

Drawing Away

a play  
by

T.M. Camp

Copyright 2009

T.M. Camp  
[tmc@tmcamp.com](mailto:tmc@tmcamp.com)

For my daughter, for Julia.

And also for Jack, just because.

Scene One

*Let's begin in darkness, that's as good a place as any.*

*We can hear a man's voice, counting. Heavy footfalls mark each number, keeping time...*

VOICE

*...seventy-nine, eighty, eighty-one...*

*...the lights rise on a small room, cardboard boxes stacked here and there among the spare furnishings, everything is threadbare and worn: A sofa, a bookshelf, a couple of chairs, and a table.*

*To one side, an open doorway leading out. To the other, an open hallway leading further in.*

*There is a small partition about waist high, a counter top separating the room from the kitchen (unseen) beyond.*

*Liz is sitting on the sofa sorting through one of the boxes, pulling out handfuls of crumpled newspaper, unwrapping dishes, placing books on the shelves.*

*She is thirteen years old and, if all goes well, she will grow up to be someone worth knowing.*

*There is a muffled crash from outside, through the open door...*

LIZ

*...careful.*

*The footsteps resume.*

VOICE

Eighty-two, eighty-three...

*...Walter appears in the doorway, carrying two large boxes stacked on top of each other. He stomps forward into the room, counting out his steps...*

WALTER

...eighty-four, eighty-five, eighty-six!

*He drops the boxes heavily right behind Liz.*

*She does not react.*

*He squats down and, with difficulty, picks the boxes up again. He adjusts his position and drops them once more...*

WALTER

...eighty-six!

*Again, she ignores him.*

*Defeated, he collapses on the sofa.*

*Walter is Liz's father and although things haven't gone well for him, he is still someone worth knowing.*

WALTER

I'm dying.

LIZ

From what?

WALTER

I said I'm dying.

LIZ

I heard you. Of what?

WALTER

Eighty-six.

LIZ

The number?

WALTER

Yes. The number. The number itself has killed me. There are eighty-six steps from the car to this apartment. I have made eighty-six trips, carrying boxes and furniture and more boxes, most of which are yours. There are eighty-six of them and they are filled with books. Many books. Heavy books. Books you've been collecting for years in preparation for this day when I, your old father, would carry them up eighty-six steps to this room, to die.

LIZ

There's nowhere near eighty...

WALTER

...also the number of almost heart attacks I've had carrying these eighty-six boxes up those eighty-six steps to his room. For you. Eighty-six times. And eighty-six times when you didn't say "Thank you father for carrying my books instead of leaving them out in the street to be stolen by younger, stronger men than yourself." Eighty-six boxes, eighty-six trips, eighty-six steps.

LIZ

Eighty-six heart attacks.

WALTER

*Almost* heart attacks. You'd like that wouldn't you? If I was gone?

LIZ

Well, it would be quieter.

WALTER

And another thing...

LIZ

...first off, Walter...

WALTER

...don't call me...

LIZ

...first off *Dad*, there are only forty-eight steps from the car to this room.

WALTER

Says you.

LIZ

I counted. You have made a grand total of twelve trips, stopping many times on the stairs to trip over steps you didn't know were there and steps you thought were there but weren't. Which is somewhat remarkable after twelve trips, that you don't have them memorized by now. Each trip takes approximately five-and-a-half minutes, depending on the amount of time you spend whining and trying to step over steps that are, and are not, there. And there are only twelve boxes of books. Four of which, by my count, are still down in the car, waiting to be stolen by younger, stronger men than yourself.

WALTER

You forgot the heart attacks.

LIZ

*Almost* heart attacks. And it's ridiculous to think that a man in your pitiful physical condition could withstand more than two before dropping dead.

WALTER

You forgot the eighty-six times you didn't say "Thank you father for carrying..."

LIZ

...twelve times, same as the trips. You don't get any thank you's until all of my books are up here safe and sound.

WALTER

You know, there are people out there who would feel sorry for me.

LIZ

What people?

*She rises, a portable radio in her hands.*

WALTER

I don't know, but there are people who feel sorry for others sometimes, I've heard of them and I'd like to believe that they're out there looking for someone like me.

*He gets up and starts for the door.*

*Liz sets the radio down, plugs it in, and extends the antenna.*

LIZ

And if you were dead, I wouldn't have anyone to carry up the rest of my books. Don't forget to bring my kit up. It's on the front seat. I'll make dinner.

WALTER

With what?

*Liz turns the radio on, dialing through the static and the noise.*

LIZ

Believe it or not, one of those boxes down there has a spaghetti dinner in it.

*She comes to rest on a hard rock station, all guitars and screaming.*

WALTER

Eighty-seven.

*He retreats through the door.*

*Liz smiles, turns the dial on the radio again, finally coming to rest on a classical music station.*

*She walks off, into the kitchen.*

*The lights shift and change, the music drawing us over and into the next scene.*

## Interlude

*As the lights shift, Liz comes back from the kitchen and begins unpacking boxes, straightening things up, setting the table.*

*As she speaks, shadowy figures move about the room, drifting here and there, roaming through the apartment.*

*As she works, Liz speaks to us.*

LIZ

When you look at something, how do you know if it's real? I see things, everywhere. Sometimes I see, well, not just things but shapes.

People.

Shadows.

They're there in the corners, in the corner of my eye. When I turn to look...

*...she stops, glancing quickly to one side. All of the roamers freeze for a moment. She turns back and they begin to move again.*

LIZ

When I turn to look, they're gone. But they come back, creeping into the corner of my eye, just over my shoulder, right at the very edge of my vision. They roam about on the edges, watching me, teasing me, making faces when my head is turned. Can you see them, can you feel them there?

I can.

*She stops again. The roaming shadows freeze.*

*She turns back. They start wandering once more.*

LIZ

How long have they been there? How long have they been doing this? How long before they...

*...she stops, glances again. The shadows freeze...*

LIZ

...I get so scared sometimes, scared to look, scared that I'll look over and they'll be there, right in front of me.

*Very slowly, the shadows start moving again.*

*She looks at us for a moment longer and then goes back into the kitchen.*

*When she comes out, the lights have shifted back to normal and the shadows are gone.*

Scene Two

*As the lights rise, Walter and Liz are sitting at the table finishing their dinner. The radio is playing.*

WALTER

There were some kids playing out there, when I was carrying things in.

LIZ

I saw them.

WALTER

They looked nice.

LIZ

Mm.

WALTER

If you want, when we're done, I'll do the dishes.

LIZ

Thanks.

WALTER

And you could go out. To say hi. Introduce yourself.

LIZ

That's a good idea. I'll do that.

*Pause.*

WALTER

You're not really, are..?

LIZ

...no.

WALTER

They looked nice.

LIZ

I want to finish unpacking.

WALTER

I can do it.

LIZ

You don't know where anything goes.

WALTER

Neither do you. We just moved in. It's a new place.

LIZ

There's still a wrong place for things.

WALTER

Are you somehow implying that I'm not capable of putting things away?

LIZ

Implying? No. I'm asserting with great conviction that you're not capable of putting things away.

WALTER

You need to finish that, you know, before you do anything else...

