that pot—

Tony  
I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT POT YOU MORON.

Everett

Woah, woah gentlemen. Please. *(he turns to Tony)* Now, I know I may have come here with this guy, but I assure you, he holds no favor in my heart. In fact, I was pretty pissed at him as recent as an hour ago. So I'm not going to arbitrarily take his side. Now tell me exactly what happened again?

*The two men settle down. Troy lights up a cigarette, Tony picks one up as well. Humorously, they end up having to work together to get the thing to light.*

Tony

Did you know this guy back in his sales days? I'll admit, the man had the gift of gab. Wherever he went, people seemed to tune in, eh?

Troy

I'm glad you recognize my—

Tony

Maybe it's because he won't shut up! Anyways, I owned a local watering hole in the Mission where this guy would pitter away his hard earned dough and the hours that went along with it. Meanwhile he was dusting up quite a racket with my patrons. After a beer or two, he'd talk to anyone with ears about his "success with the cryptocurrency economy" and how he was on the forefront of technological innovation. People really bought into his shtick. Listen, I paid attention to the customer's faces. They were mesmerized! Little did I know that's because ultimately, they were just falling for his un-apologetic, rampant FRAUD.... *(wipes his brow, takes a deep breath)*. So naturally, I get curious. I've been running the joint for a decade and it's not exactly a way to make passive income in San Francisco. So I ask! Hey, *you seem like the kinda guy that knows things about making money quickly...* How can I make some cash in my free time. He tells me the investment window has just closed. BULLET DODGED. But then he tells me about this new, hot investment opportunity in digital currency. We get to talking about his job, the sales, his product, and eventually into Bitcoin, Ethereum, and the rest of the cryptocurrencies you know. His ass tells me, no GUARANTEES ME, that if I buy five thousand dollars worth of bitcoin, it will be worth one hundred thousand by the next year! HA! So my crazy ass does it. I buy the coins. For the first few weeks before the holiday season, everything was great. With even MORE encouragement from him, I continued to pour my life savings in. Sure enough, it seemed to climb. But then I started to see the price drop. I panicked! But when I came to him for advice, he told me to STAY! He said it will all pass. Well... fifty six thousand dollars later, I was broke, dumb, and depressed. I had given my life away, literally giving away my life savings in the process. I went into debt. Deep debt. Debt that eventually got me killed.

*Troy and Everett reflect somberly on his speech. Troy especially seems to be moved, but quickly changes his posture.*

Troy

It sounds to me like you're saying it wasn't *entirely* my fault?

*At this, Tony drops his cigarette and lunges at Troy. Everett intervenes.*

Everett

WAIT! Hold on. Okay. I see what's going on here. Evidently, there's some unresolved bitterness between the two of you.

Troy

Me? I'm not bitter at all

Everett

Look, I'm not saying I'm taking anyones side here because frankly, I was completely uninvolved. BUT! I do have to say, for the sake of getting the one thing I came here to do finished, will you *please* let whatever it is go? I understand your pain. He certainly was a dumbass, but you ended up listening to him!

Tony

YOU'RE PINNING THIS ON ME?

Everett

No, I'm just saying that there are a lot of factors to consider here.

Troy

He's being unreasonable Everett, we should just go.

Everett

TROY!

Troy

Tony, I'm very sorry! There, now are we good? Can we move on?

Tony

NO!

Everett

Would you STOP with the yelling and the anger?

Tony

I'M SORRY! This man put me in debt, debts I needed to repay to some powerful people. When I couldn't pay, they fed me to the sharks. SO, THIS MAN LITERALLY KILLED ME! DID HE KILL YOU?

Everett

YES!

*There's a moment of silence. Tony drops his cigarette. Everett, exasperated, takes a minute to huff out his frustration and allow tensions to simmer. As Tony goes to pick up his cigarette, he notices the palpable anger on Everett's face.*

Tony

He... he did?

Everett

Yes. He did. I was so mad. I mean, I didn't even have the time to be the kind of mad you were, but I still struggled to even be around him. I mean he literally ruined my life. And I sat and stewed for much of the last few weeks trying to... wrap my head around it. But the truth is, the more I think about it, the more I hold onto that anger... the more STUPID I feel like I am. I always thought that while I was living, whatever anger I had, I would take with me to the grave... I thought that was long enough. Turns out it was too long. Now gentlemen, I'm giving you a courtesy that no one ever gave me: I'm telling you to *let it go*.

*Troy and Tony seem to relax their stance. Tony walks over to Troy, stares him up and down. They occupy center stage with an intense stare-down. Eventually, Tony grabs Troy by the collar who takes a deep gulp in anticipation of a punch. Instead he leans over and “dusts off” Troy’s shoulder in an apparent gesture of kindness. They step apart from each other.*

Tony

Fine. You make a point. I’ve got more to worry about in the world than the likes of *him*.

*Tony begrudgingly extends an arm to suggest a handshake. Troy reaches for his hand but pauses. There’s a moment where the two play a short game of “handshake chicken” extending and retracting their arms to see who will grab who’s hand. Eventually Troy catches his hand and they shake.*

Troy

See! I knew I was right...

*Tony squeezes his hand hard. He jumps in pain.*

Troy

Ow! Truce! TRUCE!

Everett

Don’t push it. Now that *we’re good here*, can we PLEASE talk to Eric?

*Tony grumbles. He pulls Troy in closely from their STILL ongoing handshake.*

Tony

*I’m watching you....* (to both of them) Wait here.

*Tony returns inside his club for a moment. Outside, Troy shakes out his injured hand. Everett shoots him a glare.*

Troy

See? I told you I would get you in! Easy peasy.

Everett

Yeah..... anyway, I think we’re square, so I’m good to take it from here.

Troy

Take what? What do you mean?

Everett

You can go do your own thing now. You don’t owe me anything anymore! You fulfilled your half of the bargain

*Troy looks a little dismayed. He looks as if he’s considering his options carefully before he starts to laugh.*

Everett

What?

*The door to the club opens. Tony pops his head out.*

Tony  
You're good to go now.

Troy  
Everett, we're friends now. I don't owe you anything. That's why I'm helping you. That's what friends do.

