

# THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JANEY JONES

by Jennifer Fawcett

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## **DEVELOPMENT HISTORY**

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JANEY JONES was originally developed as a one act play for two actors through Nightwood Theatre (Toronto) as part of their Groundswell Festival where it received a staged reading, directed by Jen H. Capraru. Development continued over a fringe festival tour that took it across Canada to Montreal, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Edmonton, Vancouver, Victoria, and the SummerWorks Theatre Festival in Toronto. It was held over for an additional week of performances at the Maurice Young Millennium Playhouse in Whistler, BC, and the Waterfront Theatre in Vancouver, BC.

The full-length version was developed through the Playwrights Workshop at the University of Iowa. It was produced in May 2006, as part of the University of Iowa's New Play Festival, directed by Sean Paul Bryan. In August 2006, it received a workshop production at The Hatchery Festival in Washington, DC, directed by Allison Stockman.

## CHARACTERS

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| JANEY JONES               | (28)   |
| YOUNG JANEY               | (8), JANEY's inner child   |
| MARION                    | (mid 50's - in scenes from the past she is 9 and 16), JANEY's mother |
| JUNE                      | (age range early 30's to late 70's), JANEY's grandmother             |
| HARRY                     | (age range mid 30's to late 50's), JANEY's grandfather               |
| DENYS                     | (late 20's/early 30's), JANEY's (ex)boyfriend                        |
| DOCTOR/<br>FORTUNE TELLER | can be male or female, played by the same actor                      |

## SETTING

JANEY's childhood bedroom at her mother's house, and a park across the street.

Late November of the present year.

In scenes from the past the date is noted in bold. Dates are approximate and flexible.

## NOTES

JANEY is experiencing these memories from her bed. When the memory takes place in a different location it is indicated in the stage directions, although it is important to remember that the reality for JANEY lies in that bedroom.

The entrances and exits of characters should overlap wherever possible to be as fluid as the memories, fantasies and moments of reality that blur in JANEY's mind.

In scenes from the distant past (ie. those with HARRY and JUNE), JANEY is neither seen nor heard by the characters in the scene.

There is no intermission.

## THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JANEY JONES

*The silhouette of a window rises on JANEY in bed.  
She sits up.  
A narrow light rises on a tire swing.*

JANEY

I'm spinning on a tire swing.

*YOUNG JANEY enters and gets on the swing; she  
begins to spin.*

JANEY (CONT'D)

The world is winding around me and I'm at the center. Faster and faster – the houses, the trees, my whole world blurring into ...nothing. Everything disappears, except the sky. I lean back - if I let go I could fly up into it. Just let go -

MARION (OFFSTAGE)

Janey!

*Lights snap to full.  
YOUNG JANEY exits and the tire swing rises.  
JANEY pulls the covers over her head.*

*MARION enters.*

MARION

Oh come on Janey. Janey!

*(No response)*

Sweetheart, I know you're upset but hiding in bed is not going to make it any easier.

For goodness sake, have you gotten out of bed once since you came home? Four days? Four days in bed?!

You're not going to feel better lying here staring out the window.

JANEY

What if I can't feel better?

MARION

Don't say things like that.

Janey... please, enough of this. We have to leave soon.

JANEY

I can't Mom.

MARION

What do you mean you can't? You just do. You get out of bed and have a shower and -

JANEY

Can you please just go without me.

MARION

Don't be ridiculous. You are going to your grandmother's funeral. How would she feel knowing you weren't there.

JANEY

How would she know?

MARION

That's not the point.  
I would like you there.

JANEY

Like this funeral's going to change anything.

MARION

What is that supposed to mean?

JANEY

Nothing. Never mind.

MARION

I'm not asking for much. Just a little support, for once.  
*(She waits for a response – nothing)*  
You know I have no patience for this kind of behavior. Today of all days...

*MARION storms out of the bedroom.*

JANEY

Mom - - Shit.  
Get up.

*(She doesn't move)*

Get UP.

*(As if imitating someone:)*

You have to fight against these feelings you have.

*The DOCTOR appears.  
Overlapping her last line:*

DOCTOR

You have to fight against these feelings you have. This isn't going to go away on its own.

JANEY

What are you doing here?

DOCTOR

Because of your family history, you may be more susceptible - -

HARRY (*OFFSTAGE*)

Junebug?

JANEY

(*Looking around*)

What?

DOCTOR

Of course it's your choice...

*The DOCTOR exits.*

JANEY

(*Calling after her*)

Wait –

HARRY (*OFFSTAGE*)

Honey, I'm home.

*Early 1960's, HARRY & JUNE'S house.*

*JUNE (30's) appears in JANEY's bed. She doesn't respond to JANEY.*

JANEY

Grandma? Are you really -?

*HARRY (30's) enters. He hides a blue apron behind his back. Like JUNE, he can't see or hear JANEY.*

HARRY

Guess who's the new Managing Director.

(*No response*)

Going to get up and celebrate with me, Junebug?

JANEY

Grandpa it's me, Janey. Can you see me?

HARRY (*CONT'D*)

I've got something special here for you, but you've got to get out of bed to get it. Come on lazy bones - Marion told me you've been in bed since this morning. You sleep all day, you'll be up all night and that's no good now is it.

(*Showing her the apron*)

Do you like it? I thought I'd get you something pretty but something you could use too. Blue.

JUNE

(*As if far away*)

Blue.

HARRY

Soon as I saw it, I thought of you.

JUNE

Sky blue.

HARRY

If you don't like it, I can take it back.

JUNE

No. I like it.

HARRY

I bought some champagne. It's okay about the money - I haven't got the raise yet but I should in a few weeks. That'll make things easier for you, right? You worrying about money again?

JANEY

Grandpa, can't you see what's happening to her?

HARRY (*CONT'D*)

We don't have to drink it tonight if you're not feeling well. You got another one of your headaches again? ... Honey?

JANEY

You can't follow her where she's going.

JUNE

A headache...

HARRY

Marion said you didn't pick her up from school again. Was the headache that bad?

JUNE

I forgot.

HARRY

You forgot?

JUNE

I guess.

HARRY

Well the next time you "forget" could you call me so we don't have to have the neighbors sticking their noses into our business. Mrs. Marshall had to drive her home again and you know what that woman's like. God knows how many people she's already told.... June? Are you even listening to me?

JUNE

*(To herself)*

Stupid bug.

HARRY

Stay in bed. I'll make dinner. Celebrate on my own I guess.

JUNE

I'm sorry ...

HARRY

It's okay sweetheart. You got a lot on your mind.

JUNE

My mind ...

HARRY

Go to sleep. You'll feel better in the morning.

*HARRY exits. Lights fade on JUNE.*

JANEY

*(To herself)*

What is this?

*The DOCTOR enters. JANEY goes to her.*

DOCTOR

It could be a number of things: stress, exhaustion ... -

JANEY

I'm probably making a big deal out of nothing. I mean, shit happens to everyone, you know?

DOCTOR

Yes, I know.

JANEY

It doesn't mean there's something wrong with my head. I mean I know what I'm supposed to do: get regular sleep, eat better, go on a vacation... -

DOCTOR

We all handle stress differently.

JANEY (*CONT'D*)

... take an art class, get a cat, do ugh yoga.

DOCTOR

Yoga. Right. Has that been working?

JANEY

It all just takes so much... work. I keep thinking I'm going to wake up one morning and everything will be back to normal. I keep waiting for that morning.

DOCTOR

And has this happened before?

JANEY

Yeah, but it passed. This time it's... taking longer.

DOCTOR

How long?

*JANEY is silent.*

DOCTOR

Janey?

JANEY

I can't remember.

DOCTOR

When it started?

JANEY

What it was like before. It's like that's someone else.

DOCTOR

Because of your family history, you may be more susceptible to depression.

JANEY

Depression? No. I mean it happens, I know, to lots of people but ... but – I just, I don't think it's ... that.

*Lights fade on the DOCTOR.*

*Mid 1980's: JUNE (50's) enters.*

*She is wearing the apron but now it's old and ragged.*

*YOUNG JANEY enters and stands behind JANEY.*

*JUNE is actually speaking to YOUNG JANEY and as before, does not hear JANEY.*

JUNE

Janey pet, what's wrong? I have a treat for you.

*She pulls a bag of Smarties (small white sugar candies) out of her pocket.*

JUNE (CONT'D)

These will help you feel better so when you grow up you can be strong and happy.

JANEY

I am grown up.

*YOUNG JANEY bursts out from behind JANEY and runs to JUNE.*

YOUNG JANEY

Like medicine?

JANEY

*(To YOUNG JANEY)*

Wait, you're - ?

JUNE

There's happiness in every one. But don't you eat them all at once.

YOUNG JANEY

I'll save them for when I'm sad. And when you're sad too. You're sad because Grandpa died.

JUNE

Yes.

YOUNG JANEY

Me too.

*(Referring to the Smarties)*

You need one too.

JUNE

No no, those are just for you. Would you like to hear a story?

YOUNG JANEY

About Little Bug?

JUNE

Once upon a time there was a Little Bug who lived in a little house.

YOUNG JANEY

Little Bug could fly, right Grandma?

JUNE

But she didn't know she could fly for a long time. She'd stand outside her little house and look up at the big, big sky and say "I wish I could fly" –

YOUNG JANEY

Fly fly away. Up into the sky. That's where Grandpa is now, right?

JUNE

That's right. And then one day, a long time ago now, the Little Bug got a magic present.

YOUNG JANEY

Her Super Power Cape.

JUNE

But she didn't know it was a magic cape.

YOUNG JANEY

How did she find out?

JUNE

One day she was standing outside her house, looking up at the sky and wishing she could fly and she realized she'd been given a very special present –

YOUNG JANEY

Who gave it to her? Somebody magic?

JUNE

Your grandfather gave it to her.

YOUNG JANEY

Grandpa? Did he know about flying?

JUNE

Not at first. And then... well he thought it was something different – something dangerous.

YOUNG JANEY

Flying's not dangerous.

JUNE

You do have to be careful.

At first Little Bug didn't know she could fly because she was wearing the cape the wrong way. So, she put it on her back -

YOUNG JANEY

And flew up, up and away. I wish I could fly.

JUNE

What you need is a magic cape.

*She takes her apron off and gives it to YOUNG JANEY.*

YOUNG JANEY

But it's just an apron.