LIZ

...I know. I just want to get things done and...

WALTER

...you can do that tomorrow.

LIZ

I kind of wanted to get my kit out.

WALTER

You should go out and say hi. Go play.

LIZ

"Play"?

WALTER

Yes. Play. I'm sure you've heard of it. Jump rope. Hopscotch.

LIZ

Hopscotch.

WALTER

It's a game, like...

LIZ

...I know what hopscotch is, thank you.

WALTER

Are you going to eat that or not?

LIZ

Yes.

WALTER

Because you can't do anything until it's gone.

LIZ

I know.

WALTER

I mean it, Liz.

LIZ

I'm eating it, Walter.

WALTER

Don't call me Walter.

*Silence.*

WALTER

They looked nice.

LIZ

They did.

WALTER

If you're nervous, I could go down with you.

LIZ

Oh, yeah, because that would make me less nervous. "Hi. I'm Liz. I just moved in. This is my dad. He thinks I need a friend. Will you be my friend?"

WALTER

Liz...

LIZ

...I just want to get things...

WALTER

...you know, I knew this guy in college who could, I don't know, he had this thing.

LIZ

A thing?

WALTER

He could just, you know, look at girl and she'd come over to talk to him.

*Pause.*

LIZ

And?

WALTER

He'd look at a girl, any girl, with this, this, this look. You know?

LIZ

How many beers have you had tonight?

WALTER

We used to go out looking for girls a lot in college. It was all there was to do...

LIZ

...this is all going to come out in therapy.

WALTER

This guy, he could...

LIZ

...show me the look.

*Walter scoots back his chair and adopts a nonchalant pose. He looks over at Liz and stares at her for a moment.*

LIZ

Wow. Really?

WALTER

Uh huh.

LIZ

Like this?

WALTER

Kind of. She'd just see the look and mosey on over...

LIZ

...mosey...

WALTER

...like magic or hypnotism or something.

LIZ

Are you somehow implying that I should go out and use the look to make new friends with all the boys in the neighborhood?

WALTER

Definitely not. Finish your dinner.

LIZ

I'm not hungry.

WALTER

You made it.

LIZ

For you.

WALTER

Finish your dinner. I'm just saying that you shouldn't be nervous about meeting new people. Which won't matter if you don't finish your dinner because you can't go out until you do.

LIZ

Promise?

WALTER

Finish your...

LIZ

...look, look, I'm eating. Mmmm. Carbohydrates. Roughage. Chlorophyll...

WALTER

...Liz...

*...there is a knock at the door.*

LIZ

I'll get it.

*She goes to the door and opens it.*

*A young woman in her thirties is there.*

*Karen is the kind of person you like immediately,  
even though she takes some time to warm up to you.*

KAREN

Hi.

LIZ

Hello.

KAREN

Is your mom home?

LIZ

No.

KAREN

I'm sorry, do you have, is that your white car down there?

LIZ

No.

KAREN

Oh. It's not?

LIZ

I'm obviously too young to drive.

KAREN

Uh...

WALTER

...Liz...

*...he gets up and comes to the door.*

WALTER

Hi. I've got it. Finish your dinner.

LIZ

I'm okay.

WALTER

Go. Sit. Eat.

*Liz goes back to the table.*

WALTER

Sorry. Fifteen year old girls.

KAREN

It's okay. I remember.

LIZ

I'm fourteen and three quarters, actually.

WALTER

Eat. Sorry. What's up?

KAREN

Do you own the white car down there?

WALTER

Yes.

KAREN

I own the green one.

WALTER

Uh huh.

KAREN

The white one is blocking the green one. I'm blocked in.

WALTER

Sorry. Just a minute.

KAREN

That's alright.

*He searches for a minute in the debris of the room.  
Karen peeks in.*

KAREN

All moved in yet?

WALTER

What?

LIZ

She wants to know if we're moved in yet.

WALTER

Finish your . . . getting there, yeah.

KAREN

I'm in the first one, the first apartment. Right at the bottom of the stairs, your stairs.

WALTER

My stairs? Oh, right.

*He has found his keys and comes back to the door.*

KAREN

I saw you moving in.

WALTER

Yeah?

KAREN

Uh huh.

*Pause.*

LIZ

She's waiting for you, dad.

WALTER

Thank you. Be right back.

LIZ

I'll be here.

KAREN

Nice meeting you.

*Karen and Walter leave, their footsteps sounding on the stairs.*

*Liz sits for a long moment, then she gets up and looks out the front door.*

*After a long moment, she tilts her head to stare at the label on one of the boxes in the stack next to the door.*

*She opens the box and pulls out a large plastic tool box decorated with stickers – her “kit” apparently.*

*Liz opens it on the floor, checks the contents and then goes back to the box and digs around again. She pulls out a large pad of drawing paper and sits down on the floor and takes a pencil out of the kit.*

*She sits for a moment, staring at the paper. She leans forward, sprawls out on the floor and begins to draw.*

*After a few moments we hear footsteps on the stairs again. Liz looks up, considers. She goes back to her work as Walter enters, closing the door behind him.*

WALTER

Liz.

LIZ

I know.

WALTER

Finish . . . oh. Sorry.

*Liz gets up and starts back for the table, but Walter is clearing the dishes.*

LIZ

What are you doing?

WALTER

I said I'd clean up.

LIZ

I didn't finish.

*He looks at her, tilts the two plates to show her: They're both empty.*

WALTER

Is this a new phase? Doing what I ask you to do? I don't know if I can get used to it.

*He goes into the kitchen. We hear sound of water running, dishes clattering.*

*Liz stands there a moment, looks under the table.*

LIZ

But...

*...Walter comes back out.*

WALTER

What?

LIZ

Nothing.

WALTER

You okay?

LIZ

Uh huh.

*He gathers more dishes up from the table and takes them off into the kitchen.*

*Liz stands a moment longer and then goes back to her paper and kit, spreads out on the floor and resumes her work.*

*After a little while Walter comes back in and flops down on the couch.*

*Liz keeps drawing.*

WALTER

She seemed nice.

LIZ

You should have tried out the look on her.

WALTER

Be nice.

LIZ

She was nice.

WALTER

Yeah?

LIZ

Cute too.

*She tears off the page and holds it out to him.*

WALTER

I didn't notice.

*He takes the drawing from her.*

WALTER

Wow.

LIZ

Told you.

*Walter holds the picture out to her but she is intent on her next page and doesn't look up.*

*Pause.*

*He sets the paper down next to her.*

WALTER

Goodnight.

*She does not answer.*

*Walter stands a moment, then turns for the hallway and goes to bed.*

*Liz continues to work, drawing away.*

*She does not look up when the lights shift and fade  
and all the shadows come out again.*

## Interlude

*The room is dark, lit with faint light from above. Liz is packing up her kit and getting ready for bed. She spreads sheets and a blanket on the sofa. As she works, she speaks.*

*The shadows roam around the room, but she ignores them.*

LIZ

The first night in a new place is always strange.

At night, when it's quiet, I can hear voices from long ago. The people who lived in these same rooms, walked these same floors, they speak to me, whispering their secrets, telling me their names.