*And with that Troy leads Everett inside the tiny partition of the club. When they enter, the lights inside and on stage right illuminate the space. Inside it feels a bit like a speakeasy. There's a tap, wooden chairs, and old swing music filling the environment. There are a few patrons filling the space. As soon as they enter, they're pushed against the bar. Tony comes in and calls over 'MCALLISTER'. And then walks past them as if he has other business to attend to and exits stage right.*

*Troy and Everett marvel anxiously at their surroundings. Eric enters stage right in some kind of a suit, looking like the most popular guy in the room waving to people as he passes. He looks sophisticated and confident as he approaches them. A beautiful woman follows him.*

Everett  
Hello! Are you—

Eric  
*(shaking hands)* Eric McAllister! Pleasure's all mine. Tony told me you boys were looking for me. What can I do for you?

*Troy starts walking around him, noticing all of his "more luxurious items". He picks up Eric's hand to examine his wrist.]*

Everett  
TROY!

Troy  
That's a nice watch! Where on earth did you get it

Eric  
Thanks! And no worries. It's a 1902 Rubilot. I've, of course had some improvements. But it's quite a special piece. Would you believe it's a relic of the Titanic? Man, the things you can find in this world.

Everett  
Eric, we actually need your help. We were sent here by my— —

Troy  
How did you afford a watch like that even in the afterlife?

Eric  
Well you see, I'm actually in finance, even here in the afterlife. I work with businesses that tend to target burgeoning capital enterprises here in the world of the dead. I work to help them

allocate funding as well as staffing, consultation, etc. We believe that there is a life after death and it's the life of opportunity.

Troy  
So... like investments?

Eric  
More or less, yes! It's a bit more than that, but generally yes.

Troy  
*(changing to deal stance)* How risky are you willing to go?

Everette  
Hold on, that's not what we're here for! Listen Eric, Troy and I...*(Troy shakes his hand)*. Yes, hi. I'm Everette— Eric, what I was trying to say was—

*Eric reaches out to brace their chests dramatically.*

Eric  
Wait a sec! How do you two know Tony? *You're not that punk who called earlier, are you?* I heard Tony griping about some guy who screwed him over in the real world.

*This strikes a nerve in Troy who lashes out at him. He runs over and pokes him in the chest,*

Troy  
LISTEN HERE PAL! You may have a fancy watch and look generally exactly how I would like to look, but that doesn't mean shit. Everette and I have come quite a ways tonight to get here and FIND you. I single-handedly tracked you down through an extensive network of friends I *happened* to know in the real world. I KNEW ENOUGH PEOPLE TO FIND YOUR ASS WHEREVER YOU WERE. Lucky for you, you saved us a short ride. Now, I've been berated enough since we've come in here, so you're just going to LISTEN to what we have to say and then shut the hell up forever. GOT IT?

*Eric tries to stand his ground at first, acting tough and puffing out his chest, As Troy goes on, he seems to deflate a bit. By the end, he's curious about Troy's story.*

Eric  
Wait a second, how did you find me?

Troy  
I told you already, I KNOW PEOPLE. I always know who to talk to when I want to find someone.

Eric  
What about my old friend Diego? He was a fisherman.

*In the middle of this discussion, Everette chimes up and tries to keep it on topic.*

Troy  
Fisherman? They all hang out at Dirty Mike's! I'd probably go over there and check in with my friend Jaime.

Eric  
Impressive, what about Doris Olwen, my old Secretary?

Troy  
How old?

Eric  
Thirty three.

Troy  
She like clubs?

Eric  
More of a *wine bar* kinda gal

Troy  
Did she wear Chuck Taylors?

Eric  
Religiously!

Troy  
She hangs out at Foreign Cinema. I guarantee it. If not, my friend Abood who works there can help me find her.

Everett  
Hey, I think we're off topic a bit. (nudging his friend) *Remember TROY?*

*The two seem to be ignoring him quite well. Eric is marveling at Troy's impressive network.*

Eric  
I have to hand it to you. That little database you have in your head is just damn impressive.

Troy  
Why thank you sir!

Eric  
We could use someone like you in our world. Someone who can find anyone when they need it.

Troy  
I think it could be a useful app!

Eric  
Yeah... You know it takes a lot of balls to talk to me the way you did. That was kind of shitty of you, but I respect the hell out of it. We should get together and talk about

*Troy starts bouncing up and down. He leaps into Everette's arms. He then tries to collect himself.*

Troy  
(*still collecting himself*) Ahem... that would be cool.

Everette

HELLO!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Am I a ghost here? Am I suddenly MORE dead than before.

Troy

Everett, shush! I'm in the middle of a deal here.

*Everette finally steps in and scolds Troy. He throws his arms up in frustration towards Eric, who motions to him that he know's he's trying to get in here.*

Eric

You okay bud?

Troy

Oh ignore him. He's constantly reliving the nadir of his life.

Everette

NOPE, NOPE, NOPE! Okay! NOT WHAT WE'RE HERE FOR.

Eric

Fine, fine. Let me hear your pitch.

*Everette cools down. Eric claps his hands together and a random waiter brings them three scotch glasses.*

Everette

We've actually been sent here as envoys. Your lady—

Eric

Oh! I am so sorry! I've been terribly rude. This is Leticia. She's my wife actually.

*Everette and Troy look at one another and then back at Leticia.*

Everette

Your wife? No, no. We're talking about Alice!

Troy

You know Alice right?

Eric

Sure! I mean, you're talking about the woman I was married to in the world of the living.

*Troy and Everette look to Leticia, expecting her to be rather upset about the whole thing.*

Leticia

Oh, don't worry! Eric has let me in on his life on the world above.

Everette

So you know about her?

Leticia

Sure! Everything that's relevant.

Everette

Okay, well I've been sent here to deliver a message from her to you Eric.

Eric

A message from Alice.

Troy

*(to Leticia)* I'm not sure if you're gonna want to be here for it...

*Leticia wraps her arm around Eric and they stare wistfully into each others eyes.*

Leticia

Whatever it is doesn't matter to me. I know the man I love.