JUNE

It looks like just an apron, but if you tie it over your shoulders,  
(*Putting it on YOUNG JANEY*)

and stand where you can see the whole sky, and wish with all your might, it becomes a Super Power Cape.

YOUNG JANEY

Just like Little Bug's?

JUNE

The very same.

YOUNG JANEY

Wow! I can't wait to show - -

JUNE

Janey, it's a secret cape. You have to be careful how you use it because it is very powerful.

*YOUNG JANEY "flies" off stage.*

JUNE (CONT'D)

My mind ... dark clouds gathering ... everyone will know.

JANEY

You wore that apron everyday til Grandpa died. And then you gave it to me.

JUNE

What do I do now? Harry?

*JUNE gets into the bed.*

JANEY

Grandma, what have you given me?

*MARION (30's) enters. (Because this scene is in the past she cannot see JANEY.)*

MARION

Mom – you're up. I'm sorry if Janey woke you. She knows you're supposed to be sleeping.

JUNE

I was telling her a story.

*YOUNG JANEY "flies" in.*

MARION  
(To JANEY)

What are you doing with that ratty old apron?

YOUNG JANEY

It's a Sup-

*YOUNG JANEY clamps her hand over her mouth.*

MARION

I don't want that thing in my house.

YOUNG JANEY

But Mom –

MARION

You heard me, throw it out.

JUNE

Your father gave that to me.

MARION

It's just a rag now anyway. Why would you give that to Janey?

JUNE

It was special ... -

MARION

Look. Mother, you can relax now. The Home will prepare your meals.

JUNE

The Home?

MARION

Mom. Please –

JUNE

What home?

MARION

We've talked about this. The house is being sold.

JUNE

Sold? But your father built that house for me.

MARION

And it's too much for you alone. Dad knew that – we decided this is the best way.

JUNE

We?

MARION

You'll be very comfortable in the Home.

JUNE

I'm not old Marion.

MARION

It's not about your age.

JUNE

I can take care of myself. I know there have been times but ... a Home?  
Your father would never -

MARION

It was his idea.  
I'm sorry. I thought he would have told you. I can't do what Dad did. Please  
understand, with Janey, by myself -

JUNE

By yourself. Such a shame *your* husband -

MARION

We are not talking about this.

JUNE

He wasn't your father. Your father never would have walked out on a wife and  
child -

MARION

No he wouldn't, but Michael wasn't Dad – we all know that.  
Look, you'll get better care in the Home – professional care.

YOUNG JANEY

Grandma's going to stay here, right?

MARION

I'll make your room comfortable –

YOUNG JANEY

Right mom?

MARION

I'll move in all your favourite things. The staff is very friendly...-

YOUNG JANEY

Mom!

MARION

Janey – go and play downstairs please. Grandma needs to sleep.

JUNE

*(To YOUNG JANEY)*

Don't you want your room back sweetie?

YOUNG JANEY

Nope. It's more fun when you're here.

MARION

Janey ....

YOUNG JANEY

I'll be quiet, I promise.

*She roars off stage.*

JUNE

You're angry with me.

MARION

No -... It's just we've been through this.

JUNE

I'm sorry.

MARION

A young couple has made an offer – I know it's soon but the agent doesn't think we'll get a better one. They want to move in at the end of the month. I can look after the details – I don't mind doing that, but I need to know what you want to do with Dad's books and clothes -

JUNE

Damned fool all my life. Couldn't see him right there in front of me ...

MARION

Do you want another pill?

JUNE

No – no more pills.

MARION

The doctor said you should sleep.

JUNE

“The doctor said”, “the doctor said” ...

MARION

This is hard for me too Mother. I’m doing my best.

*JUNE turns away from her and closes her eyes.*

MARION

Maybe we can talk about this later.

*The present – MARION now speaks to JANEY.*

MARION

Janey? Did you hear me?

JANEY

What?

MARION

I said we can talk about this later.

JANEY

Talk about what?

MARION

Have you not heard anything I’ve said?

JANEY

Mom, can you see her?

*She indicates JUNE sleeping beside her; MARION cannot see her.*

MARION

I can see you’re still in bed. You’ve obviously decided to make today as difficult as possible. This behavior doesn’t work today.

*YOUNG JANEY enters. JUNE wakes up – this is a continuation of the previous scene.*

YOUNG JANEY

*(To JUNE)*

This stupid cape doesn’t work.

JUNE  
No?

MARION  
*(To JANEY)*  
How am I supposed to do this on my own?

*MARION exits.*

YOUNG JANEY  
How am I supposed to be a superhero if I can't fly? That's a basic requirement. I did everything you said. I looked up at the sky

JUNE  
Did you look way up?

YOUNG JANEY  
Waaaay up and I put my arms out.

JUNE  
What did you see?

YOUNG JANEY  
Tree branches, clouds. Some birds.

*YOUNG JANEY and JUNE go to the window.*

JUNE  
When you look out there what do you see?

YOUNG JANEY  
Blue, Grandma. All I see is blue.

JUNE  
What kind of blue?

YOUNG JANEY  
Light blue?

JUNE  
Just light blue?

YOUNG JANEY  
Kind of grey, kind of white.

JUNE

A sky in March; the blue of snow in sunshine... Now look higher.

YOUNG JANEY

It's darker.

JUNE

Beyond the blue what do you see?

YOUNG JANEY

I can't see that far.

JUNE

Beyond the sky is the blue skin of the earth. Reach through the sky blue to where the earth is spinning through space; spinning in purple-blue circles, then circles blue as smoke, and bigger and bigger until the circles are dark as night. If you let the sky under your skin you can reach through space and rise above all of this. And then you will fly.

*YOUNG JANEY exits.*

JUNE (*CONT'D*)

Fly up through the sky ... It's waiting.

*JUNE exits.*

JANEY

*(Looking out)*

What do you feel when you're up there?

*The DOCTOR enters carrying a bottle of pills.*

DOCTOR

You might feel a bit jittery and you'll probably experience some nausea - pick up some Dramamine - that'll help counteract the insomnia too, or I can prescribe sleeping pills. This is one of the gentler ones - we can go stronger if we need to.

JANEY

How is being a jittery nauseous insomniac an improvement?

DOCTOR

Most people prefer to deal with the side effects rather than the disease -

JANEY

Disease? No - leprosy is a disease. Or Alzheimer's. This is just a - a problem.

DOCTOR

From everything you've told me, and given your grandmother's history –

JANEY

My grandmother has bipolar disorder. That's totally different.

DOCTOR

Different, but related.

JANEY

She's taken pills all her life and they've never helped.

DOCTOR

But has she stayed on them?

JANEY

She says they do all these horrible things to her.

DOCTOR

Bipolar disorder is a complicated illness, but it can be controlled.

JANEY

Controlled? Her life's been ruined because of it.

DOCTOR

That may have had more to do with the choices she made than the disease.

JANEY

So it's her fault? Then I guess this is my fault.

DOCTOR

No one's blaming you. There are many factors that can contribute to depression; some of them are not in your control.

There are other options we can try but I think these are a good place to start; to help you think more clearly.

*The DOCTOR exits.*

JANEY

Well that's helpful.

Oh these? These are for sick people.

*(Holding up a single pill)*

This little white circle of compressed powder - no bigger than a Smartie. I will lose myself to this?

*YOUNG JANEY enters with her bag of Smarties  
JANEY holds the pill at arm's length.  
YOUNG JANEY does the same with a Smartie.  
They slowly move the pill/Smartie to their mouth.  
YOUNG JANEY gulps down her Smartie.  
JANEY doesn't eat her pill.  
They see each other.  
They stare at each other for a moment.*

JANEY

You can see me?

YOUNG JANEY

Course I can. You're right there. Who were you talking to?

JANEY

What?

YOUNG JANEY

You were talking to somebody, about those.

JANEY

No I wasn't. I was just thinking.

YOUNG JANEY

Are those my grandma's?

JANEY

They're mine.

YOUNG JANEY

Do they taste good?

JANEY

I don't know. I haven't tried them yet.

YOUNG JANEY

I only like pills that taste good.

JANEY

Me too.

YOUNG JANEY

How come you're in my room?

JANEY  
It's my room. Or it used to be. I'm Janey.

YOUNG JANEY  
Hey – me too.

JANEY  
Umm, I think you're me.

YOUNG JANEY  
I'm you?

JANEY  
And I'm you.

YOUNG JANEY  
You are? Cool.

JANEY  
How old are you?

YOUNG JANEY  
Eight. How old are you?

JANEY  
Twenty-eight.

YOUNG JANEY  
You're old.

JANEY  
No I'm not.

YOUNG JANEY  
Do you have kids?

JANEY  
I have houseplants.

YOUNG JANEY  
Are you married?

JANEY  
No.

Are you a doctor? YOUNG JANEY

No. JANEY

Are you an astronaut? Or a stuntwoman? YOUNG JANEY

NO. JANEY

Well are you famous? YOUNG JANEY

Stop asking me. No. JANEY

Well what are you? YOUNG JANEY

You mean what's my job? Nothing. JANEY

Are you sure you're me? When I'm twenty-eight I'm going to be somebody very important. And I'm going to have three kids and I'm going to live in a big house and do whatever I want. YOUNG JANEY

No you're not. JANEY

Says who? YOUNG JANEY

Says me. JANEY

My mom says I can be whatever I want. My grandma says I can be a superhero if I try hard enough. YOUNG JANEY

A superhero... JANEY

MARION (*OFFSTAGE*)

Janey, stop dawdling. Let's go.

YOUNG JANEY

We're going to see my grandma. She's in a Home-With-A-Capital-H. She just moved there.

My grandpa died.

JANEY

I know. I'm sorry.

YOUNG JANEY

When I get back maybe I can show you my Super Power Cape. But you have to promise not to tell anybody.

*She runs off.*

JANEY

A superhero. How could I have forgotten that?

*One year earlier: the newspaper office.*

*DENYS enters.*

*(In this scene JANEY is not depressed.)*

DENYS

You must be the superhero.

JANEY

What?

DENYS

That's the word from the boss. He said I'm supposed to introduce myself to the superhero journalist.

JANEY

Thanks. I'm not sure what I've done to qualify.

DENYS

Nah - he's right; that piece you did on the G8 protests kicked ass. My kid sister's deep into the whole student movement thing. She says you're like a hero to them – I'm supposed to get your autograph.