I can smell their food cooking in the kitchen, hear their feet on the stairs, their shouts and laughter and their arguments, children crying in the corners, their songs worming their way into my dreams.

*Silence.*

LIZ

I had this dream. I am in the old house, where we lived back before my parents split up. I'm standing in the doorway of the back bedroom, the one where guests would sleep when they came to stay. But no one has come to stay for a long, long time.

The afternoon air in the room is warm and musty and thick. Tiny particles of dust roam in the shaft of yellow light that spills in through the grimy window.

Against the wall, half-hidden in the shadows, is an old chest of drawers.

LIZ (*continued*)

The top drawer is open.

A mirror hangs on the wall above it, grimy and filmed with dust. The top drawer is open.

I wipe the dust away from the smooth surface of the mirror. My reflection, my face, hollow and pale, stares back at me.

The top drawer is open.

I look in and there's, there's something in there – I don't know what, something I shouldn't have seen. I slam the drawer shut and turn to leave the room.

Halfway to the door, I hear the dull rasp of wood against wood behind me.

I turn around.

The top drawer is open.

I go back and push it closed again.

I step away and, and, the drawer, it . . . it slowly slides out again.

I push it closed, I lean against it, trying to hold it closed. But I can feel something inside pushing back. It's stronger than I am, my feet are slipping on the floor, I can't hold it in any longer.

I step back, halfway turn to run and stop when, one by one, all of the drawers slowly slide open.

*She pulls the blankets up over her head while the shadows roam and drift through the room.*

Scene Three

*The light rise on the room. Night. Pale light spills in through the window.*

*Liz is on the couch, under the blankets and covers.*

*Silence.*

*There is a low sound from the hallway.*

*She sits up.*

*The sound is repeated . . . and then again.*

*She listens a moment. She gets up and pads over to the entrance to the hallway. She stands a moment, listening.*

*The sound again: A low choking sob, someone crying.*

*She goes into the hallway.*

LIZ (*off*)

Dad?

*Pause.*

LIZ (*off*)

Dad..?

WALTER (*off*)

...it's alright, Liz. Go back to bed.

*Pause.*

LIZ (*off*)

Are you..?

WALTER

...it's fine. I'm fine. Go to sleep.

*Pause.*

*Liz comes back from the hallway and sits on the couch.*

*Silence.*

*She lays down, sliding her feet back under the covers.*

*Silence.*

*The crying starts again and she sits up for a moment.*

*Pause.*

*She lays back down and closes her eyes.*

*Fade.*

Scene Four

*In the darkness, we hear music playing – light classical piano, peaceful and bright.*

*The lights rise on the apartment, a few boxes are still scattered about here and there but things are getting sorted out fairly well.*

*Liz enters from the kitchen, humming.*

*She goes to a stack of boxes and moves the radio, picking up the box underneath and carrying it off into the kitchen.*

*We can hear her humming, putting things away.*

*Abruptly, the music stops.*

*She comes back into the room and stops halfway to the radio.*

*It is gone.*

*She stands for a moment, confused.*

*Pause.*

*She goes to the door, checks – it is locked and the chain is on.*

*She turns back and looks at the room, the lights shift and change...*

Scene Five

*The light rise on the room.*

*After a moment, we hear footsteps and voices outside the door.*

*There is an indistinct sound and the door opens.*

*Liz enters, putting her keys into her pocket.*

*She comes into the room, talking...*

LIZ

...blah blah blah...

*...she trails off, looks back at the boy standing in the doorway behind her.*

*His name is Tim and he is slightly older than she is, but he doesn't quite seem to have a handle on it yet.*

LIZ

It's okay. You can come in.

*Tim enters, looks around. He starts to close the door.*

LIZ

Leave it open. I'm not supposed to have anyone up here when I'm alone. It's okay. Just leave it open. It's hotter up here.

*She starts up a small fan.*

LIZ

The window's painted shut. You want something to drink?

TIM

Yeah. Thanks.

LIZ

What do you want?

TIM

What do you have?

LIZ

I'm not really sure. Let me go see what's still there.

*She goes into the kitchen.*

*Tim walks around the room, looking at things.*

LIZ (off)

Is water okay?

TIM

Sure.

LIZ (off)

Alright.

*There is the sound of cupboards opening, a tap running.*

*She comes back out with a glass and hands it to him.*

LIZ

It's kind of cold, kind of not.

TIM

Thanks.

*He sips it.*

*Pause.*

LIZ

Do you want to sit down?

TIM

Sure.

*She sits on the couch, moving her kit and a stack of drawings over to one side to make room.*

LIZ

Here...

*She lifts up the papers and one flutters to the floor. She claps her hand over the top of the stack and sets it down next to her.*

*Tim retrieves the fallen drawing.*

TIM

Did you draw this?

*He sits down on the couch.*

LIZ

I did.

TIM

It's nice.

LIZ

Thanks.

*He sets it down on the stack and pulls out another one.*

TIM

Did you..?

LIZ

...what is, sorry.

TIM

No, go ahead.

LIZ

What were you going to say?

TIM

Did you, are all of these yours?

LIZ

Uh huh.

TIM

They're great.

LIZ

Thanks.

TIM

Who's this?

LIZ

My dad. He was taking a nap.

TIM

He looks dead.

LIZ

Thanks.

*He leafs through the drawings.*

TIM

These are great.

LIZ

Hold on.

*She gets up and goes to one of the bookcases, pulls out a battered folio and brings it back to him.*

LIZ

Here.

TIM

Wow.

LIZ

When I was five my dad bought me a stack of paper for my birthday, as tall as I was. He told me that if I drew a picture on every page, every day, that eventually by the time I got to the bottom of the stack, the picture I drew on that last sheet would be a good one. Then I'd be a real artist.

TIM

Tall as you?

*She holds her hand up.*

LIZ

As tall as me when I was five.

TIM

Wow.

LIZ

Yeah.

TIM

How close are you to the bottom?

LIZ

I'm done. I got to the bottom two years ago.

TIM

Really?

LIZ

Uh huh. But I'm not sure I'm a real artist yet.

TIM

I don't know, this stuff looks great.

LIZ

He keeps saying he's going to buy me another stack for my birthday, taller this time. Tall as me now.

TIM

Is he an artist or something?

LIZ

No. He works in, he's got two jobs. He works in an office during the day and then at night he has a job in a bookstore. That's the, that's the house we used to live in. I'm not that good at trees.

TIM

Looks like a tree to me. Who's this?

LIZ

My mom. I did it from a picture and you can totally tell. Do you want some more water?

TIM

Yeah, thanks.

*She takes his glass and goes back into the kitchen.*

TIM

You live with just your dad?

LIZ (*off*)

What?

TIM

I said...

*...sound of water running...*

LIZ

...hang on...

*...she comes back in with his glass.*

LIZ

Sorry. What?

TIM

Thanks. You just live with your dad?

*She moves the papers over and sits down next to him.*

LIZ

Uh huh. My parents got divorced when I was really little.

TIM

Why'd they get divorced?

LIZ

I really don't know.

TIM

Sometimes . . . a kid at school, a friend of mine, he goes back and forth.