*Everette looks at Troy who gives him a big shrug. He clinks Everette's glass and the both begrudgingly down the whisky. The lights dim. It's evident Everette is about to reveal some truth that will fundamentally change the events at play.*

Everette

*(to Troy)* Should I tell him the truth?

Troy

Only if you take another shot!

### **Shot**

Everette

Here's the deal. She loves you. Alice. She never got to say it and... and I think that there's a part of her that feels as though there's still unfinished business between the two of you because of that. I know how hard it can be to communicate with someone because of the whole pesky living business. And so I'm here to advocate on her behalf and pour her heart out to you!

*As he digests this information, Eric seems touched. But he never seems particularly emotionally moved. He fills his glass with whiskey, the lights rise up and he takes a sip. Troy and Everette lean in.*

Troy

Well? What do you have to say?

*Eric pours them glasses as well.*

Eric

To Alice!

*He clinks their glasses and they all take a shot. There's a moment of silence afterwards and Everett seems disappointed.*

Everette

*That's it? Really? TO ALICE?! What do you think about it? How do you feel about it?*

Eric

*(nonplussed)* What do I think about it? I think I'm dead! Obviously it's a touching sentiment and it means a lot, but I don't feel very particular about it one way or the other.

Leticia

I think it's rather sweet! I'd like for my former fiancée to think so fondly of me!

Everette

I don't get it. That's it? No revelatory moment! Nothing you want to say back.

Eric

I feel like you're disappointed in some way? Listen, I have nothing in my heart but love for Alice, but frankly after getting down here and meeting Leticia, I realize that I was completely wrong to be in a relationship with her. The whole thing was a massive mistake.

Troy

*(to Leticia)* You certainly seem more responsive than her, at least to me!

Everette

A mistake? Tell her it was a mistake? You want me to tell Alice, a woman who has travelled quite a ways to come out here and find you that the relationship she cherished so dearly was a mistake.

Eric

Look, when you put it that way, it sounds bad! But all I'm trying to do is set her free.... With the truth no less.

*Everette looks like his world is spinning. Troy briefly catches him.*

Leticia

...I'm going to go ahead and mingle with the others. Catch you at my recital later? Toodles!

*Leticia exits. Eric listens to music offstage and looks to exit the conversation.*

Eric

Listen you two, I should go. It's been really—

Everette

HOW LONG... were you married?

Eric

I don't know.... Five years? Six maybe. We'd been dating for a few before that.

Troy

Everette, maybe we should go. I don't know that there's anything else we can do here. *(he pats Everette's shoulder)* I'll wait for you outside. I'm gonna continue to smooth over my relationship with Tony.... Nice to meet you Eric! Stay in touch!

*Troy hands Eric a business card and proceeds to exit stage right "deeper into the restaurant".*

*Everette and Eric sit there in silence, their hands in their pockets, drinks in their hands.*

Eric

I should be going soon. We have a few little ones back at the abandoned warehouse that I have to make sure get fed.

Everette

Little ones?

Eric

Yeah! We got four kids. Kind of a fantastic deal since I never got to have any while I was living. Just goes to show you just how much life *doesn't* end after death eh!

Everette

Yeah... I guess. I'll tell Alice you said hi.

*Eric sticks his hand out and Everette shakes it. Eric starts to walk away, but sets his drink down and turns around one more time.*

Eric

Hey man, I know you're disappointed, but look: People change! I— I just realized that I never loved her. Don't get me wrong, we had a lot of fun in marriage. I think at the end of the day we just never clicked the way I hoped we would. I know it's not the response you want, but it's the truth and if your responsibility is to deliver the truth, then I'm simply doing my bit.

*Eric exits. Everette is left there alone biting his lip. He takes a few swigs of his drink and then attempts to throw the cup down in a dramatic shatter. Instead it bounces and rolls around the stage and he chases after it. When he puts his drink at the bar and stares steadfastly out the window.*

Everette

*Right. The truth.*

*He massages his forehead and attempts to rehearse himself. He exits the building.*

*The stage goes dark. End Act 2.*

## **No Shot**

*Everette waves away the shot, looks at Troy and sighs.*

Everette

Alice just wanted us to tell you... how happy she is that you're *probably* in a better place.... And that no matter what you do in your life *or death*, that she will support you no matter what. In fact, she herself has found a person who will gladly take care of her in your place and it's not like a *dig against you or anything!* If anything it's more like she's happy and happy to let you be happy being whoever you are or whoever you might be with ever.

*There's a moment of silence after Everette's ramble. Troy takes his drink away from him and sips from both. He takes the mantle.*

Troy

I think.... whatever... Everette... *was* trying to say was that Alice wants to wish you well in the afterlife and she'd be happy to know you're happy.

Eric

That's very nice of her. Gosh I loved that woman.

Leticia

That is so sweet! I wish my former husband would speak so fondly about me! I'm sure he's saying 'good riddance' somewhere pissing away the last of his dollars in Macau!

*Everette looks at Troy with morose guilt.*

Everette

Wait! That's not all. She also wants to say that she—

*Troy covers Everette's mouth.*

Troy

—Still hopes you're keeping up with the world of finance! You know what they say, *debt really does follow you to the grave and beyond!*

Eric

Yes, well I hope she's doing well too. What's she up to? Has she remarried? I truly hope that he's a nice gentleman!

Everette

You WHAT?! HOW CAN YOU—

Troy

*(covering Everette's mouth)* —know her life so accurately? That is so... darn.... accurate.

Leticia

Eric just pays attention! He really cares about people and that's why I feel like the luckiest woman dead.

*Everette seems like he's struggling to say something and Leticia and Eric get suspicious.*

Troy

Would you excuse us for just one moment?

*Troy coyly pulls Eric to the side while the other two continue to stare into each other's eyes longingly.*

Troy

*(under his breath)*  
What are you doing?

Eric

I was sent here to deliver a message and—

Troy  
And? AND? And what, per se? Who's to say that you didn't deliver the message? I fail to see a concrete set of consequences.

Everette  
I'll be letting her down.

Troy  
HOW? She's not going to know!

Everette  
She's going to expect a response back!

Troy  
And what are you planning on telling her?

Everette  
....I—

Troy  
Were you going to tell her *the truth*? Tell her that her husband has quickly moved on and doesn't glaze his words with even the slightest hint of sentiment?