JANEY

Tell her if she wants I can put her in touch with some of my contacts – there's another protest coming up.

DENYS

Really? She'll love that. So, did you actually go?

JANEY

Yeah. It was incredible.

DENYS

Did you get tear-gassed?

JANEY

Oh yeah.

DENYS

That's intense. You're a rebel.

JANEY

More like a concerned citizen.

DENYS

I'm Denys.

JANEY

I'm Janey.

DENYS

I know.

JANEY

Oh my.

DENYS

I mean, Mike already told me. So where are you?

JANEY

*(More to herself)*

Where am I?

DENYS

Mike always gives the newbies some "human interest" story. You know, total bleeding-heart crap.

JANEY

He said something about an animal shelter?

DENYS

That sounds about right. Don't worry – you'll get more interesting stuff soon. Mine was a bake sale at the mental health hospital. I thought it was total bullshit but I ended up talking to this kid who'd just found out her mom was crazy. Fucking intense.

JANEY

Wow. Yeah.

DENYS

I'm at City Hall now, not that politicians are any saner... Anyway, um, nice to meet you – welcome to uh ... The Chronicle. Oh – hey - a bunch of us usually go for drinks Thursday nights – you're welcome to join.

JANEY

That'd be great.

DENYS

... Well, nice to meet you. I gotta run.

*After a prolonged moment he exits.*

JANEY

Denys – wait.

*Immediately –*

*Mid 1960's, HARRY & JUNE's house:*

*HARRY (30's), MARION (9) and JUNE (30's) enter.*

*HARRY is carrying a sagging, over-decorated birthday cake.*

JUNE

*(Overlapping the previous scene)*

Wait!

HARRY

June –

JUNE

The camera. Where's the camera? We have to have a picture – Marion's big day, Big Girl Day. Harry, go find it.

HARRY

I don't know where it is.

Harry – JUNE

Dad! MARION

June, we can find the camera later. HARRY

Oh – I know - wait here – JUNE

*She runs off.*

Dad ... MARION

Just wait honey. HARRY  
(*Quietly*)

There's a picture you showed me once. JANEY  
(*To MARION, who doesn't hear her*)

*JUNE returns with a camera.*

Let me light the - - HARRY

Smile! JUNE

*She takes the picture.*

Sweetheart, slow down. HARRY

*He lights the candles.*

Okay Marion, don't forget to make a wish. HARRY

Ice cream! Spoons!! JUNE  
Oops - forks – forks for cake – silly me!

*JUNE dashes offstage to the kitchen singing "Happy Birthday". Sounds of crashing cutlery and slamming cupboards punctuate the following:*

HARRY

June it's fine. Spoons are fine.

*HARRY serves the cake. He and MARION begin to eat then immediately stop. MARION looks like she is about to cry. JUNE enters.*

HARRY

Is this a new recipe?

JUNE

I asked Mrs. Marshall for her very best chocolate cake recipe. I said, "Mrs. Marshall, it's Marion's ninth birthday and she needs an extra special cake and I know you know a thing or two about cake".

HARRY

Are you going to have some?

JUNE

Oh no, I'm not hungry. Why aren't you eating?

MARION

It tastes funny.

JUNE

I made it especially for you. Eat your cake.

MARION

Dad – tell her.

HARRY

Umm . . . sweetie, did you put sugar in it?

JUNE

It's cake, of course there's sugar in it.

HARRY

It's just – maybe when Mrs. Marshall was writing out the recipe she forgot a few things.

JUNE

No, I remember: cocoa, eggs, butter.... vanilla, umm flour ummm...

HARRY

Sugar?

JUNE

Are you accusing me of not being able to make a simple cake for my daughter's birthday?

HARRY

No sweetheart, I'm just saying – you've been busy all day maybe you missed –

JUNE

Busy all day - busy all week – cleaned the whole house top to bottom and wrapped the presents and planned everything and made the food and -

MARION

It's okay Mum.

*The doorbell rings. HARRY gets up.*

JUNE

No - wait. Don't answer it.

HARRY

It's probably those damned Jehovah's Witnesses again. Interrupting us at dinner...

JUNE

It's for the party.

MARION

What party?

*JUNE moves faster and faster, cleaning the table, scrubbing the floor, checking the door, etc.*

JUNE

It was a surprise – for you – for my big girl. I invited everybody. I called all the mothers in your class – I invited your whole class honey – a big happy surprise party – I invited everybody for cake and ice cream. I cleaned the whole house. I made the cake I planned everything. I called them all this morning. It was going to be perfect – a perfect birthday - perfectperfect . . .

HARRY -  
June - -

*The doorbell rings again.*

JUNE  
Make them go away.

HARRY  
Well how's that going to look – you invite them and then we don't answer the door.

JUNE  
No – the cake is all wrong – I forgot the sugar, you're right. I was so excited – it's all wrong. What will they think?

*The doorbell rings.*

MARION  
You invited everybody in my class?

JUNE  
I'm sorry. I'm so sorry

*The doorbell rings.*

HARRY  
June, just calm down. Marion, take your mother upstairs. I'm going to let them in – I'll serve them coffee – there's ice cream at least. Marion can have her party – we can put on some music and they'll all go home in an hour.

*The doorbell rings.*

JUNE  
But the cake - -

MARION  
Daddy –

HARRY  
June –

*The doorbell rings again and again.*

JUNE  
I'm sorry. I just wanted it to be perfect. I'm sorry-I'm sorry-I'm sorry...

*JUNE gets into the bed.*

JANEY

*(To JUNE, who doesn't hear her)*

Once upon a time there was a Little Bug.  
The Little Bug lived in a little house with little flowers on the wall. And sometimes those walls would get so close the Little Bug would smack into them – smack smack smack. And then she'd look up at the sky and say "I wish I could fly; fly up into the big big sky. And when I look down everything would be so little. And little things shouldn't scare you, even if you're just a Little Bug."

*HARRY comes to the bed. It is later that night.*

JUNE

Are the guests ...?

HARRY

Gone.

JUNE

And Marion?

HARRY

Asleep. Finally.

JUNE

Do you think anyone -

HARRY

Noticed? Noticed that you weren't there, and Marion was crying and didn't want to see any of her friends, and the house was half decorated for a party they'd only been invited to earlier that day, and the cake had no goddamned sugar in it? Yeah. I think maybe some of them noticed.

JUNE

What did you tell them?

HARRY

I told them ... I ... I didn't know what to tell them. I just laughed and said my wife's pretty spontaneous. Ha. Ha. Ha.

JUNE

My brave soldier. Always knows what to say.

HARRY

Do I? I just want to know – what the hell were you thinking?

JUNE

I don't remember.

The thoughts – the ideas – they don't have words – they're pictures, like movies in my head, they flicker in front of my eyes and they're so clear and I know exactly what to do to make it perfect, perfect like in the movies and then, and then .... The movie stops and it's just me and I didn't put sugar in the cake. I was watching the movie – I was at the part where all the children play on the lawn and then come in and have birthday cake and ice cream and, and, -

HARRY

June.

JUNE

It's never right. I just want it to be right.

HARRY

This weekend my sister's going to look after Marion and we're going to see a doctor.

JUNE

Doctor Locke?

HARRY

No, a different doctor. Nobody has to know, just you and me. I want you to tell the doctor about what happened.

JUNE

It all seems so silly now.

HARRY

I want you to be brave -

JUNE

Like a brave soldier?

HARRY

Yes. Like a brave soldier. Sleep now Junebug.

*HARRY exits.*

*JANEY goes to JUNE in the bed.*

JANEY

What did the doctor say to you?

*The DOCTOR enters.*

*JUNE exits.*

DOCTOR

Part of what you're experiencing is chemical.

JANEY

Chemical?

Last week I saw a woman laughing.

Two women on the bus; one of them said something and the other suddenly burst out laughing. She threw her head up, arched her back - it spilled out of her.

*(She tries to laugh – silence)*

His hand on my back; the taste of chocolate the instant before it leaves my mouth. Hold on to it - -

*(To the DOCTOR)*

Where am I in “chemical”?

DOCTOR

The physiology of the brain is complex Janey.

JANEY

So is that why I can't feel anything?

*JANEY turns away from her and wraps her arms around herself. She touches her arm, her face, her neck, growing more frantic.*

JANEY (CONT'D)

No no no no no no

Denys –

*DENYS enters.*

*He kisses JANEY's face, her neck, her arm – his movement is identical to what she just did.*

JANEY

*(To the DOCTOR, not heard by DENYS)*

I just want to be able to feel again.

*She and DENYS get in bed. She enters the scene with him; her mood changes.*

DENYS

Have you ever been to see a shrink?

JANEY

Is this your version of pillow talk?

DENYS

Sure. I let you talk about genocide during an intimate candle-lit dinner last night.

JANEY

Excuse me. The candles were incidental - that was a business dinner.

DENYS

I hope you don't think this part's been incidental, Ms. Jones. Mmmmm. You smell nice.

*He snuggles in next to her and doesn't hear her speak to the DOCTOR. When JANEY speaks to the DOCTOR, she resumes her previous state.*

DOCTOR

*(Referring to the pills)*

It may take some time before you notice a difference. It's important that you stick with them, even if you don't think they're working.

JANEY

Sure ... whatever.

DOCTOR

Have you started taking them?

JANEY

... Not yet.

DOCTOR

This is going to involve some effort on your part. You're going to have to fight against these feelings you have –

JANEY

You've said that already.

DOCTOR

But have you heard me?

JANEY

Would you tell someone with a brain tumor to “fight against the cancer”? Do they have to cure themselves?

DOCTOR

I would tell them they have to believe a recovery is possible.

JANEY

Look – you do NOT understand what I’m feeling.

DOCTOR

I’m trying to.

JANEY

Oh really? So when I say “empty” does that actually mean something to you? Personally?

DOCTOR

*(Harshly)*

Do I have to feel exactly like you to be able to help you?

*Beat.*

DOCTOR

*(Gently)*

A lot of people come into this office feeling the way you do.

*JANEY turns back into the scene with DENYS.*

*The DOCTOR exits.*

JANEY

Why did you ask about the shrink?

DENYS

I saw one for a while, when I was a teenager, in my “angry phase”. I remember him talking about how someday in the future I would feel “content” – what a horrible word. Anyway it seemed ridiculous - like he was totally ignorant of the reality of my shitty little life, just like every other adult at the time.