LIZ

Yeah. Well. For me there's only forth.

TIM

Where's your mom?

LIZ

I . . . I don't really know. I haven't seen her in a long time, like a couple of years. They shared custody for a while but my mom was . . . she has some problems. So my dad got custody.

*Pause.*

TIM

When's your birthday?

LIZ

Two weeks. What I really want is a new set of chalks, if we can afford it. But I hope he lets me pick them out. He has no idea what to get. He got me a watercolor set last year and I barely use it. I like chalk better, pastels and charcoal – the way they feel on your fingers? And they smell great. But I do a lot of pencil work too.

TIM

I have this picture in my room, from when I was little. We went to a carnival one time and there was this guy who was drawing pictures of people. He did one of me. My mom had it framed and put it in my room. It's kind of baby picture now. I have this really big head and I'm riding a bike and he wrote my name in big puffy letters next to it, like a cartoon. "Timothy!" I don't know, it's not as good as any of this.

LIZ

Hang on...

*...she opens up her kit and gets out a pencil, pulls a pad of paper out of the folio and leans back with it on her knees.*

TIM

What are you doing?

LIZ

Don't move.

*Silence, but for the sound of the pencil against the paper.*

TIM

Is that what you want to do? You know, be an artist?

LIZ

I don't know. Don't move.

*Silence.*

TIM

Do you..?

LIZ

...what? Don't move.

TIM

Sorry. When you're finished, do you...

LIZ

...art is never finished, it just stops in interesting places.

TIM

Oh.

LIZ

My dad told me that. Have you ever seen a painting, a real one? Like in a museum?

TIM

I don't know. I guess.

LIZ

Don't, don't move. Sit back the way you were.

TIM

Sorry.

LIZ

It's alright.

TIM

Last year for a field trip they took us to a museum.

LIZ

Well, they have paintings there.

TIM

Yeah.

LIZ

What'd you see?

TIM

I don't know.

LIZ

What artists?

TIM

I can't remember. I remember, there was one I liked.

LIZ

What'd you like about it?

TIM

I don't know, the colors. It had all these neat shapes, squares and lines.

LIZ

Who was the artist?

TIM

I don't know, I can't remember his name. But I liked the painting.

LIZ

Uh huh. Did it look finished?

TIM

I don't know. It was . . . colorful.

LIZ

Well this one is black and white. Sorry.

TIM

It's okay. When you're finished, do you want to...

LIZ

...if you're not having a good time, just say so.

TIM

I'm having a good time.

LIZ

Uh huh.

TIM

When you're done, do you want to watch TV or something?

LIZ

We don't have a TV.

TIM

Really?

LIZ

Uh huh.

TIM

Have you ever seen TV?

LIZ

No I've been living in limbo my whole life, Tim.

TIM

Yeah.

LIZ

Of course I've seen TV. We had one before we moved, for awhile. But it broke and we couldn't afford to get it fixed or get a new one. We had a radio, but it . . . it got stolen.

TIM

What's your favorite show? I mean, on TV? When you had a TV, I mean.

LIZ

I don't know.

TIM

We could go over to my house to watch something, sometime.

LIZ

Actually, I don't really like TV all that much.

TIM

What do you, what do you like to do?

LIZ

I like to draw. Stop moving.

TIM

Sorry.

*Silence.*

TIM

That tickles.

LIZ

What?

TIM

Just kidding.

*She stops for a moment and looks at him, then back down at her paper. She draws a line, slowly.*

LIZ

Can you feel that?

TIM

What?

*She draws another line.*

LIZ

This.

TIM

Where?

*She leans forward, tracing her finger across his cheek.*

LIZ

Here.

*He shakes his head.*

LIZ

What about this?

*She kisses him lightly on the lips.*

LIZ

You feel that?

TIM

Yeah.

*Pause.*

TIM

Uh...

*...pause.*

LIZ

Yes?

TIM

Can I use your bathroom?

*She looks at him.*

TIM

What?

LIZ

Almost done.

*She carefully tears the sheet off the pad.*

LIZ

Here. Now you have one where your head's not so big. I don't know how to draw tricycles, sorry. I left it out.

TIM

Thanks.

LIZ

I signed it. If I'm ever famous you can sell it.

TIM

Thanks. It's terrific.

LIZ

Why thank you, Timothy. Tell your mom to frame it, in place of that baby one.

TIM

Yeah. I will.

LIZ

It's through there.

TIM

Oh, thanks.

*He starts to rise, but she leans forward and kisses him again.*

*She leans back.*

LIZ

Are you okay?

TIM

Yeah. I just really have to go. Sorry.

LIZ

So go.

TIM

Okay.

*He gets up, goes to the hall.*

LIZ

On the left.

TIM

Thanks.

*He goes into the hall. We hear a door close.*

*Silence.*

*Liz gets up, stretches.*

*She takes the glass and goes into the kitchen. We hear the sound of water running.*

*She comes back, sets the glass on the coffee table.*

*She sits down for a moment, picks up the drawing she just did and studies it. She adds a couple of lines, sets it back down.*

*She picks up his glass and takes a sip, wiping the rim afterwards.*

*Long silence.*

*She takes another drink.*

*She gets up, taking the glass back into the kitchen. Sound of water running. She comes back in and sets it down.*

*She sits, trying out a couple of casual poses.*

*She gets up again, goes to the hallway and listens.*

*She steps back, walks around the room for a moment.*

*She takes another large folio off of one of the bookshelves, leafs through it, walking back to the couch.*

*She reconsiders, puts it back on the shelf.*

*She goes to the couch and picks up all the drawings (leaving the one she did for him) and puts them back in the folio and places it beside the other on the shelf.*

*She goes to the hallway.*

LIZ

Tim? You okay?

*Silence.*

LIZ

Hello? Timothy?

*Silence.*

LIZ

Tim?

*She steps into the hall.*

LIZ (*off*)

Tim? Are you okay?

*We hear her knock.*

LIZ (*off*)

Tim?

*She knocks again.*

LIZ (*off*)

Tim?

*She comes back out, waits a moment.*

*She goes back in, knocking louder.*

LIZ (*off*)

Tim? Are you in there? Tim, listen. I don't want to . . .  
listen, this isn't funny. I'm going to open the door. If you're  
in there, you'd better say so.

*Silence.*

LIZ (*off*)

Tim. This could be embarrassing for you and, potentially, for me  
as well.

*Silence.*

LIZ (*off*)

Okay then.

*We hear the door open.*

LIZ (*off*)

Tim?

*We hear her footsteps. Another door opens.*

LIZ (*off*)

Tim? Tim?

*She comes back in, looks around.*

*She goes to the front door, looks out.*

LIZ

Tim?

*Silence.*

LIZ

Tim?

*Silence.*

*She comes back in, closes the door.*

*She looks around the room for a moment, goes to the couch and sits down.*

*She picks up the drawing, looks it over.*

*She picks up the glass and takes another drink of water.*

*Fade.*

Scene Six

*The light rise on the room. More things may be missing.*

*Walter is pacing.*

*Liz is sitting on the couch...*

WALTER

...and then what happened?