Everette  
He hasn't heard *me* out yet!

Troy  
And what difference will it make!

Everette  
It's the TRUTH!

Troy  
It's the unnecessary truth. Look at the man! Are we going to trade one unhappiness for another? Is that really what this has all been about?

*Everette stops for a moment to think. He vacillates between his desire for the truth and widespread happiness. After a deep breath, he grabs Troy by the head and they do a mutual nod towards one another. They return facing Eric and Leticia.*

Everette  
It's so nice to have met you! I'm sorry to bother you.

*Troy, Eric, and Leticia all look surprised.*

Troy  
Hey! Stay in touch! (Troy hands him a business card)

*Everette ushers Troy in front of him stage left towards the exit of the bar. Leticia and Eric start to exit stage right, but Eric turns around one more time.*

Eric  
Oh Everette!

Everette  
Yeah?

Eric  
If you see Alice again, tell her I said hi. I hope she's made a great life for herself.

Everette  
I'll try not to let her have too much fun without you.

*Eric exits stage right. Everette and Troy leave the club. Everette seems to walk with purpose.*

Troy  
You're not... telling her 'hi' from him, right?

Eric  
*Hell no!*

*Troy turns around and tiptoes back towards the club.*

Troy  
Cool. Good. Glad we're on the same page.

Everette  
Where are you going?

*Troy frantically makes his way back towards the club, but continues to wave Everette offstage.*

Troy  
Oh me? I'm just. It's not— I've got to tie up a few loose ends, but I'll meet you over there!

Everette  
*Do you know where it is?*

Troy  
What kind of a question is that?

*They both exit opposite ends of stage. The stage goes dark. End Act 2.*

### Act 3 Scene 1

*The lights rise up and reveal a starry backdrop. Several houseplants are placed throughout the scene to give the impression of a “forest”. Hidden behind the plants is a backdrop featuring a red railing to suggest one is on the Golden Gate Bridge. For now, fairy lights hang from the distance to emulate the kind of lights used by the bridge. For extra authenticity, add dry ice!*

*As the light go up, Alice and Gwen wander their way into center stage where there’s a bench and a single “lamppost”. Gwen is giddily swinging a six pack of beer in her hand and Alice is still struggling from the moral conundrum in front of her. They walk extraordinarily slowly (or in circles and explore the scene as if it was actually apart of nature.*

Gwen

This is great. I mean, does it get any better than this? The beautiful Presidio! I don’t know that I’ve ever seen it like this... at night! To be honest, I would have never thought to come here this late, what with the patch of darkness we had to make our way through, but somehow darn it, we did it! Great thinking for the hike.

Alice

*(panting)* I just didn’t want anyone to track us— er, know where we’re going! In case they were thinking of, you know, crashing our little get together.

*Alice collapses on the bench, Gwen comes and sits down next to her on the floor. Alice hands her a six pack of drinks.*

Alice

Here. *(handing her an opener)* Do you mind?

*Gwen cracks open two drinks and hands her one. Alice starts chugging.*

Alice

There. That’s better.

*Gwen leans her head against the armrest of the bench nearest Gwen. She looks up at the stars. A bright white-blue light shines on her face.*

Gwen

Wow Alice, look at the stars! This is just INCREDIBLE. I mean, you never get this in a city, There’s got to be four, maybe five of them up there. *(Alice looks up and looks over at Gwen. She smiles)* I think this is the thing a lot of people forget about - just taking moments like this. Looking up at the stars, enjoying the galactic masterpiece painted in front of us. You know I’m an astronomer? Well, I actually teach an after-school program for children on astronomy, but *potato tomato.*

*Alice, enjoying seeing this revived, living Gwen, slowly slumps down out of her seat next to Alice. Both enjoy basking in the blue light in center stage. She observes Gwen’s cheeriness and it rubs off on her. She joins her in staring at the sky.*

Alice

Oh yeah? Teach me some things then!

*Gwen gets really quiet for a second.*

Gwen

*(impersonating Mufasa) SIMBA..... LOOK AT THE STARS..... THE GREAT KINGS FROM THE PAST LOOK DOWN FROM THOSE STARS.*

*Alice and Gwen break into a giggle fit. Alice offers her a “cheers” for her impersonation.*

Alice

Not bad, not bad!

Gwen

God, I loved that movie. I hated the betrayal part in the beginning though! Really horseshit move to kill an innocent guy like Mufasa like that.

*Alice’s faces goes pale. She looks over at Gwen to see her reaction, then quickly looks back.*

Alice

Haha.... yeah....

Gwen

*(pointing)* Ooh look! There. Do you see those there? That’s Cassiopeia! She’s a queen. Let’s drink to that. *(looking around more)* And there? See that! That’s Orion!

Alice

Cool! Drink to Orion! What’s his story?

Gwen

Oh him? He’s the son of Poseidon. Pretty baller dude overall. Just an overall good guy. You know, do no wrong individual.

Alice

Cheers to Orion!

Gwen

Ooh and there’s Scorpius, named of course after the terrible scorpion that tragically stings Orion to death.

*Alice does a spit take on Gwen and starts coughing.*

Gwen

HOLY SHIT! Are you okay? I thought I was the drunk one here.

Alice

I just— uh, got something caught in my throat.

Gwen

You’re not vaping are you? That shit will sneak up behind you, tell you it’s really chill, and then kill you when you least expect it!

Alice

NOOOOOO!

*They both stand up. Gwen is a bit disturbed at how loudly Alice reacted. Alice starts pacing. She grabs her head out of frustration before she grabs her by the shoulders.*

Alice

I'm sorry. I— I don't know what came over me. I think I have a thing about dying.

Gwen

Don't sweat it girl. I get it. I just think, the more you think about that stuff, the more you're going to lose out on life. I mean look around you!

*Gwen goes and grabs a leaf off a nearby plant.*

Gwen

Isn't this neat? I mean, maybe I'm being a little over-the-top. But I think this is cool as hell! This is life. (*referencing her verdurous surroundings*) This is life! Everything around us is full of abundant and exciting life. Look up above us! That's what I'm talking about. I mean sadly, and too often, we're left between living without much of a life and having a hell of a life without much living.