JANEY

And?

DENYS

And it doesn’t seem so ridiculous now. Work’s good; things are good...

JANEY

Things...?

DENYS

Um, things ...um this thing in particular...u-us, I guess? Wow. I'm a lot more articulate in print.

*They kiss.*

JANEY

Where do you see yourself in five years?

DENYS

Ohhhh ... I don't know – this bed's nice.

JANEY

I want to be a foreign correspondent somewhere far away, maybe Nairobi, or Beijing. Or somewhere with rebels; you know, get the exclusive interview with the guerrillas.

DENYS

You like gorillas? Have I ever shown you my Silver Back?

*He makes gorilla noises and exits.*

JANEY

*(Laughing)*

Not that kind of gorilla ...

*(Realizing she's alone)*

Oh.

*JANEY picks up her bottle of pills and examines them again.*

*YOUNG JANEY enters.*

*She takes out her Smarties, examines them and then starts to eat them.*

JANEY

Are you going to eat all of those at once?

YOUNG JANEY

Grandma said I could.

JANEY

Did she give them to you?

YOUNG JANEY

She said I should keep them for when I need them. So even if she can't give them to me, I'll have some.

JANEY  
Do you need them now?

*YOUNG JANEY nods.*

JANEY  
Why?

*YOUNG JANEY shrugs.*

JANEY  
Why don't you go outside and play?

YOUNG JANEY  
You sound like my mom.

JANEY  
Well you're not going to feel better just hiding in your room all day.

YOUNG JANEY  
You are.

JANEY  
I'm ... - it's different. What's wrong? Is it school?

*YOUNG JANEY shakes her head.*

JANEY  
You just feel sad?

*YOUNG JANEY nods.*

JANEY  
Sometimes I feel sad too. Sometimes I don't even know why.

YOUNG JANEY  
But you should know – you're old.

JANEY  
You've got to stop saying that.

YOUNG JANEY  
We went to the Home-With-A-Capital-H to see Grandma but she was different and she wouldn't look at me. And Mom yelled at the nurse for letting Grandma

YOUNG JANEY (*CONT'D*)

stop taking her pills, and then Grandma yelled at Mom, and, and - I hate the Home-With-A-Capital-H. It smells funny. Like old people.

JANEY

Do you know why?

YOUNG JANEY

Cause they're old.

JANEY

No. Why Grandma was different.

YOUNG JANEY

They never tell me anything.

JANEY

Sometimes, when adults aren't feeling well they don't act like they normally do.

YOUNG JANEY

*(Holding out her Smarties)*

But I could make her better. I could give her these.

JANEY

That's candy.

YOUNG JANEY

It's medicine.

JANEY

Is that what she told you?

YOUNG JANEY

Make-You-Feel-Better pills.

JANEY

Do they work?

YOUNG JANEY

For a while.

JANEY

But not forever. What will you do when they don't work anymore?

YOUNG JANEY

I won't need them then – Grandma said. I'll be grown and I'll know what to do.

*She runs off.*

*Mid 1960's: HARRY & JUNE's house; JUNE is on the roof, HARRY down below. JUNE wears the apron like a cape. She is focused out and up and only half hears HARRY until the end.*

HARRY

What are you doing? June!

JUNE

... Doing?

HARRY

Doing - what are you -

JUNE

I'm on the roof.

HARRY

Yes, you're on the roof. Why!?

JUNE

The sky ...

HARRY

Mrs. Marshall called me to say my wife is standing on the roof.

JUNE

Called you at work, Mrs. Marshall...

HARRY

She called me. I'm here now.  
I'm worried /

JUNE

*(Echoing)*

/Worried.

HARRY

This is crazy/

JUNE

/Crazy.

HARRY

Yes crazy. Listen to me: you are going to come down. Now.

JUNE

The sky's so much closer from here.

HARRY

*(Speaking almost over her)*

Last month – do you remember when we went for dinner?

JUNE

To fly up, up, above all this ... -

HARRY

You wore your new dress; everyone said how pretty you looked.

JUNE

When you're that high everything down here is little.

HARRY

Do you remember how happy we were? I do.

JUNE

Little things shouldn't scare you.

HARRY

I want that June back. My June.

JUNE

*(Referring out)*

If I could just get up there...

HARRY

There's nothing up there. People are watching – please.

JUNE

You can't follow me where I'm going Harry.

HARRY

What? June - -

*JUNE continues to stare out.*

HARRY

Don't lock me out. Staring into goddamned space - I didn't marry a bug June.

*On “bug” JUNE turns to face HARRY. They hold this for a moment then she goes to him.*

*The DOCTOR enters.  
JUNE, HARRY and the roof fade.*

DOCTOR

There’s a psychologist who works here – I’ve spoken to her and she could start seeing you immediately. She could help you focus on more specific techniques for dealing with your feelings.

*As she speaks, the DOCTOR puts on the FORTUNE TELLER’s cloak.*

JANEY

I don’t want a psychologist. I just want someone to tell me what’s going to happen.

FORTUNE TELLER

Are you in the position of extrasensory perception?

JANEY

I... I guess?

FORTUNE TELLER

Now I am going to focus. We shall consult your Spirit Bird....

JANEY

My what?

FORTUNE TELLER

I am going to focus...

JANEY

Okay uhhhh ...so this bird?

FORTUNE TELLER

Is the representative of your soul.

JANEY

What do I do with it?

FORTUNE TELLER

I don’t know.

JANEY

Can I request a goose?

FORTUNE TELLER

No geese.

JANEY

I've always liked geese. They're so graceful...

FORTUNE TELLER

Fo-CUS. I give the answers, not the reasons, now shush.

*(She makes various bird noises)*

Very strange.

*(Sensing the Spirit Bird)*

Oh..... I see .... For you it is a sparrow! But it is not on top of your head.

JANEY

Where is it?

FORTUNE TELLER

It has fallen behind you. I think it may be dying.

JANEY

Oh God.

FORTUNE TELLER

*(To the Spirit Bird)*

Ahhh? ... Yes, yes...

*(To JANEY)*

The little birdie says you will experience a low period.

JANEY

Oh great. You know, maybe I shouldn't hear anymore.

FORTUNE TELLER

You come here, you pay me \$26.99 and now you don't want to know? Whatever. It's your karma. It's your MasterCard.

JANEY

Will knowing help? Will I be able to change anything?

FORTUNE TELLER

You will experience a low period.

JANEY

And ... ?

FORTUNE TELLER

And what? This is what the birdie says.

JANEY

What about a high period after that?

FORTUNE TELLER

Hard to say. Depends on how you do in the low period. If you get lost in the valley, you don't get to the mountain top. If you wander too long in the forest, you miss the borscht.

*She starts to wander away, then:*

FORTUNE TELLER

You see that door?

JANEY

Yes.

FORTUNE TELLER

When you arrive it's an entrance.

JANEY

Okay.

FORTUNE TELLER

Now it's an exit.

JANEY

Right ... so I have to go out the same way I came in - is that like Buddhist or something?

FORTUNE TELLER

No. It's like I want to take a nap.

*(She starts to walk away then turns again)*

You are at the beginning. Or you are at the end. It's all a question of perspective. You must choose.

*She removes the cloak and becomes the DOCTOR.*

DOCTOR

In essence, you have to choose your perspective; choose how you're going to respond to the events in your life. Being positive sometimes takes more work than being negative. Remember, mood alters perception.

JANEY

Yeah.

DOCTOR

What you think is happening may not actually be happening, at least not the way you're seeing it.

JANEY

Wait, so now I'm making this up?

DOCTOR

No, but how you perceive an event effects how you respond to it. The psychologist could help you examine your -

JANEY

Therapy isn't going to change what's already happened. Like at work?

DOCTOR

I'm suggesting there might be an alternative perspective that would be worth examining. You told me you -

*(Referring to notes)*

“freaked out, didn't go into work for two days, didn't answer the phone -”

JANEY

I'm aware of what happened.

DOCTOR

If you purposely sabotaged yourself that may speak of a larger problem than the event itself -

JANEY

Why are you always prodding at me?

DOCTOR

I'm suggesting might have been healthier ways to deal with - -

JANEY

You weren't there. You wouldn't know.

*DENYS enters.*

DENYS

Janey, are you ready?

JANEY  
(To DENYS)

What?

DOCTOR  
Janey, I can only help you when you're ready.

*Lights fade on the DOCTOR.  
At the newspaper office:*

DENYS  
We gotta go - show starts in half an hour.

JANEY  
Uhhhh - - Can you just go without me.

DENYS  
You're kidding right?

JANEY  
(Referring to work)  
I can't go. I haven't got this done.

DENYS  
How much more do you have to do?

JANEY  
A lot.

DENYS  
The deadline was an hour ago.

JANEY  
No - really? I hadn't noticed.  
Sorry. Look - Mike said he could push it till ten so I'm just under a little pressure right now, okay?

DENYS  
Trust me - I understand. It happens to all of us.

JANEY  
Not to me.

DENYS  
The piece I did about that trial last month? I was ready to shoot myself.

JANEY

This is different.

DENYS

...Okay.

JANEY

Just go without me.

DENYS

I'm not going to go while you're stuck here. Why don't you show me what you have so far and we can figure out the rest. Maybe we can get in after intermission.

JANEY

Do you see all this? Three solid weeks of research and interviews - I don't even know where to start.

DENYS

Okay ... calm down -

JANEY

That's about the least calming thing you can say.

DENYS

I'm just trying to help.

JANEY

I've been sitting here since eight this morning and I haven't written a thing. And the same thing happened yesterday and the day before. I haven't slept since Tuesday - I can't think of anything but this piece, but I can't write it. It's not even like what I write is bad - I can't write anything. My arms feel like lead. I can't think - I can't concentrate - -

DENYS

I'll help you. Have you eaten anything?

JANEY

I'm not hungry.

DENYS

I'll order us some take out, and we'll sit here jam it out -

JANEY

I can't Denys.

DENYS

Yes you can. You're the superhero, remember?

JANEY

Please don't say that.

DENYS

Look, you're a great journalist – he wouldn't have given this to you if he didn't think you could handle it.

JANEY

If I mess this up I ruin everything. This is my one chance to prove to him - -

DENYS

You're putting too much pressure on yourself - you're a perfectionist.