LIZ

I opened the bathroom door and he wasn't there. I checked in your room. I thought he might be hiding, you know.

WALTER

In my room.

LIZ

Uh huh.

WALTER

Go on.

LIZ

He wasn't there. So I came back out here. I looked out the front door.

WALTER

Where did he go?

LIZ

I don't know.

WALTER

Where do you, where did you think he'd gone?

LIZ

I thought he'd left. I thought he went home.

WALTER

But he didn't.

LIZ

No.

WALTER

Where'd he go?

*Silence.*

WALTER

Okay. You came back. And then what?

LIZ

I . . . I sat down.

WALTER

Uh huh.

LIZ

I just, I was just waiting.

WALTER

For what?

*Silence.*

WALTER

Liz?

LIZ

Uh huh?

WALTER

What aren't you telling me?

LIZ

I'm telling you everything...

WALTER

...okay, okay. Okay.

LIZ

I am.

*Walter sits down next to her on the couch.*

WALTER

What were the two of you doing up here?

LIZ

Nothing. We just, we were just talking.

WALTER

What did you talk about?

LIZ

Nothing, just stuff.

WALTER

Stuff . . . like?

LIZ

Like . . . stuff. I don't know. Drawing. My birthday. Mom.

WALTER

Uh huh. What else?

LIZ

Television. We looked at my pictures. We were just talking, I drew his picture...

*...Walter takes a sheet of paper off the table.*

WALTER

This?

LIZ

Uh huh.

WALTER

And then what?

LIZ

And then we just, we were just talking. He had to, he asked to use the bathroom.

WALTER

Was he, did he seem upset at all?

LIZ

No. He was fine. He, God, he had to pee, okay? I told him where the bathroom was.

WALTER

He didn't have any . . . did he talk about going somewhere? Did he say he was going anywhere else?

LIZ

No. He didn't say anything. He said we could go over to his house to watch TV but, you know, we didn't go anywhere.

WALTER

Uh huh. Why do you think he left?

LIZ

I don't, I don't know.

WALTER

Did anything else happen?

LIZ

Not really.

WALTER

Not really? Liz?

LIZ

Nothing, nothing else happened. I might have, I just...

*...pause.*

WALTER

What?

*Pause.*

LIZ

I kissed him.

WALTER

Uh huh.

LIZ

That's all.

WALTER

Did he kiss you back?

LIZ

I don't, what do you mean?

WALTER

I mean . . . you kissed him.

LIZ

Uh huh.

WALTER

Just once or, you know..?

LIZ

...no. Just once, dad.

WALTER

Okay.

LIZ

Twice actually. The door was open.

WALTER

Okay. Okay. He was sitting here?

LIZ

I was sitting there, he was sitting here.

WALTER

Uh huh. Did he say anything? Anything when you..?

LIZ

...he didn't, he didn't say anything. He had to, he had to go to the bathroom and when he was gone I went into the kitchen and came back here and I didn't hear anything for a while so I went and knocked on the door and he was gone, he left, I don't know why, he didn't say anything to me, he didn't say anything, I only kissed him and then he was...

WALTER

...shhh, shh, it's okay...

LIZ

...I only kissed him, okay? I just...

WALTER

...I know, I know, it's okay...

LIZ

...I didn't do anything wrong...

WALTER

...I know, it's all right, you're just scared. Hang on.

LIZ

Where are you going?

WALTER

It's okay.

*He goes into the hallway, comes back with a roll of toilet paper.*

WALTER

Sorry.

LIZ

It's okay.

*She tears of a strip, blows her nose. She hands it back to him. He sets it down on the table and sits back down.*

WALTER

Okay. Walk me through it one more time. You came back here.

LIZ

We came back here...

*...fade*

Interlude

*The stage is dark.*

*Soft blue light from above.*

*Liz is curled up on the couch, ready for bed. She speaks to the audience...*

LIZ

...of course I'm just scared. Why do grownups always say that? Don't they get scared? Why do they always say "You're just scared" like that was all it was and saying it means it's all right, like being scared is okay..?

*...pause.*

*Fade.*

Scene Seven

*The light rise on the room.*

*Liz is sprawled on the rug, drawing away. Her kit is open next to her. Pastels, chalks, paper, pencils litter the floor around her.*

*There is a sound at the door, the rattling of keys. Liz stops what she is as Walter enters.*

WALTER

Hey.

LIZ

Hi.

*He hangs his keys on the light switch next to the door.*

*Liz looks at him. He shrugs.*

WALTER

If you put them in the same place every time, you won't keep losing them.

LIZ

Good idea.

*He flops on the couch.*

WALTER

What're you doing?

LIZ

How was your day?

WALTER

It was a day. You okay?

*Liz goes into the kitchen.*

WALTER

Everything okay?

*Liz comes back with a plate of food. She sets it on the table.*

LIZ

Did you eat?

WALTER

What is it?

LIZ

Did you eat yet?

WALTER

No.

*He gets up and goes to the table.*

WALTER

What is it?

LIZ

Food.

*She goes back into the kitchen.*

*Walter sits down at the table.*

WALTER

Thank you.

*Liz comes back in carrying another plate.*

LIZ

Uh huh.

*She sets the plate down on the table and sits across from him.*

WALTER

You didn't have to wait.

*She gets up, goes back into the kitchen, comes back with a beer and sets it to one side of his plate.*

WALTER

I can't stay long. I need to, I just came by to check in before I head back out.

*Liz sings softly, under her breath...*

LIZ

"...Hello I must be going..."

WALTER

"...I cannot stay, I came to say I must be going..."

LIZ

"...I'm glad I came, but just the same..."

WALTER

"...I must be going." Sorry. I need to go.

LIZ

You need to eat.

WALTER

I just came back to check in. Listen, it won't be like this for long. Just till things get more settled...

LIZ

...dad.

WALTER

Uh huh?

LIZ

Eat.

*They eat in silence.*

WALTER

This is good. How was your day?

LIZ

Good.

WALTER

What'd you do?

LIZ

I don't know.

WALTER

Did you go out?

LIZ

Just for salad stuff. How is it?

WALTER

It's good. What else did you do?

LIZ

Well . . . when I was coming back from the store, I met a couple of kids. Two girls from the fourth floor. We sat on the front steps and talked for a while. They're sisters. They go to my school. They're really nice.

WALTER

Really?

LIZ

No. Not really. I went up to the store and got salad stuff. I came back. Drew a little. There were two kids outside, across the street, playing on the steps. Two little boys, brothers.

WALTER

How old were they?

LIZ

I don't know. Little. Their mom was watching out the window.

WALTER

What were they playing?

LIZ

I don't know. Hopscotch.

WALTER

Boys don't...

LIZ

...whatever.

WALTER

You drew the kids?

LIZ

The mom, the window actually. The curtains blew out, covering the window. She kept putting something to hold them in place. something heavier every time. A candlestick, a book, a couple of books.

WALTER

How long did you sit out there?

LIZ

I don't know, until the mom called them in. They started fighting. She yelled down at them, closed the window. I could still hear her yelling after they went in. That is one loud lady.