*She wraps her hands around Alice and slowly guides her onto the bench next to her. Alice starts drinking*

Gwen

I just think moments like this: the spontaneity that you brought me? That's special! That's the kind of shit that only comes around once in a blue moon. You forced me to break my comfort zone. That's just not something we do anymore.

Alice

Wait, forced? Woah, woah, woah.

Gwen

(*excited*) Yes! I mean, without you, I would be at home safe and bored out of my mind. You took me away from that safety.

Alice

*Is this the hard stuff? (stealing a flask out of Gwen's pocket)* And... I think maybe we can say that the whole situation is a two way street. You know? I invited you... you accepted the invitation. I think culpability is more widespread than one might let on.

*Gwen laughs.*

Gwen

You're funny dude! I'm glad we met like this. It's EXACTLY what I needed.

Alice

Well, I'll just say, I don't think that you look remotely as somber as you were earlier at the restaurant.

Gwen

Booze will do that to you.

*Alice stands up and crosses her arms as she searches elsewhere for help.*

Alice  
Sometimes booze makes it worse!

Gwen  
Yeah, but not when you're in the right company.

Alice  
*(scoffing cheerily)* Me? We just met!

Gwen  
Yes, but you reached out to me! You helped me. Out of the goodness of your heart. I think that too many people nowadays forget that we're all human. We all laugh in our own way, we all hurt in our own way, we all feel love in our own unique way. And I think for whatever reason, we've put up all these obnoxious barriers to *actually* sharing that with people. We're afraid. *I'm afraid*. I don't want to be alone. I need someone who knows that what I'm thinking is the right way to think. Not because I want to be validated for a particular opinion... but because I don't want to feel like someone doesn't understand me. That's when I feel most alone.

*Alice begins to tear up with her back to Gwen. She clears her throat and wipes her eyes before turning around.*

Alice  
That's the thing Gwen. I never want to be alone. And I think I sympathize with your ex.....perience because of that. Looking back, I don't know if we clicked. Eric, and I. I just know that during all those wild nights, dancing naked at Ocean Beach, I felt comfortable. I let my guard down entirely. I felt embraced. *(she pauses for a moment and approaches Gwen)* But I was never sure if he felt the same way. And I think it's the uncertainty that's driving me to this DAMN place right here. I mean, I am at WITS EFFING END here. But I need an answer. Because if it wasn't true and I had just fabricated this entire thing inside my head, then I've been so alone.

Gwen  
Oh come now! I thought I was the one that was supposed to have a complete meltdown to deal with the inner anxieties of a literal post-mortem? You're not alone. You've got that husband of yours!

Alice  
He's de— Oh that one! Yeah, I mean. That's the point. I'm pathetic. I like Jim. He's a nice enough guy. But at the end of the day, I'm with him because I'm scared. I'm not like you. You're brave. You feigned attention with a super-successful, albeit not-very-attractive bachelor today. If that was me, I'd be putty in his hands. I'd give in. I feel like he'd get me. It's exactly what happened with Jim.

Gwen  
That's funny... Here I thought I was the one whose life was in shambles because the man I loved had died. And here you are, MARRIED, telling me it doesn't get any better!

*They both laugh and cheers. They begin to sip.*

Alice

I just need to get my answer. Then I'll feel like it wasn't all for nought. I just need to know that he's somewhere right now... lonely, waiting on the edge of the Embarcadero, watching the sunsets, waiting to hear my voice again.....in heaven, of course.

Gwen

Honestly, if he loved you, he wouldn't be doing any of that. He'd care about your happiness more than your loneliness.

*Alice looks over at Gwen as if she's said something revolutionary. She pauses and takes a big swig from the can.*

Gwen

It's too bad you'll never know....

Alice

Say Gwen, if you could be back with your Everett, no matter the circumstance, would you?

*Gwen stands up and starts to limber up, gathering her things. She begins playfully swinging around the lamppost.*

Gwen

You mean, if I could go back in time and tell that IDIOT to look where he's stepping, would I? OF COURSE! I mean, I think about it all the time. Now would I resurrect him? Ehh...Unless this is some kind of Patrick Swayze *Ghost* situation...

*Alice looks calculating. She reaches for Gwen's flask again. Gwen's phone rings.*

Gwen

*(on phone)* Hello? Dante? I'm fine, I'm fine. Yes. *(makes annoyed face at Alice)* I am not home. I'm somewhere in the Presidio with a complete stranger, drinking.... No, of course I'm serious.... WHAT? NO IT'S FINE. HEY, HEY, HEY! It's a girl. Yeah. OH SO NOW YOU'RE OKAY WITH IT? How do you know she's not dangerous.... Okay, thanks for calling. I'll call you next week. Sorry I was out of it tonight.

*Gwen hangs up the phone*

Gwen

He is a sweet guy... A little overly cautious though. Well come on!

Alice

Come on what?

Gwen

This isn't it, right? I mean surely this wasn't the intended ending destination! You weren't like: this patch of dirt is perfect! Come on, let's go.

Alice

*(weakly)* Let's do it....

*The lamppost goes dark. The stage turns black. The shrubbery is easily removed to reveal the bridge in the final scene.*

## Scene 2

*As the lights rise, there's a railing going across the length of the stage with a backdrop of San Francisco at night from the Golden Gate Bridge. The railing is covered with small lights, giving it a bit of a fantasy look. At first, just these lights are illuminated, revealing a somber, nervous-looking Everett overlooking the ocean with the city in the background. He's warming his hands with his breath and scratching his head. With his posture slumped over the railing, he addresses the audience.*

Everett

Oh man. Everything about death is so disappointing. God I hate it. There's so much waiting. So much thinking. Wait and think. Wait and think. Blah, blah, blah. That's all I feel like I did *in the real world*. I spent my whole life thinking and planning and waiting for all these things to happen. And they just might have! It's like... well, it's kinda like... I have no idea what it's like. I don't know that there's really anything like your neighbor accidentally committing suicide on you. I mean WHO DOES THAT? It's... rude, frankly! Like, keep your death to yourself!