JANEY

I'm shit.

DENYS

No, you're *the* shit.

JANEY

I'm being serious.

DENYS

So am I. So.... Thai or Vietnamese?

JANEY

*(Putting her head in her hands)*

Oh God...

DENYS

Sushi. Excellent suggestion.

*DENYS takes out his cell phone and exits.*

*JANEY tries to work then begins to panic again.*

JANEY

Stop it stop it stop it stop it -

You can't be like this. You are NOT doing this. Fuck.

*(She takes a deep breath)*

No. Everything's fine... just figure it out.

I'm fine.... I'm ... -

*(She takes another breath)*

Fine. Okay.

*She composes herself.*  
*DENYS enters.*

DENYS

Okay, so, show me where you're - -

JANEY

Sweetie, you're right – I just freaked myself out. I'm sorry.

*DENYS looks unsure.*

JANEY

Why don't you call Neil – he'd love the ticket. Then you don't have to go alone.

DENYS

But -

JANEY

It's silly to waste it. If you call him now you'll still get there on time.

DENYS

I don't mind staying.

JANEY

Really. I'm fine. I was just being stupid.

DENYS

... You're sure?

JANEY

Yes.

DENYS

It's not a big deal. It happens to all of us.

JANEY

Go, have fun. I can handle this.

DENYS

Okay... I'll call you later.

*JANEY kisses him on the cheek. He turns to go then turns back.*

DENYS

Baby, it's okay to ask for help, you know?

*He exits.*

JANEY

No, it's dangerous.

*JANEY's apartment - it's a mess.*

*(Note: in previous workshops YOUNG JANEY has created this mess.)*

*MARION enters.*

MARION

*(Looking around)*

What happened in here?

JANEY

Mom...-

*MARION starts cleaning up.*

MARION

I know it's not my place to comment –

JANEY

No, it's not.

*MARION goes to say something then decides against it.*

JANEY

What?

MARION

*(Taking out her cheque book)*

How much am I making this out for?

JANEY

Five hundred. I'll pay you back.

MARION

Sweetheart, if you need money I don't mind.

JANEY

The rent's due and I haven't got any more money on my credit cards and I've never asked you for -

MARION

It's okay. Here.

*(Handing her the cheque)*

Janey ...?

JANEY

I lost my job.

MARION

What?

JANEY

So it might take me a little while to pay you back.

MARION

But they just gave you a promotion.

JANEY

They changed their minds.

MARION

They can't just fire you for no reason.

JANEY

Maybe they had some reasons.

MARION

But you were doing so well. That doesn't make sense.

JANEY

It wasn't that great a job anyway.

MARION

You told me it was the best job you've ever had.

JANEY

Then I guess it was me, I guess *I* wasn't good.

MARION

I'm sure that's not true. Can you talk to them? Maybe they'll reconsider.

JANEY

I don't think so.

MARION

It would be worth asking.

JANEY

No, it wouldn't. Just trust me, okay? I couldn't take it. I failed –

MARION

Don't you say that.

JANEY

But it's true.

MARION

Look, sometimes when we're given hard things to deal with we have to fight a little harder.

JANEY

What am I supposed to do with advice like that?

MARION

Well I'm sorry if it's not what you want to hear but -

JANEY

Because it's so easy to say. But anybody who's ever actually felt this way knows -

MARION

You think I don't know? You think you're the only one who's felt like this? You can't even see how much you've got.

*She starts to go then stops.*

MARION

I'm sorry about your job, but just giving up like this isn't going to make anything better.

JANEY

I'm not. I'm tired Mom. I'm just ... tired.

MARION

If you want you could move back home, for a little while, if that would take some of the pressure off.

JANEY

I can't do that.

MARION

Well, your bedroom's there if you want it.  
I want to help you Janey, but I'm not going to feel sorry for you.

JANEY

Thanks.

MARION

My father spent his whole life feeling sorry for my mother. It made him blind.

*JANEY turns away from MARION.*

*The FORTUNE TELLER sweeps in, speaking as she comes.*

*MARION does not see her.*

FORTUNE TELLER

Are you in the position of - - Oh. You.

JANEY

*(To the FORTUNE TELLER)*

It doesn't make sense.

FORTUNE TELLER

I'm not a shoe store. No return policy.

MARION

Janey, I've been where you are. You have to make the choice to keep going.

*JANEY moves fully into the scene with the FORTUNE TELLER.*

*Lights fade on MARION.*

JANEY

It's what you said about choice.

FORTUNE TELLER

I told you – I tell you *what* I see, not *why* I see.

JANEY

I'll pay – please, it's important. You said I was going to go into a low period but then you said it's my choice. If it's my fortune, does that mean it's going to happen no matter what? Or is it a warning of what could happen if I don't do

JANEY (*CONT'D*)

anything? If I don't choose this, am I stuck with it anyway, like destiny? I guess what I'm saying is, is it inevitable, or am I just susceptible?

FORTUNE TELLER

You want me to ask your birdie?

JANEY

My bird's probably dead. I want to know what you see.

FORTUNE TELLER

You didn't like what I saw.

JANEY

Your sign says "crystal ball readings".

FORTUNE TELLER

What would you like me to see in my ball?

JANEY

Me. Having a normal life. You know, a fulfilling job, a husband, a dog, Bermuda.

FORTUNE TELLER

When you stand at the edge of dark water it is hard to know what you will find when you go in, what dangers lie hidden; maybe seaweed, maybe little fishies.

JANEY

What about tea leaves? Or tarot cards? I'm looking for something a little more concrete.

FORTUNE TELLER

Information is a powerful tool.

JANEY

Right. So that's why I need to know what lies ahead.

FORTUNE TELLER

And what would you do with that knowledge?

JANEY

I could know whether I'm going crazy or if this is just a phase. If this is permanent then I'm not sure I want to keep going, but maybe it's just temporary, like because Saturn returned.

FORTUNE TELLER

Did it? Damn, I have library books due.

JANEY

Is there any way of bringing my bird back to life?

FORTUNE TELLER

I don't know. I'm not a vet. Okay, you owe me \$26.99. Pay in cash and I won't charge you tax.

JANEY

But I still don't know what's going to happen.

FORTUNE TELLER

You said: husband, dog, Bermuda.

JANEY

That's what I want.

FORTUNE TELLER

To get to Bermuda you must pass through the Triangle. Dogs can break your heart and husbands pee on the carpet, but in the mean time you have a nice Sunday in the park. I told you it was your choice. You see that door?

JANEY

You want another nap?

FORTUNE TELLER

No. When you arrive it is an entrance. Now it is an exit. It is the same door but with different meanings. It's all in how you see it.

JANEY

What if I don't see any door at all? Does that mean I'm crazy?

*The FORTUNE TELLER takes off her cloak and becomes the DOCTOR.*

DOCTOR

You're not crazy.

JANEY

Different words – same problem.

DOCTOR

The words are important. Depression is not the same as “crazy”.

JANEY

What about bi-polar disorder? Do I have that too? I mean it's in me, right?

DOCTOR

Let's not jump to conclusions.

JANEY

Eight months ago everything in my life was great; I could do anything. But maybe it wasn't even real – maybe I wasn't actually a good journalist. What if all those ideas I had, all those things I thought I could do – what if they were just me being manic?

DOCTOR

Everybody experiences natural highs and lows.

JANEY

Everybody else.

DOCTOR

Diagnosis is a complex process. I'd like to do some more tests.

JANEY

Your tests are just questions. What if I answer wrong?

DOCTOR

We can't x-ray like with a broken bone if that's what you mean.

JANEY

Isn't it comforting that psychiatry is so exact.

DOCTOR

A certain amount of faith can help.

JANEY

*(Holding the pills)*

So you're saying that if I take these, if I believe in these, it goes away?

DOCTOR

You might start to feel better. And if you start the therapy -

JANEY

But will it go away?

DOCTOR

You may have to deal with depression all your life.

JANEY

I'm going to be on pills for the rest of my life?

DOCTOR

Not necessarily.

JANEY

Why can't you just give me a straight answer?

*The DOCTOR exits.*

*JANEY hurls the pills offstage.*

*Immediately:*

*Early 1970's, HARRY & JUNE's house: JUNE (40's) enters carrying the same bottle of pills. She is setting the table. HARRY (40's) enters.*

HARRY

Smells great in here.

JUNE

Roast chicken, gravy, mashed potatoes and cherry pie.

HARRY

What's the occasion?

JUNE

I wanted to make a nice dinner for you. And... I have a surprise.

HARRY

A surprise?

JUNE

A whole new June – just like the old June.

HARRY

The old June?

JUNE

A pill-free June. I stopped Harry. I'm free – that's why I feel so good – I'm free of the pills.

HARRY

You stopped?

JUNE

The shaking has stopped. My mouth isn't dry – my skin has cleared up - haven't you noticed? Of course you have. I'm normal now – it's gone. Tell me you've noticed.

HARRY

Because you've stabilized.

JUNE

No. Because it's gone – it's all out of me. They're horrible chemicals Harry. But now you can cancel my prescription and we can use the money to go on a vacation.

HARRY

How long ...?

*JUNE reaches into her apron pocket and pulls out the bottle of pills.*

JUNE

I haven't opened this yet.

HARRY

That's a whole month's worth.

JUNE

I thought you'd be happy.

HARRY

Happy? You've been lying to me.

JUNE

Lying? I haven't ...– lying? What about me?

HARRY

They're for you.

JUNE

Well I don't need them anymore.

HARRY

Yes you do and you're going to start taking them again – right now.

JUNE

But I'm fine.

HARRY

Goddamn it - this isn't a game June. You know what the doctor said.

JUNE

You can't make me go back into that – that fog. I can't think clearly when I'm on those. I can't remember anything – I can't concentrate - -

HARRY

Well then what about me? What about Marion?

JUNE

I'm doing this for both of you. You said you wanted your old June back. But you don't want me now – why Harry? Because I can think for myself?

HARRY

Just calm down –

JUNE

No – you calm down. You can't control me.

HARRY

I'm not controlling -

JUNE

Do you think I like being like that? How dare you –

HARRY

How dare I? Who do you think picks up the pieces every time? Who has to explain it to our daughter? Who gets the looks from the neighbours? You think people don't know? You think they don't talk? What do I get out of this arrangement?