*She gets up and goes over to the mess on the floor, brings back a piece of paper and hands it to him.*

LIZ

I couldn't get the bricks right.

WALTER

What's wrong with them?

LIZ

At first they looked like I did them with a ruler. Which I did. When I did them freehand, they came out too sloppy. When I left them out, it didn't look like the building anymore.

WALTER

You know what you should do? Do a rubbing. Go over there with some paper and a piece of chalk and lay the paper over the bricks. What you do is put the paper up and rub the flat side of the chalk on...

LIZ

...I know what a rubbing is, Dad.

WALTER

You should try that.

LIZ

I don't think I have enough paper to do the whole building.

WALTER

Just do a piece of it. Look at how they fit together. Then try drawing it from far away.

LIZ

Now why didn't I think of that?

WALTER

Now why didn't you?

*He rises.*

LIZ

"I'm glad I came but just the same..."

*...Walter leans the picture against his glass.*

WALTER

Thanks for dinner. It was great. Save the rest for when I get home tonight. Don't drink my beer.

LIZ

I won't.

WALTER

I memorized how much was left.

LIZ

No you didn't. Did you?

WALTER

You'll never know.

LIZ

I hate beer anyways. It tastes funny.

WALTER

Oh really?

LIZ

I mean, that's what I've heard.

WALTER

Uh huh.

*He gets up and casts about for a second.*

LIZ

Dad.

*She nods at the door. He goes to it and takes his keys off the switch.*

WALTER

Lock the door.

LIZ

I will.

*He leaves.*

*Liz locks the door behind him and goes back to the table.*

*She pulls out her chair, then his. Looks under the table.*

*Her drawing is gone.*

*Fade.*

Scene Eight

*The lights rise on the room. Walter is there, on the phone.*

*We can hear noises from the kitchen. Liz is doing the dishes. His voice is pitched low...*

WALTER

...the police didn't have any answers. They made her go through everything again, what happened, what did he say, were there any strangers around, that sort of thing  
. . . they talked to everyone, nobody saw anything . . .  
yeah . . . uh huh . . . she didn't say anything, all she knows, all she knows is she kissed him and then he left  
. . . God I hope not. It was her first kiss. I think it was her first kiss. I hope it was her first kiss . . . I didn't think I was going to have to deal with any of this . . . boys . . . I was counting on more time . . . another ten years . . . I'm not ready for this yet . . . she is, but I can feel her drawing away, getting older, more . . . I don't know, more aloof. I wasn't ready for this. Not yet...

*...there is a knock at the door.*

WALTER

Look, there's someone at the . . . uh huh . . . I'm off tonight, for once. Yeah. Alright. Good bye.

*He hangs up the phone and goes to the door.*

*Karen is there.*

KAREN

Hi. Blocked in again.

WALTER

I'm so sorry, just give me a second to find my keys...

*...he starts looking through the room.*

WALTER

Sorry. They're around here somewhere. We're still settling in.

KAREN

It's okay.

WALTER

Uh huh. I can't find anything these days. Have you . . . have you noticed anything, I don't know, have you had any problems with things missing?

KAREN

What do you mean?

WALTER

I don't know. There's lots of little things . . . I set something down and then the next minute it's gone. One minute it's there and then . . . nothing.

KAREN

Well, it's not the best neighborhood. Someone broke into my car last year.

WALTER

No, I mean . . . I'm having trouble keeping track of things.

KAREN

It's always like that when you move.

WALTER

Uh huh. But . . . I don't know, there's lots of little things missing. I'm starting to wonder...

*...pause.*

KAREN

Wonder?

WALTER

There was this kid, a friend of my daughter's...

KAREN

I heard. The cops talked to me.

WALTER

What'd they say?

KAREN

They just asked questions. Have I seen any strangers in the building, anyone suspicious? That sort of thing.

WALTER

Uh huh.

KAREN

Have they heard anything?

WALTER

Not a thing. I can't imagine what it must . . . I mean, compared to a kid disappearing, a radio's nothing.

KAREN

A radio?

WALTER

Don't worry about it.

*He has found his keys.*

WALTER

Bingo. At least I'm finding them sooner this time.

KAREN

Yeah.

WALTER (*calling*)

I'll be right back. I gotta move my car.

LIZ (*off*)

Again?

WALTER (*calling*)

Yes.

LIZ (*off*)

Whatever.

*Walter looks at Karen, shrugs.*

KAREN

It gets worse.

WALTER

Great.

*They head out the door.*

KAREN

I know what you mean. When I moved in it took me months to find everything. I'm still looking for stuff.

WALTER

What else did the police..?

*...they are gone, voices and footsteps on the stairs and then silence, but for the sound of Liz in the kitchen, banging cupboards closed.*

*After a moment, she comes through the room and sits on the couch, waiting.*

*After a few moments, Walter reenters and closes the door. He hangs his keys on the light switch.*

WALTER

You know, she's been pretty nice about it, but I really have to stop doing this.

LIZ

What's the matter, the magic look doesn't work anymore?

*Walter stops a moment, looks at her.*

*He sits down on the couch with her.*

WALTER

What's wrong?

LIZ

I heard you.

WALTER

What?

LIZ

You heard me.

WALTER

I hurt you?

LIZ

I heard you.

WALTER

You heard me?

LIZ

On the phone.

WALTER

Uh huh.

LIZ

Who were you talking to?

WALTER

Who was I talking to?

*Liz shoots him a look.*

WALTER

Sorry. Just a friend. Someone from work.

LIZ

What's her name?

WALTER

Her name is . . . okay, you know what? Why don't you just tell me what you're mad about instead of..?

LIZ

...I don't like you talking about me.

*Pause.*

WALTER

I'm sorry. I just . . . I need to talk to someone about all of this. Liz...

LIZ

...if you have a problem with me then you should talk to me.

WALTER

I don't have a problem with you.

*Pause.*

WALTER

Listen, sometimes . . . sometimes I need someone to . . . I just need another pair of eyes sometimes, someone to check my bricks, make sure I'm doing them right.

LIZ

You're doing them right.

WALTER

It doesn't always feel that way.

*She takes his hand.*

LIZ

You're doing them right.

*Silence.*

LIZ

I miss her.

WALTER

I know. You could call her.

LIZ

How?

WALTER

Well, many people have found a telephone to be helpful.

LIZ

Is she allowed..?

WALTER

...she can talk on the phone.

LIZ

Do you know the number?

WALTER

I have it.

LIZ

Have you called her?

WALTER

No. But that doesn't mean you can't.

*He gets up.*

WALTER

Call her. If she can't come to the, they'll give her the message if she's...

*...long pause.*

LIZ

What?

WALTER

Where's the . . . Liz..?

*...he looks at her.*

*The phone is gone.*

*Fade.*

Interlude

*The lights rise on the room, blue light and roammers.*

*Liz speaks directly to the audience...*

LIZ

...the first time, I'm six or seven, maybe younger, and I'm with my mom at the mall. We're shopping for clothes, school starts next week, and there's people everywhere dragging kids behind them. All the kids are whining, all the parents are grumpy.