*Everett begins pacing the stage. He makes his way to the far stage left and points out towards one far end of the city.*

*THERE!* That's where I could be right now. RIGHT THERE. And instead, I'm here... one of the more iconic spots to end one's life. (*thinking*) Why couldn't he have done it here? I mean look at the view! It's one of those things that you'll *want* to be the last thing you see before you die... *Well except for the damn fog*, but STILL. It's life. It's beautiful, reaffirming! It's the kind of thing that gives you immediate regret about what you just did!

*Everett sighs deeply. He takes a moment.*

It's awesome. Truly. Like deserving of awe. And *I* took it all for granted. I mean, I wasn't walking down the street appreciating the smell of fresh flowers, petting strangers' dogs, and stopping for boba tea just for the hell of it. I had a routine! I couldn't stop to... to... try and engage with people! To try and engage with life! What would that have done anyway? Huh? Sure, maybe someone - *I doubt it* - but maybe someone would appreciate that gesture. Maybe even think it's nice. I always kind of liked it. But I didn't have time for that! I didn't have time to be nice! I had things to do.

*He runs to the other end of the stage.*

You see that over there? That's where I was planning on moving to. I applied to live at an apartment over there and I was rejected. I couldn't come up with four references because the fourth most recent landlord was my mom. And right over there? That's where I wanted to work. It was supposed to be a great company with all the bells and whistles. Kombucha on tap, free organic fig-bars, yoga teacher that taught classes with marijuana incense, and free nude-drawing classes to help you access your creative side. *Ironically, they did not offer a 401k or health insurance*, but it didn't matter anyway because I wasn't a "culture fit".

*He walks back to the center.*

Not a culture fit? They were saying I was an asshole. That's how they tell you. Because what possible culture are you trying to conform to? Is the goal to make these homogenous corporate entities that operate more like clubs than businesses? If so, I don't want any of it.

No.... They're looking for someone... good. Not virtuous, not necessarily saintly. Just good. I must have looked bad.

*He droops over the rails.*

Maybe I am bad. I didn't *plan* on being that way. Part of my grand plans involved donating to charity regularly when I was rich! I want to help the poor. *I want to help my friends! I just wanted to do it.....(he sighs)... when it was convenient.*

*In the background, Amy strolls onto stage right, she sees Everett having his moment and decides to eavesdrop.*

And now... I can't help but feel like I'm *still* doing that. Instead of helping Gwen now, I-- I'm going to help her when she's dead. That's not kind... it's convenient *for me.*

*Everett has a moment of questioning.*

She loves me! She *wants* to be with me! I can help her... I just need her here with me. Does that make me a bad person? I sure hope not. Every decision I made led me here. Good, bad, right, wrong - it's all just a consequence of decision. Does morality really even play a role?

*Amy sneaks up next to him with her Joule. She keeps her presence hidden*

Am I a hopeless romantic... or a hopeless asshole?

Amy  
Both probably.

*Everett jumps backwards out of fright.*

Everett  
AMY! What the HELL.

Amy  
What's wrong? You look like you've seen a ghost?

Everett  
What are you doing here?

Amy  
I always come by here on my way home.

Everett  
Home? What the hell are you talking about? I thought you lived in SF?

Amy  
I do!

Everett  
Across the bridge?

Amy  
Under it!

*Amy points down over the bridge and Everett looks over.*

Everett  
That's a pile of trash...

Amy  
That's actually a dirty old sofa, a flashlight, and a half-eaten box of oreos, thank you very much.

Everett  
Like I said.... You live down there?

Amy  
YES! You think I'm paying rent in this city on a near minimum wage-job?

Everett  
What about your psychic ghost job?

Amy  
HA! Yeah, I use that money to cover my rent.

Everett  
I thought you said you live down there.

Amy  
I do. *(doing voice)* Scenic, open-concept, waterfront one-bedroom... parking spot.

Everett  
Wow...

Amy  
Yeah and you thought dying here was tough.

Everett  
I'm rethinking my whole approach now... What with this whole Gwen thing.

Amy  
Oh, this still?

Everett  
Yes I guess I just feel this sourness. I just feel like whatever it is just doesn't go together. I've been waiting my entire life to be with Gwen. And now I've been waiting my entire death for her to die! But I see her now. She seems... I don't know... She seems different.

Amy  
Or maybe you're just actually getting to see what she's like on her own.

Everett  
Don't remind me.

Amy  
So what are ya gonna do?

Everett  
Don't know... I'm stuck between just getting her here now... or leaving her alone.

*Amy pats his shoulder.*

Amy  
Have you ever thought about Alice in this situation?

*She starts to walk away.*

Might be worth considering!

Everett  
Where are you going?

Amy  
To sleep! So I can wake up from this bad dream.

*She begins to exit. As she does, Alice and Gwen appear on stage. Alice looks surprised to see Amy. Amy pats her on the shoulder.*

Amy  
Good luck, kid. Hope it's worth it. I'm off to sleep in my bush. Goodnight!

*Gwen laughs, she grabs Alice around the shoulders.*

Gwen  
The homeless in this city sure say some weird-ass things!

*Amy chuckles and exits. Everett tries to keep himself hidden for the time being as Alice and Gwen make their way to center-stage, he puts his hands in his pockets and heads upstage.*

Alice  
Yes....bizarre indeed.

Gwen  
WOW! Look at this view. I can't believe we actually did this.... On a weeknight no less! God I'm going to hate myself tomorrow. I have the third graders tomorrow. I usually save my alcohol for *before the class.*

*Alice looks around suspiciously. Gwen acts surprised.*

Gwen  
You okay?

Alice  
Yeah, yeah. You just enjoy the view! Give me a moment.

*Alice turns around. Walks straight over to Everett and swings him around.*

Everett  
Ow, ow!

*She looks delighted at seeing him. She hugs him*

Alice  
It is you! I thought it might be a mugger.

Everett  
No, no! It's me.

Alice  
Well, did you see him?! Eric?

*Everett seems shy.*

Everett  
I— I did.

Alice  
And??

Everett  
Well you see, I— uh—

*Troy walks into the scene. Everett pauses.*

Troy  
Oh this should be good...

Everett  
TROY! Troy's here! Troy's here everyone!