JUNE

Arrangement? Is that what this is?

HARRY

You know that's not what I meant.

JUNE

You're treating me like a child - I'm your wife. If I say I'm better, I'm better. You think I'm crazy don't you.

HARRY

Of course I don't.

JUNE

Then what is it? If you trusted me you'd let me do this.

HARRY

It's the disease I don't trust.

JUNE

I hate that word. It's a problem – a little problem, but it's gone. I thought you'd be happy –

HARRY

How could you have done this without talking to me?

JUNE

I wanted to be clear for you. And for me. And it wasn't easy you know. There were days... but I knew it was important that I be strong. Because you've been so strong.

Is it too late?

HARRY

No – no sweetheart.

JUNE

It's the one thing I can do to make you happy.

HARRY

But it could come back, don't you see? I'm trying to protect you –

JUNE

Then trust me. Do you think I want to go through that again? That place, it's so dark – you have no idea.

HARRY

I know.

JUNE

No, you don't. You can't know how it feels to be moving at a different speed from the rest of the world; to feel like you're going to suffocate in your own skin. I see what it does to you. You think I don't know? Would you have married me if you'd known about this Harry?

HARRY

Of course – yes, of course.

JUNE

I want to start fresh, the way things were supposed to be. I want Marion to look at me like she looks at you – I never get that.

*HARRY is silent.*

JUNE

I'm not crazy.

HARRY

I know.

JUNE

I just want to feel like me again. Is that selfish?

HARRY

No. No my love.

You have to promise me, if you start to feel it, even a little, you'll take the pills again.

JUNE

Of course.

HARRY

Do you promise?

JUNE

I promise.

*JUNE leaves the bottle of pills. They exit.  
JANEY snatches the pills and puts them back in her pocket.*

*JANEY's apartment: DENYS enters.*

DENYS

Sorry I'm late – that was a very mysterious message you left -  
*(He sees the table)*

Whoa.

JANEY

Surprise!

DENYS

It smells great in here.

JANEY

I made you dinner.

*(Handing him a bottle of champagne)*

Can you open this? I picked it out especially. It's the real deal.

DENYS

Wow...

JANEY

I even made you cherry pie.

DENYS

*(Starting to wrestle with the bottle)*

What's the occasion?

JANEY

I wanted to do something special for you.

DENYS

Thanks... Isn't our anniversary - - oh shit, did I get that wrong?

JANEY

Relax. Tonight is all for you.

DENYS

*(Still wrestling)*

For me? What'd I do?

JANEY

Put up with me.

DENYS

So you're feeling better?

JANEY

I've decided I'm going to be.

DENYS

You decided, just like that? That's – that's great baby.

JANEY

It's just a matter of changing my perspective, right?

*(Re. the champagne)*

You're going to spray that everywhere!

DENYS

Fuck it. I'm getting a hammer.

JANEY

Don't worry about it.

DENYS

But you wanted - -

*JANEY goes to him.*

DENYS

Mmmm. You smell good too.  
*(Breaking away from her)*  
 Let me try again.

*She takes the bottle from him.*

DENYS

I was about to get it -

JANEY

We can try again in a bit. It'll be too fizzy now.  
*(She starts unbuttoning his shirt)*  
 Besides, there's something I want to do first...

DENYS

But this is going all out of order. It's supposed to be champagne and meaningful conversation then fantastic sex. Are you proposing we just skip to the sex part?

JANEY

Maybe...

DENYS

Well why didn't you say so?

*She pulls him towards the bed.  
 DENYS starts frantically taking off his clothes.*

DENYS *(CONT'D)*

I didn't want to be accused of only having one thing on my mind – I mean, I'd hate for you to think I'm that kind of guy, not able to cherish you for more than your fabulous - -

*JANEY kisses him.*

Or I can shut up.

DENYS

*They get into bed and pull the covers over themselves so they're hidden.*  
*After a moment JANEY slides out from the bed.*  
*DENYS freezes.*  
*She stares at the bed.*

JANEY

It's happening again -  
 Go back.  
 I can't feel you anymore.  
 Go back.  
 I'm not here, am I?  
 I can't breathe – I can't see anything. It's rising – it's rising around me.

*She gets back in bed, gasping*  
*DENYS pulls the sheets back.*

DENYS

Hey ... talk to me – are you okay?

JANEY

I'm sorry.

DENYS

Baby, it's okay.

JANEY

No. It's not.

DENYS

No really, it's –

JANEY

You don't have to pretend.

DENYS

Is it me?

JANEY

No.

DENYS

I guess we should have stuck with the original order.

JANEY

We have to get drunk to have sex now?

DENYS

Are you kidding? No, but sometimes it helps kind of loosen things up.

JANEY

I wanted tonight to be special.

DENYS

It still can be.

JANEY

You know what I mean. Like before.

DENYS

Maybe this is just a little hump we have to get over. It's fine.

*He gets out of bed and starts to dress. Silence.*

DENYS

You know, I was talking to Mike today-

JANEY

I don't want to talk about the paper.

DENYS

No, wait. This is good. He really likes your work. He said if you were feeling better he'd be interested in talking to you –

JANEY

He was pretty clear when he fired me.

DENYS

But he's had a chance to think it over – he knows how much pressure you were under.

JANEY

What did you tell him?

DENYS

Nothing. He approached me. Lots of people ask about you.

JANEY

And what do you say?

DENYS

That you won the lottery and moved to Memphis.

JANEY

Denys –

DENYS

Okay, I admit it - I tell them that I keep you tied to my bed so I can - -

JANEY

I'm serious. What do you tell people?

DENYS

I tell them that you've got some stuff going on that you have to sort out.

*JANEY glares at him.*

DENYS

What do you want me to say?

JANEY

Everyone thinks I've had a nervous breakdown.

DENYS

They're not judging you... Honest, people understand – it happens... Baby, I wasn't trying to upset you. I thought you'd want to know you have that option.

*She slumps into the bed.*

DENYS (*CONT'D*)

Listen, I had a crazy idea. This weekend, why don't we go away. Somewhere romantic, you know? I saw this ad for these cottages up north – they're cheap this time of year – no one would be around.

JANEY

It's November.

DENYS

I know, but it would be cozy. We could just sort of hide out. Build a fire, read each other stories ... no pressure to do anything more, really. I looked into it – actually, I kind of booked it – I know it's spontaneous but that's what's so great about it.

JANEY

I can't.

Why not? DENYS

My grandma. JANEY

You can miss one weekend. DENYS

She's not well. JANEY

But you see her all the time. DENYS

I'm the only one she talks to. JANEY

It would only be two days – I don't think your grandma would mind two days. DENYS

I would. JANEY

You see her more than you see me. DENYS

I can't, okay? You could have given me some warning. JANEY

And you would have just said no. I thought maybe if it was spontaneous you might get caught up in it – in the fun of it, you know - fun? Something we used to have. DENYS

Well I'm sorry I'm not fun enough. JANEY

I thought you were "changing your perspective". Even if you'd pretend – maybe you'd fool yourself. DENYS

Pretend? You think it's that simple? JANEY

DENYS

Have you talked to your doctor yet?

JANEY

Yeah. And she gave me pills.

DENYS

Well... Good. Are they working?

JANEY

No .

DENYS

Maybe you need to try a different kind.

JANEY

I haven't taken them yet.

DENYS

Why not?

JANEY

And I'm not going back to her. I canceled my next appointment.

DENYS

That doesn't make any sense. If it'll help you -

JANEY

Don't you see what it means if I have to take pills?

DENYS

It means you can start to feel better.

JANEY

You don't just press a magic button and it goes away.

DENYS

I know.

JANEY

Those things can totally fuck with your head.

DENYS

How do you know if you don't try them?

JANEY

I've done my research – I know what I'm talking about. I want to be clear.

DENYS

So this is you being clear?

JANEY

YES.

*(Pause)*

What if they don't work?

DENYS

They have other kinds.

JANEY

Are you still going to be hanging around then?

DENYS

What's that supposed to mean?

JANEY

You know what I'm talking about. I'm not fun to be around, you said it yourself.

DENYS

Look – I'm sorry I said that. I want to help you – but it's getting pretty exhausting feeling like I have to keep proving that to you.

JANEY

You can't fix me Denys.

DENYS

Then what do you want me to do? Because I have no idea at this point. Half the people at work are on medication – I don't see what the big deal is – I mean it helps them -

JANEY

Well good for fucking them.  
I just - I need to figure this out. Okay?

DENYS

Yeah. You keep saying that. But nothing changes.  
So where do I fit in, to the figuring it out part?

*JANEY is silent. She doesn't look at him.*

DENYS

That's what I thought.

JANEY

Denys, you know I love you, don't you?

*YOUNG JANEY bursts in.*

YOUNG JANEY

Wrong wrong wrong wrong wrong –

*DENYS doesn't hear the following but continues on with the scene the way it really happened.*

JANEY

*(To YOUNG JANEY)*

Get out! Can't I have any privacy?

YOUNG JANEY

You got it all wrong - that's not what happened.

JANEY

How would you know? You weren't there.

YOUNG JANEY

I know you're remembering it wrong on purpose.

JANEY

So what, it's my memory. I can change it if I want to.

YOUNG JANEY

But it's wrong. You can't fix it this way.

DENYS

Janey .... I think.... Shit.

JANEY

*(To YOUNG JANEY)*

I don't want to do this again

DENYS

If you could give me something. I want to be there for you...-

YOUNG JANEY

You just lay there.

DENYS

But it feels like I'm the only one here who's trying. Do you even want a relationship right now?

*Silence.*

DENYS

I get it.

JANEY

*(To YOUNG JANEY)*

Please stop this –

DENYS

Guess I should have figured that out a while ago.

YOUNG JANEY

You didn't say anything.

DENYS

Maybe ... I think maybe it would be better if we didn't see each other for a little while.

*DENYS gathers his clothes and exits.*

JANEY

I meant to say it.

YOUNG JANEY

But you didn't. So how's he supposed to know?

JANEY

It doesn't matter anyway.

YOUNG JANEY

I know – you could call him. Where's the phone?

JANEY

I'm not calling him cause I'll just screw it up again. People like me end up alone. How old are you?

YOUNG JANEY

I told you, eight. Wow - your memory really stinks.

JANEY

I don't take relationship advice from eight year olds. Especially eight year old inner children.