Like everyone else, we're wandering through the stores and trying on clothes and fighting over everything and then we go to a new store and start all over again, shopping and fighting and my mom has stopped going in stores now, we're just walking through the crowds and not stopping and I'm tired and hungry and all of a sudden my mom stops...

*...silence.*

LIZ

She's just standing there, staring at the ground and squeezing my hand and she looks down at me, just for a second, and pulls me over to a bench that's somehow miraculously empty. She sits me down and she's saying "Wait here a minute, I'll be right back." and then she's gone, vanished into the crowd. And I'm alone.

*Long silence.*

LIZ

It's ten minutes later, maybe longer. Which is a lot longer than "Right back" when you're six years old.

She's got a shopping bag. She sits down next to me and takes out a pad of paper and a box of crayons. She gets me all set up and she says "Wait here. I'll be back in a little bit."

LIZ (*continued*)

And then she's gone again.

I stand up on the bench, stand and watch her vanish into the crowd. I can see her moving through the people, drawing away, heading for a restaurant at the end of the building. A bar.

She doesn't look back. Not once.

I sit down, open the Crayons. It's the big box, the 64 Colors and it smells like cardboard and the first day of school and . . . oh, it just smells wonderful. And I take one out, open up the pad, and start to draw.

*Silence.*

LIZ

The mall closes at nine o'clock that night . . . but they come and get me long before then.

I have twenty-three pictures and I'm starting on the twenty-fourth when they're calling my dad and he's crying when he comes in the office, frantic and holding me too tight and saying he's sorry even though we both know, everyone knows, it's not his fault.

*Silence.*

LIZ

Mom doesn't come home for two weeks.

*Silence.*

LIZ

My dad drops me off on the first day of school. I'm scared, I'm excited, I'm scared. I don't have new clothes, but I have my pad of paper and my crayons and my dad . . . and that's all I need...

*...long silence, the lights fading as the roamers  
slip away.*

Scene Ten

*The light rise on the room.*

*Liz is sitting on the couch in her pajamas, just waking up.*

*She sits for a moment – stretching, yawning, rubbing her eyes – before she rises and heads off into the hallway.*

*A long moment passes.*

*Then, the sound of a toilet flushing.*

*Liz comes back into the room and looks at the clock.*

LIZ

Ugh . . . dad, you're going to be late...

*...she goes off again and we hear the sound of knocking.*

LIZ (*off*)

Dad, it's after eight...

*...more knocking, the sound of a door opening...*

LIZ (*off*)

...dad, you're going to be late...

*...silence.*

LIZ (*off*)

Dad?

*Silence.*

*Liz comes back in and goes into the kitchen.*

LIZ (*off*)

Dad?

*She comes back in and stands for a moment.*

*Pause.*

*She walks to the door.*

*Pause.*

*She reaches out to touch the keys that are still hanging there, but she does not take them.*

*She turns back to the room.*

*Silence.*

*Fade...*

Scene Eleven

*The lights rise on the room. While it might not be immediately noticeable at first, A number of things are missing – books, couch, furniture, pictures off the walls. Liz is sitting on the floor, drawing.*

*There is a knock at the door.*

*She looks up. The knock is repeated.*

*She gets up and goes to the door. Karen is there.*

KAREN

Hi.

LIZ

Hi.

KAREN

Can I talk to your dad for a minute?

LIZ

No. You can't.

KAREN

I'm sorry?

LIZ

He's not here.

KAREN

He's not?

LIZ

No.

KAREN

When will he be back?

LIZ

I, he's . . . I don't know.

KAREN

I really need to, do you know when he'll be back?

LIZ

No.

KAREN

Is your mom home?

LIZ

No. She doesn't live here.

KAREN

I really need to, I'm blocked in again.

LIZ

Uh huh.

KAREN

Listen, I need to, I really need to get somewhere. Will he, is your dad coming back soon?

LIZ

I don't know.

KAREN

Do you know where he is?

LIZ

No.

KAREN

Shit. I really . . . I'm sorry.

LIZ

It's alright.

KAREN

Well, can I at least, would it be all right if I used your phone?

LIZ

Uh huh.

*She steps back and Karen enters.*

LIZ

Uh . . . we don't have one.

KAREN

I'm sorry?

LIZ

We don't have one. A phone. We don't have a phone. We used to. But it disappeared. It's gone. You can't use it.

KAREN

I'm sorry, I don't suppose you have the car keys?

*Liz takes the keys off of the switch and hands them to her.*

KAREN

Thanks. I'll bring them right back.

LIZ

Uh huh.

*Liz closes the door and turns back to the empty apartment.*

*Fade.*

Interlude

*The stage is dark.*

*Soft blue light from above.*

*Liz and the roamers.*

*She speaks to the audience...*

LIZ

...and in the dream I'm lying in bed, waiting, and there's a knock at the door and I get up to answer it and no one is there, so I go back and lay down and go to sleep and I dream of a door at the top of a long flight of stairs – eighty-six of them – and I climb up to it and knock . . . then I wake up because there's a knock on the door, I get up to answer it, but no one is there . . . so I go back and lay down and go to sleep and I dream of the door and the stairs again, and I climb them and knock on it . . . and then I wake up because there's a knock on my door, and so I get up and go to it . . . and as I go through all of this, in my dream, I never think. I never realize. I never stop.

*Pause.*

LIZ

Eventually I wake up . . . and I lie in bed and stare at the door, waiting...

*...fade.*

Scene Twelve

*The lights rise on the room, stripped almost completely bare.*

*Liz is lying on the floor wrapped in a few blankets.*

*Long silence.*

*There is a knock at the door.*

*Silence.*

*Another knock.*

*Silence.*

*Another knock, louder this time.*

*Liz stirs, goes to the door.*

*Karen is there.*

Hi...

KAREN

...green car, right?

LIZ

Yeah.

KAREN

Uh huh.

LIZ

I hope it's not too late, but...

KAREN

LIZ

...it's alright...

*...she walks back to her blankets and sits down.*

*After a moment, Karen follows her into the room.*

KAREN

Are you guys moving out?

LIZ

Looks like it.

KAREN

Oh. Where are you going?

LIZ

I honestly don't know.

KAREN

I'm sorry, is your dad..?

LIZ

...he isn't here. I don't know where he is and I don't know when he's coming back but even if I did, it wouldn't matter. Alright? So I can't help...

KAREN

...okay, okay. Okay. I brought his keys back.

*Liz takes them and hangs them on the light switch.*

KAREN

Are you all right?

LIZ

Uh huh.

KAREN

When is, do you know when your dad will be back?

LIZ

Not really.

KAREN

Is he at work?

LIZ

No. I don't think so.

KAREN

Is he going to be back soon?

LIZ

I don't know.

KAREN

You don't know when he's coming home?

LIZ

No.

KAREN

Where's your mom?

LIZ

She doesn't, she doesn't live here. They're divorced.

KAREN

When, when did your dad leave?

LIZ

I don't know.

KAREN

How long, sweetheart: How long has he been, I mean, does he usually leave you here, does he usually go away like this?

LIZ

No.

KAREN

How long has he been gone?

LIZ

Since yesterday, no, two days ago.

KAREN

He's . . . your dad's, your dad's been gone for two days?