Alice  
Hey! No! Don't distract from this convo.

Troy  
For once, I agree with the lady here. You got to pull the band-aid pal. I was just going to check in on you.

Everett  
What? Troy, I'm just telling *Alice* about Eric.

Troy  
Yes! I hear you and that's great. In fact, I've actually got a good thing going with Eric... *like a really good thing!* He wants me to do consulting, so I'm just popping in to tell you you can slack me or ping me or whatever you need to, but I'm stepping into a one-on-one with him momentarily, so... I know you'll do the right thing.

Everett

I don't know what part of the Eric experience she'll find most interesting.

Alice

All of it! Literally, any and all of it.

Troy

Oh, he's actually pinging me now! Just give her the short and sweet, less truthful version, or the longer, real version.

*Troy runs offstage. Gwen wanders to the far end of stage so Alice and Everett can have middle.*

### **Short and Sweet**

Everett

He was.... Very, very sad to not have you in his life. Once I talked to him, he remembered you and all these moments that you guys shared...

Alice

Oh! What moments??

Everett

I don't know that it's my place to share. *(Alice looks confused)* But the point is, he just made me realize how lucky he is to have a girl like you. Someone who, through thick and thin, through the best of times and the worst of times, has nothing but appreciation for someone who did little else but care and have a moment of true selflessness in hoping for the best for someone while expecting nothing in return. If he wouldn't have cared about you, he would have been an idiot.

*Alice begins to well up, she smiles at Everett with fond memories of her lost lover.*

Alice

I'm just glad he noticed.

Everett

And more than that, he wanted nothing more than for you to feel as good as you made him feel. You deserve nothing less. I think if there were more people like you here, the world of the dead would be a lot better place. But for now, the living world is lucky to have you. You've got a heart of gold.

*Alice wipes her eyes and laughs through happy tears*

Alice

I think... I think I feel at peace now. It's like there's this huge burden lifted off my back. And I know I'll see him again one day. When it's all said and done here. But it also sounds like he doesn't want me to join him.

*Everett holds her arms. He looks over at Gwen*

Everett

I think he wants you to do what he never could. Live the best life you possibly could without the weight of his ghost holding you down. Laugh, cry... feel like you only can when you're alive. Test the limits of the living because god knows that's absolutely not fun when you're dead.

*Alice laughs and turns away to hide her face, which is still a little teary. They look over the bridge.*

You know what would happen to me if I jumped off the bridge right now? I'd end up feeling exactly the way I do now, except I'd be a bit more wet and I'd probably find Al Capobe's lost treasure. But what good would it be?

Alice  
So... he didn't care about Jim?

Everett  
If he spent his entire afterlife in a vindictive state, would he have ever cared about you after all?

*Alice takes a step back. She looks him up and down,*

Alice  
Honestly, I think you... You've done more here for me than anyone else would've. I don't know why it's you. I don't know why I can see you of all people. All I know is that I'm glad I see you. I'm glad I see you because I feel like even if you were alive, not a lot of other people would. *(referencing Gwen)* Okay, maybe her. She's lucky! But for now. I got one over on that girl. I... I think I'm ready to move on. I've said all I need to say and I only hope that it's enough for him. It's certainly enough for me.

Everett  
You're definitely the coolest bi-dimensional being I've ever met. I hope this has helped.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Long and Honest**

Everett  
To tell you the truth... He... Well I think that. Listen, you are one hundred and fifty percent better than him and you need to know it.

*Alice looks panicked*

Alice  
Wha— what are you saying?

*Everett gets frustrated. Alice starts to hyperventilate over the bridge. She realizes what he's saying.*

Everett  
The man is an ASSHOLE Alice. He's... got a woman. And a family and a bunch of shit that just.... Gets to me when I think about it. He just. He didn't care.... In the way that he should've.... In the way that he could've.... In the way you hoped he would.

*Alice spends a long moment in silence.*

Alice  
All those years..... Those nights I spent thinking of him so sure that he would be there thinking of me. All wasted...

*Everett puts his hand on her back and channels her frustration.*

Everett

I... didn't want to tell you... I didn't want to hurt you. I know how hard it can be.... When you care about someone so much... You just want them to know at any cost.

Alice

I didn't expect anything from him. If anything, I just hoped it... I hoped it would make things easier for *him*. Now I see he never needed me in the first place. I feel like *I wanna jump off now*.

Everett

Take it from me. You're way too good for *this world*. You should stick to doing good in your own.

Alice

Thanks...

*Everett sits and contemplates her pain.*

Everett

I think the hardest part of this whole thing is that *he's not a bad guy*. He's just.... Made the wrong choice in my opinion.

*Alice smiles at that. She starts to pull herself back together.*

Alice

I'm sure she's nice.

Everett

Oh, no. She's *terrible*.

Alice

*(laughing)*

Really?

Everett

Just awful. And look. Now you get your pick of the litter.

*Alice turns to face him and buries her head in his shoulder.*

Alice

You're a really nice guy Everett. I'm glad I can see you.

Everett

I hope that the freedom of knowing *the truth* brings you some relief.

\*\*\*\*\*

Alice

Well. I... I guess I feel better. Or at least, I feel as good as one can, considering the circumstances.

Everett  
It's a lot to take in, I know.

*Alice hugs him.*

Alice  
Thank you. I... can't believe you did that for me. You went out of your way. It was very generous of you. You didn't expect anything in return.... well, except for *(points to Gwen)*.

Everett  
Yeah, don't mention it. I— think I actually enjoyed the experience... just cause I got to hang out with you.

*Alice smiles.*

Alice  
Well, a deal's a deal.

*Alice heads back towards Gwen.*

Alice  
You're a good chick, you know that?

Gwen  
I was really going for more of a “bad bitch” vibe... so it's actually the opposite of what I was hoping for.  
*They laugh.*

Alice  
I'm afraid that I am unfortunately the real bad bitch.

Gwen  
*(Highlander impression) There can only be one!*

Alice  
I'm beginning to really feel that.

Gwen  
Tell me we can still be friends after tonight!

Alice  
*(wincing)* How about we start with friends for life and take it from there?

Gwen  
Deal.