YOUNG JANEY

Well as an outer adult you totally suck. I'm just trying to help.

JANEY

Why? Why do you care? Why can I even see you?

YOUNG JANEY

I don't want to grow up to be like you.

JANEY

Well too bad.

YOUNG JANEY

It's like you've forgotten all the good stuff on purpose. I don't think you have what Grandma has. She's way more fun than you.

JANEY

Because she gives you candy and tells you stories? None of that is real.

YOUNG JANEY

It's real if you believe in it.

JANEY

You want me to remember things the way they really happened? Well guess what - when you're my age, you're going to need Grandma and she's going to abandon you - she's going to - -

YOUNG JANEY

She's going to what? Tell me.

JANEY

No.

YOUNG JANEY

Why are you saying such mean things about her?

JANEY

Has Mom told you yet about why she left home?

YOUNG JANEY

No...

JANEY

She was only sixteen – that’s screwed up. You know why?

*Early 1970's, HARRY & JUNE's house: JUNE (40's) enters carrying a brush covered in yellow paint. She starts painting wildly.*

YOUNG JANEY

Grandma?

*JUNE doesn't hear her.*

JANEY

No – wait - I don't want to see this.

YOUNG JANEY

Then stop it.

JANEY

I can't. You have to go.

YOUNG JANEY

She’s not looking at me again – Grandma!

JANEY

Get OUT.

*JANEY pushes YOUNG JANEY off stage.*

*MARION (16) enters.*

*JUNE should barely pause for MARION's interjections.*

JUNE

Oh Marion! Isn't this yellow glorious. I wanted to surprise you with it but you're home early, or I'm late – I've lost all track of time. Ohhhh– your speech. I missed your speech didn't I -

MARION

My speech?

JUNE (CONT'D)

I know - yellow's good for speeches. Stand on the table and speechify away.

MARION

My speech was three weeks ago -

JUNE (*CONT'D*)

I was painting away just having a grand old time and I said to myself “now June, don’t you miss Marion’s speech. She’s written a doozer and you need to be there to see her win that competition”. So I hustled out and caught the bus to your school -

MARION

You went to my school?

JUNE (*CONT'D*)

But when I got inside I saw the rules on the wall and Rule Number Nine says that you must wear shoes and I was in such a hurry I’d plum forgot -

MARION

Did anyone see you?

JUNE (*CONT'D*)

Silly me - and I didn’t want to be screwing up your concentration by getting in trouble - Marion’s mother interrupts the proceedings by getting a detention for being shoe-less – tsk tsk -

MARION

Did anyone see you?

JUNE

Ohhhh – you’re mad at me.

MARION

It doesn’t matter.

JUNE

Oh no it does it does - -

MARION

I just want to go to my room.

JUNE

I have to make it up to you.

MARION

Just forget it, okay?

JUNE

I know – let’s go out to lunch!

MARION

Why isn't Dad home yet?

JUNE

It's just us – mother and daughter – out to lunch!! Out to lunch, out to lunch -

MARION

Mom, slow down okay?

JUNE

We never do mother-daughter things do we. Let's start today. We'll start with lunch.

MARION

Um ... look – why don't you sit down. Do you want me to make you a cup of tea?

JUNE

Maybe there'll be a buffet!!

MARION

Please don't be like this now. Where's Dad?!

JUNE

Ohhh - we can get dessert - we can get two each.

MARION

We're not going for lunch. You don't have any money.

JUNE

I'll go to the bank. The money is in the bank.

MARION

They won't let you Mother – don't you remember last time?

JUNE

Then I'll just say "charge it". They know who I am.

MARION

No they don't.

JUNE

They know. They remember. I used to be the most beautiful girl in this town. I could have won every beauty contest – look at me Marion – look at me -

MARION

You're covered in paint.

JUNE

Men couldn't keep their hands off me -

MARION

Mom – slow down.

JUNE

Your father practically had to beg me to marry him – oh the way he'd touch me -

JANEY

Stop this!

MARION

Stop –

JUNE

And look at you, my beautiful daughter –

MARION

Please, you're scaring me –

*JUNE grabs MARION's face.*

MARION

Don't touch me.

JUNE

You're just like me.

MARION

Like you?! Why would I want to be like you?

JANEY

Mom – get out.

JUNE

Don't even like your own mother.

MARION

Why are you doing this?

JUNE

I've seen the way you look at me – ungrateful girl, spoiled -

MARION

Spoiled?!

JUNE

Don't want to go to lunch with your own mother.

MARION

I'm going to call Dad.

JUNE

Threatening me?

JANEY

Please – somebody stop this - -

JUNE

All the things I do for you - -

MARION

What have you ever done for anybody but yourself!

*JUNE hits MARION in the face.  
MARION falls.*

JANEY

Mom!

JUNE

Oh .... Oh ..... Stupid bug stupid stupid flying into the wall smack smack. I didn't do that- somebody else – I'd never do that – you know that -

JANEY

Mom, what did she do to you?

JUNE (*CONT'D*)

My baby girl — ice – ice on your pretty face and no one will know – here let me touch it – no one has to know -

MARION

Get away from me!

JUNE

I didn't mean to – a mistake a mistake it was just a mistake – I'm sorry I'm sorry -

JANEY  
– I'm sorry -

MARION  
Get away -

*MARION runs off.*  
*JUNE begins to spin. Faster and faster.*

JUNE  
Big hands reaching up from the centre of the earth big-hands-squeezing reaching up into me strangling me – falling down-down to earth dark-dark – ground rushing up I can see thehouses-thestreet – his car ontheroad coming-home-goingtosee-going-to-be-madmadmad -

*HARRY enters. He goes to JUNE and holds her.*

HARRY  
Shhhhhh. Shhhhhh. June, my June. Come back to me.

*MARION returns.*

MARION  
Dad – why weren't you here?

HARRY  
I'm sorry sweetheart.

MARION  
I didn't know what to do and she wouldn't stop and -

HARRY  
I know but -

MARION  
But what? She hit me.

HARRY  
I'm sorry sweetheart.

MARION  
She hit me.

HARRY  
It wasn't her fault –

MARION

She was yelling and she grabbed me and –

HARRY

Marion –

MARION

Why are you holding her? Why aren't you holding me?

HARRY

Because your mother needs me.

MARION

What about me?

HARRY

Sweetheart –

MARION

You're always protecting her.

HARRY

Try to understand - -

MARION

Understand? My mother's crazy – that's what I understand.

HARRY

Don't you dare say that about her.

MARION

It's true – why can't you admit it?

HARRY

We don't say that word.

MARION

No, *you* don't.

HARRY

Go to your room. I'm not having this argument with you.

MARION

I'm not a baby Dad. You always take her side.

HARRY

I'm warning you Marion, not now - -

MARION

Not ever. I'm so sick of this. I'm sixteen – I can do what I want. Do you hear me?! You're not even looking at me -

*MARION runs out.*

HARRY

Marion!  
She's in there.

*(To JUNE)*

I know you're in there. You have to believe me. We'll find something else. It's my fault. It's all my fault.

*HARRY leads JUNE to a hospital bed and exits.  
The DOCTOR enters and prepares JUNE for  
electroconvulsive therapy (ECT).  
JANEY returns to her bed.*

JANEY

Erase me.

JUNE

Start over again.

JANEY

This isn't what I thought would happen.

JUNE

This isn't how it was supposed to be.

JANEY

I'm watching my life from far away -

JUNE

Flicker through me –

JANEY

Like a movie happening without me.

JUNE

Images of my life in black and white.

JANEY

I tell myself “go outside, feel the pavement. This is real so I am real”.

JUNE

I don't want this to be what's real.

JANEY

“Ride the bus, check your messages, go home, make tea” - the world isn't falling apart I just have to step into it.

JUNE

I want to be in the sky where I can't feel anything.

JANEY

The world is moving, spinning; days pass, nights...

JUNE

There was a time,

JANEY

There was a time,

JUNE

There was a time,

JANEY

When this was somebody else. There was a time,

JUNE

I'm not sure when it changed;

JANEY

There was a time,

JUNE

When something went wrong.

JANEY

I don't know what I did -

JUNE

There was a time, before.

JANEY

But now -

JUNE

Erase me.

JANEY

I could do it. I could actually disappear.

JUNE

Disappear.

JANEY

Forever. And then they can all -

JUNE

Forget.

*The sound of electricity.*

***The present.*** DENYS enters wearing a winter coat.

DENYS

Janey?

JANEY

Denys?

DENYS

Umm, I hope you don't mind.

JANEY

Wait, are you really here?

DENYS

Your mom called me.

JANEY

She called you? Today?

DENYS

She told me, about your grandma. I'm so sorry. She thought you might want me to go with you to the funeral. I don't know if you want me to but ... well, she said you haven't umm... been taking it so well.

JANEY

.... No, I guess not.

*They sit in silence for a moment.*

DENYS

You see that park bench across the street?

*(He points towards the window)*

I've been sitting on that for the past hour trying to figure out what to say. I started to imagine... oh, never mind. It's stupid.

JANEY

Please...

DENYS

I started to imagine we hadn't met yet. And you were sitting there on the bench with me. Nothing complicated. Just two strangers sitting on a park bench.

*Split scene:*

*HARRY(50's) enters.*

*He sits next to JUNE who lies in bed.*

*The scene shifts for JANEY and she gets out of bed.*

*DENYS continues speaking to the space she occupied; for him she is still there.*

HARRY

June? Marion had a baby girl.

DENYS

We don't say anything. We just sit.

HARRY

She named her Jane. Little Janey. We're grandparents, love.

DENYS

And we watch the people going home from work. And the sun sets and the street lights come on and we still sit.

HARRY

I told her you were real happy for her but I bet she'd like to hear it from you. She said when she gets out of the hospital maybe we could visit. She looked happy.

DENYS

And by now we both know that we've been sitting on this bench way too long to be normal, there must be something.

HARRY

Watching her with little Janey, all I could think of was you. Some days I would come home early, sneak up to the back door just to watch you. There you'd be,

HARRY (*CONT'D*)

radio blasting, dancing away with little Marion in your arms - absolutely in love. Do you remember that?

DENYS

And then, finally you turn to me. You don't say anything, you just give me a look and lead me to your apartment.

JANEY

(*To DENYS - he can't hear her*)

Everything is simple again. Pure.