LIZ

Uh huh.

KAREN

Where did he go?

LIZ

I don't know.

KAREN

He left you alone?

LIZ

Uh huh, but he didn't...

KAREN

...he didn't tell you where he was going?

LIZ

No.

KAREN

What did he say?

LIZ

He didn't say anything, he just . . . I woke up and he wasn't here. I thought maybe he'd gone to work early and I didn't wake

LIZ (*continued*)

up when he left, but I always wake up when he leaves. And then he didn't come home like he usually does, you know, in between.

KAREN

In between?

LIZ

He has two jobs one in the morning, one at night. He usually comes back, in between, to check on me. I made dinner for him but he didn't, he didn't come home. It got, his dinner got cold. So I just, I went to bed and in the morning he wasn't back. He hasn't been back.

KAREN

You've been here alone for two days? Seriously?

LIZ

It might be three, actually. I can't remember.

KAREN

Did he, did he leave, is . . . is he, is he coming back?

LIZ

I don't think so.

*Silence.*

KAREN

Look, why don't you come down to, why don't we go down to my place and, and, I don't know, call around and see if we can find him? We can wait for him there.

LIZ

Who could we call?

KAREN

I don't know. Hospitals. The police...

LIZ

...no...

KAREN

...there might have been an accident, he might be somewhere and he, I don't want to scare you, but he be hurt and he might not be, uh, able to tell them anything. And you don't have a phone, so they couldn't call, and...

LIZ

...I'm not going anywhere.

KAREN

We could just, we could leave him a note telling him where you are. It'd be better than waiting here by yourself.

*Pause.*

LIZ

You shouldn't stay here too long.

KAREN

Why not? Don't worry. Come down with me. We'll leave a note and make some calls. It'll be better than just waiting.

LIZ

What if..?

*...pause.*

KAREN

What?

LIZ

What if we call and no one knows anything? Will it be better then, better than waiting?

KAREN

I don't know.

LIZ

I don't want to go just yet. Will you sit with me for a little while? Will you? Just sit and talk to me? Please?

KAREN

Sure. Sure. But if he doesn't come back in a while, you're coming downstairs with me and we'll call around. Deal?

LIZ

Deal.

KAREN

Okay?

LIZ

Yes.

KAREN

Okay. Look, why don't you lie down for awhile. Here, I'll sit up and wait. And if he doesn't come back, I'll wake you up...

LIZ

...I don't want to go to sleep.

KAREN

It'll be okay. Here, just...

*...she spreads out one of the blankets and pats the floor next to her.*

KAREN

Come on. It'll be okay.

*Liz lies down, puts her head on Karen's lap.*

LIZ

Okay.

*Liz closes her eyes.*

*Long silence.*

*The lights fade.*

Interlude

*The stage is dark, the roamers move here and there.*

*Soft blue light from above.*

*Karen sits on the floor, dozing with Liz's head in her lap.*

*Liz speaks to the audience...*

LIZ

...I feel safe. I feel safe, but . . . but this isn't safe, I'm not safe. She's not safe. When you feel safe, when things feel safe, when they feel normal and good, then that's when it happens.

*Pause.*

LIZ

I know this. But I feel safe.

*Fade.*

Scene Thirteen

*The light rise on the room, morning light spills in through the doorway.*

*Liz is lying on the floor, wrapped in blankets.*

*Long silence.*

*She sits up, blinking.*

*She looks around for a moment. More of the furniture is gone.*

*And she is alone.*

*She lies back down, pulls the covers over her head.*

*Fade.*

Interlude

*The stage is dark. Soft blue light from above.*

*The roamers move here and there.*

*Liz is lying, covered in the blankets, only her face peeps out at us...*

LIZ

...this used to work, when I was little. I'd wake up and I'd get scared and I'd pull the covers over my head and wait and try not to think about the shadows and what they were doing and I'd lie there until I couldn't stand it anymore and I'd throw back the covers...

*...she sits up, the roamers stop.*

LIZ

And they were gone. They disappeared.

*She lies back down, covering up again.*

LIZ

I could hear them fighting, my mom and my dad. Sometimes there was yelling but mostly, mostly they just talked real low and you could tell, even though they were quiet, they were still fighting. And I would pull the covers over my head and wait and wait and wait . . . wait for the yelling and the voices and the fighting to stop...

*...she covers up her face...*

LIZ

...but it didn't.

*Fade.*

Scene Fourteen

*The light rises on the room. About half of the furniture is gone. There are empty places here and there on the walls where pictures once hung, a large spot where the bookshelves used to be.*

*Liz is sitting at the table, drawing and humming under her breath.*

*She holds up her paper and examines her work. Satisfied, she leans it on the table and gets up.*

*She goes into the kitchen, her humming louder now.*

*She comes back with a large glass and sets it on the table, leans her picture up against it.*

*She sits down, singing softly...*

LIZ

*...happy birthday to you, happy birthday dear Elizabeth, happy birthday to you.*

*Pause.*

LIZ

*Make a wish.*

*She closes her eyes for a moment, holding them tightly closed.*

*She opens her eyes and blows fiercely at the drawing. It falls over.*

*Silence.*

*Fade.*

## Scene Fifteen

*The light rises on the room, almost completely empty now.*

*Liz is crouched down, drawing a long rectangle of chalk on the floor, where the table once was.*

*The walls around her are covered with chalk drawings of what once was there: Bookshelves filled with chalk outlines of books, curtains on each side of the window, picture frames.*

*She continues drawing, adding outlines of chairs around the table she has drawn. After a moment, she steps back to examine her work, cocking her head to one side.*

*She surveys the rest of her work throughout the room, making additions and corrections here and there, filling in the space.*

*She moves to the middle of the room and starts on another long rectangle where the couch once was.*

*Once it's completed, she walks around it critically before sinking down to the floor with a sigh.*

*She looks around one more time and nods, satisfied.*

*The lights fade.*

Scene Sixteen

*The light rise on the room, completely empty.*

*Liz is drawing a grid on the floor. She finishes and walks around it, humming.*

*She stands at one end and tosses the piece of chalk into one of the squares on the grid and hops on one foot, singing...*

LIZ

"...hello, I must be going . . . I cannot stay, I came to say I must be going..."

*...she balances on one foot, leans down and retrieves the chalk, hopping back to the beginning.*

*She tosses the chalk again and hops on her other foot up the hopscotch grid, singing...*

LIZ

"...I'm glad I came, but just the same, I must be going..."

*...she leans down, picks up the chalk and bounces it in her hand, still balancing on one foot.*

*Pause.*

*She puts her foot down, looks at the piece of chalk in her hand.*

*Pause.*

LIZ

All right. Looks like it's me or you now.

*She sets it back down in the last square of the grid. She carefully stands it on end.*

LIZ

Comfy?

*She steps back and waits.*

*The lights fade.*

Scene Seventeen

*The light rise on the room.*

*Liz is gone.*

*The chalk is where she left it in the center of the floor.*

*The lights fade.*

Scene Eighteen

*The light rise on the room.*

*It's empty.*

*The chalk is gone.*

*Silence.*

*The lights fade to black.*