*Alice then grabs Gwen by the side and pulls her back.*

Gwen  
*Woah! Are you that drunk? I'm not a great dancer.*

*Troy runs back on stage. He takes his spot right by the action.*

Troy  
Phew! I didn't miss it! I was worried.

Alice  
How about a little interpretive dance?

Gwen  
I basically float!

Alice  
Perfect!

*Alice, reluctantly, charges with Gwen towards the edge of the bridge. Everett rushes over to grab Alice before she sends Gwen over the edge - inadvertently, he ends up holding Alice in a dip over the bridge. Alice looks stunned as she looks into his eyes. The spotlight shines on them. Troy puts his elbow on Gwen's shoulder, who just seems mystified.*

Troy  
You see what I see?

*Finally Gwen stands up. The lights come up.*

Gwen  
How are you— - How are you doing that?

Alice  
*(whispering to Everett)* You should probably let me down now. She's going to get suspicious...

Everett  
Right.

*Everett pulls her up. She brushes herself off. She about-faces Gwen who is looking at her cock-eyed.*

Alice  
Would you give.....me.... A minute?

Gwen  
You're not going to off yourself are you?

*Alice just smiles. She pulls away from Gwen. Troy, still on her shoulder, looks at her and back at them.*

Gwen  
Something is wrong with her...

Troy  
Oh honey, you have *no idea*.

*Over on the other side of stage, a smaller light comes to illuminate Everett and Alice.*

Alice  
What are you doing?

Everett  
I can't... you can't do it... You can't kill her.

Alice  
Certainly not with you being so... dramatic. Besides, I thought this is what you wanted! I thought *she* was what you wanted.

Everett  
I thought so too. But she's not some pet that I need returned to me. She's not my property. She's not even dating me anymore and really doesn't owe me *anything*. I just assumed she'd want to. I assumed she'd been agonizing over my absence.

Alice  
She does! She misses you!

Everett  
Yeah. And I like that. She'll always miss me in some way. And see, that's the thing. The second that she dies. The second she falls off this bridge and is rejoined in my arms, she won't miss me anymore. She'll have me. And to be honest, she might be a little mad.

Alice  
Yeah... I was thinking about that.

Everett  
You were?

Alice  
Yeah. I tried to think of the situation from my point of view, where it's Eric whose out to bring me back to him and he gets someone to murder me so I can be back with him. I mean, at first I thought, "*Awww, how romantic! Saving your love from beyond the grave.*" But... that's not all what I would want. I mean, I'm going to be real, I would be pissed off. I miss Eric like crazy. And I have to thank you for everything you've done to connect us. But I also think that, in the end, I was more attracted to the idea of him than anything. He wasn't *that* spectacular. In fact, he obviously didn't go to the lengths you went to connect with me.

Everett  
He's an idiot.

*Alice smiles. She puts her arms on Everett.*

Alice  
So's Gwen.

*From the distance, Gwen waves over.*

Gwen  
Hey! I— this has been super fun, but I've got to leave soon.

Alice  
*(still to Everett)* She shouldn't need all this convincing to die.

Everett  
She's a hard sell.

Alice  
If she could see you the way I do...

Everett  
I don't know that anyone's going to see me the way you do!

*They look at each other and laugh. She gives him an intimate hug and a kiss on the cheek. He starts to get emotional.*

Alice  
I'm taking that with me to the grave.

Gwen  
*Hello! Yeah. I STILL need a ride. Remember? Phone broken? I have some pot at my apartment.... And Cheez - Its.*

Everett  
I think she just out-bid me.

Alice  
Oh she way outbid you! *(to Gwen)* Coming!

*Alice leaves to go toward Gwen.*

Everett  
Take care of her for me!

Alice  
Oh, you *don't* want me to kill her? *(Everett shakes his head while smiling)* Good. I like her... I think she's a keeper.

*Alice reunites with Gwen. Troy pulls out a cigarette and walks offstage for a moment..*

Gwen  
FINALLY! Let's go.

Alice  
You better not have been lying about the pot.

*They laugh. Gwen pauses briefly.*

Gwen  
We may need to stop at a convenience store *(Alice slaps her)* — for Cheez Its! I think I'm out of Cheez Its!

*Gwen exits. Just before she exits the stage, Everett calls out to her and she looks over her shoulder.*

Everett  
*ALICE!*

*She pauses. He makes a gesture between the two of them with his fingers as if he's referencing both of them.*

Everett  
Maybe in another life?

Alice  
*(coily)* Maybe. See you on the other side *(she winks at him)*

*She walks out. Everett lets out a deep sigh. He looks over the edge of the bridge. Moments later, Troy comes back on stage a bit more frantic. He has a cigarette hanging from his lip, which he throws out of his mouth.*

Everett  
At least we've got each other man.

Troy  
Yeah.... I actually have to run. I have an investors meeting in like an hour! But I'm glad everything worked out for you exactly the way you didn't plan it. I mean, you and I, we're good right?

*Everett smirks. He puts his hand on his friend's shoulder.*

Everett  
Yes. We're good. We're friends.

Troy  
...and possibly investing partners? You may have unknown assets Everett which will make you a pivotal member of our growing team. You follow me Everett? Listen, I gotta run, but this has been fun. I'm assuming you're not going to get another shot like that again ever, so I hope you don't regret your choice! Like me and my leap of faith into the business world, there's no turning back. These choices, they have consequences. But don't let it weigh on you too heavily. When it's all said and done, greater, more handsome forces are at work ensuring all of our fates... Anyway, you okay? You're okay. You can't die twice. Anyway Ev, get back to me about the investments. Goodnight!

*Troy spoke so fast, Everett was made Dizzy. Some music plays in the auditorium. Troy begins exiting.*

Everett  
*Wait! Where are you? It's early! Don't say goodnight!*

*Troy continues exiting, but calls after him as he runs off stage.*

Troy

Hey man, maybe you should try Ghost Tinder! *(Troy continues exiting the stage)* Or, you know, maybe you just wait another sixty years? *(He exits)*

Everett  
Shit. Kill me.

*Raise the music and close the curtain. Allow music to run out while cast members bow.*  
*Goodnight Tonight*

*Fin.*