DENYS

And I take off your clothes. You are so beautiful and I want to touch you – touch every part of you, and I think, “I could love this woman, this park bench woman”.

JANEY

And you take off your clothes...

DENYS

And we get into bed and just lie there like that.

JANEY

And I'm not afraid.

DENYS

And we listen to the neighbours and the traffic; we watch the lights move across the ceiling.

HARRY

Don't worry honey, this spell's just lasting a little longer than the others.

DENYS

And the city and all those people, they all seem so far away because it's just us. Inside something.

JANEY

(*To herself*)

But wait - how can that happen?

DENYS

Or maybe we're still sitting on the bench and it's all still ahead of us.

JANEY

(*To herself*)

It's too late. None of this can really happen.

HARRY

Just think love – a new life. It's like we get another chance.

*JANEY gets back into bed.*

*She is now back in the scene with DENYS.*

JANEY

You have to stay away from me.

DENYS

What?

JANEY

Just stay away. Both of you - -

DENYS

Both?

JANEY

I know how this ends now. You can't follow - just go.

DENYS

Janey –

JANEY

GO!

*DENYS exits. HARRY exits.*

*JANEY goes to JUNE in the bed.*

*JUNE is now a very frail elderly woman.*

JANEY

Grandma?

JUNE

Marion – I'm so glad you've come to visit me.

JANEY

It's Janey, Marion's daughter.

JUNE

I've made everything so hard for you and your father; dragged everybody I loved into this with me. What kind of a person does that?

JANEY

Grandma, I don't know what's happening to me.

JUNE

I'm going to make it better Marion. This time I'm going to do the right thing. Once upon a time there was a little bug...

JANEY

All you ever do is tell me stories.

JUNE

Little, little stupid bug...

JANEY

Nothing is ever real. This is real. Grandma – don't you see?

JUNE

Flying up up -

JANEY

It's in me too.

JUNE

Marion, you were born the night of the first snowfall. When I woke up the next morning, the world had changed – all the hard edges had softened. Do you remember? They put you in my arms and I carried you to the window and showed you the snow. When I was a little girl I used to think the snow was falling pieces of sky. I wanted to be buried in snow so I could feel what it was like to be in the sky. But if you really want to fly all you have to do is step into it.

*JUNE climbs to the roof.*

*JUNE (CONT'D)*

And so the little bug leapt into the blue sky;  
Up, up, up,  
Until she disappeared.  
Goodbye Marion. Tell Janey I said goodbye.

*JUNE throws her arms up in the flying pose. She falls backwards in silence and disappears.*

*The blue apron falls from the sky.*

*Blackout.*

*Lights come up on JANEY and MARION.  
JANEY is back in bed.*

MARION

You know what I felt when the police called me? Do you know what I felt when they told me what my mother had done?

Relief.

No more negotiating with her to take her pills. No more worrying when the cycle would start again. No more.

JANEY

Mom, the last time I saw Grandma, she thought I was you.

MARION

My mother didn't know who I was.

JANEY

She said goodbye.

MARION

Goodbye?

JANEY

She said she was going to do the right thing.

MARION

The right thing? The right thing! The right thing would have been not thinking of herself for once. The right thing is being a single mother and lying in your bed and wishing it would swallow you and then hearing your daughter cry out and going to her because you're her mother and she needs you and she comes first. The right thing is doing that every single day – making her lunch and doing your job and never ever letting anyone know what it's costing you even if it might kill you. I've done the right thing every day of my life but no one has ever done it for me. Least of all my mother.

JANEY

You can't blame her for everything.

MARION

Why not?

JANEY

Because where does that leave me if I'm like her?

MARION

But you're not. Everything I've ever done has been to make sure that doesn't happen. You're stronger than that Janey. You have to be.

JANEY

Why?

MARION

Because you're my daughter.

A week before you were born, I sat in the car with your grandfather and he convinced me to let my mother be a part of your life. He told me it was controlled.

He promised.

And as we sat there it started to snow. It covered everything in the street. He pointed out the window and said, "You see? The ugly parts can be covered over – become beautiful again."

And I thought maybe she could be a part of your life; our life. Maybe she deserved that.

When I brought you home from the hospital at first I didn't know what to do with you, this little bundle of ... baby. So I just held you. I used to hold you for hours. Even after you fell asleep. And I would make promises: I promise to protect you, I'll keep all the bad away...

But it passed through me into you. From her, to me, to you. My father was wrong - the ugly parts don't disappear. They're still there, aren't they. They're always there.

All I wanted to do was protect you from the silence that this world can be. Janey, you're all I've got.

*Lights fade on MARION. She exits.*

*JANEY looks around. She realizes she is alone. She takes out her bottle of pills and pours the entire bottle into her hand.*

JANEY

It's been right here the whole time.

I could do it.

A failure. A waste. A waste of space.

So just ... disappear.

*She lifts the pills to her mouth.*

*YOUNG JANEY bursts in.*

YOUNG JANEY

What are you doing?!

Leave me alone. JANEY  
 But what about me? YOUNG JANEY  
 You're not even real. JANEY  
 I'm just as real as you. YOUNG JANEY  
*JANEY lifts the pills to her mouth again.  
 YOUNG JANEY puts her arms into a flying pose  
 and plows into her. The pills go flying.*  
 What are you doing? JANEY  
*JANEY starts madly trying to pick up the pills.*  
 You don't want to do this. YOUNG JANEY  
*YOUNG JANEY also starts picking up the pills.*  
 Yes I do. JANEY  
 No – you said I'm you and I don't want you to do this - YOUNG JANEY  
 You can't stop me. JANEY  
 I know what Grandma did now – but that doesn't mean you have to too. YOUNG JANEY  
*JANEY looks at the pills in her hand.*  
 Don't you see? If you do this it happens to me too. YOUNG JANEY  
*YOUNG JANEY eats her handful of pills.*

JANEY

Hey –

*(She drops her pills)*

What are you doing? Those aren't candy - they're real. Spit it out –

*YOUNG JANEY collapses.*

JANEY

Get up. Get UP.

Stop messing around you stupid kid – I'm serious.

*She checks her breathing – nothing.*

JANEY

Oh Jesus, shit.

But I didn't do it. I didn't actually do it. Did I? No. NO. This is so fucked up. Wake UP. Call 911 - the phone – where's the phone? We'll go to the hospital and tell them what, my inner-child's dead? This is so fucked up -

*DENYS rushes in, still wearing his coat from the previous scene.*

DENYS

Janey – were you shouting?

JANEY

Look what she's done –

DENYS

Why are there pills all over the place?

JANEY

But I didn't actually do it.

DENYS

Do what? What just happened?

JANEY

I – I poured them into my hand –

DENYS

All of these? Shit – what were you doing?

JANEY

Suddenly it was right there – a way to disappear for good -

DENYS  
Disappear?

JANEY  
And she said I was going to do it to her too -

DENYS  
Who? What have you done?

JANEY  
And then she collapsed and -

DENYS  
I need you to answer me – have you overdosed?

JANEY  
NO!

DENYS  
Okay good. That's good.

JANEY  
But don't you see?

*She points to YOUNG JANEY on the floor.*

DENYS  
An apron?

JANEY  
No.

DENYS  
I'm sorry, what are you showing me?

*JANEY goes to YOUNG JANEY.*

JANEY  
You don't see her, do you?

DENYS  
I think maybe we should go to the hospital.

JANEY  
No.

JANEY (*CONT'D*)  
(*Pointing*)

Look. She's right there.

DENYS

There's nothing there. Okay?

JANEY

But –

DENYS

Trust me.

JANEY

There's nothing there...

DENYS

What just happened?

JANEY

I'm sorry.

DENYS

You scared the shit out of me. I don't know what I'd do if you did that.

JANEY

I won't.

DENYS

But what if I hadn't walked in?

JANEY

I thought about it, but I couldn't actually do it.

DENYS

If you ever - - if you even think about it –...  
Janey – don't you know how much I love you?

JANEY

How can you love someone who's such a mess?

DENYS

But I don't see the mess. I see you.

JANEY

Me?

DENYS

When you let me.

JANEY

Did I ever tell you about how when I was a little kid I wanted to fly? My grandma gave me an old apron of hers and told me it was magic. I've never believed in something so much.

*YOUNG JANEY wakes up.*

JANEY (CONT'D)

*(To YOUNG JANEY)*

I really thought I could fly if I tried hard enough – fly up into the sky. And that was the way to get away from everything that hurt. But I can't actually fly. I never could.

*YOUNG JANEY takes off the apron and gives it to JANEY.*

JANEY (CONT'D)

It's really about believing enough to be able to keep going; about being brave enough.

*YOUNG JANEY exits.*

JANEY

I don't want to be like my grandma. No matter what I can't let that happen -

*(She catches herself)*

And I almost did. That's always going to be there too.

*(Referring to the pills)*

If I try these... I need you to know - you have to understand –

DENYS

Okay.

JANEY

They aren't me. They're just temporary.

I need to know I'm still going to be me – even if this takes a while. Because.

This might follow me...like a shadow. It might always be there, beside me.

But I think I might be able to live with that. There are ways I can live with that, right?

*MARION enters.*

MARION

Janey? You're still not dressed - -

JANEY

Oh shit - the funeral. I've missed it.

MARION

No. But we have to go now.

JANEY

You waited?

MARION

I'm not going without you.

JANEY

Mom - ?

MARION

Yes sweetheart?

JANEY

Nothing. I'll be down in a second.

*(Off MARION's look)*

No, really, I will.

*MARION exits.*

*JANEY gets her coat and shoes.*

DENYS

Aren't you going to get dressed?

JANEY

There's something I have to try.

DENYS

Where are you going?

JANEY

Just across the street to the park. It'll only take a minute –

DENYS

Do you want me to come with you?

JANEY

No. I'll be okay.

*DENYS exits.*

*The space opens into the park.  
The tire swing lowers.*

*JANEY approaches it cautiously then sits on it.  
She spins in silence for a moment.*

JANEY

I'm spinning on a tire swing.  
The world is winding around me, faster and faster. The houses, the trees –  
everything is blurring into - -

*(She looks up)*

Blue.  
I can feel it now. Under my skin.  
The sky starts down here Grandma – it goes up from here.  
I've been standing in the sky the whole time.

*She leans back and spins as the lights fade.*

*End of Play*