

HUMAN SERVICES

a play by Tom Baum

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CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

KELSEY, 20s, a famous pop star.

MOMMA, Kelsey's mom, early 40s.

ROMAN, 30s-40s, a paparazzo.

MILO, 20s-30s, a paparazzo.

BAXTER, 60s, a street person, a client at Aspiration House, a halfway house for addicts, homeless, and recently discharged psychotics.

CARMEN, 20s-30s, a client at Aspiration house. Hispanic.

DARNIQUE, 30s, the administrator at Aspiration House.

RACHEL, late 20s, early 30s, counselor at Aspiration House.

DAISY, 20s-30s, a pre-op male-to-female transgender, a client at Aspiration House.

WYATT, 20s, a client at Aspiration House.

OFFSTAGE CHARACTERS

TWO LAPD COPS

JUDGE

Scene 1

(Lights up on KELSEY's bedroom. KELSEY's on her smartphone, rolling a joint. Spotlight on MOMMA, on the other end.)

KELSEY: A half a billion hits!

MOMMA: I know, baby. How can anyone compete with that?

KELSEY: Incredible.

MOMMA: It's staggering. That horse-faced bitch, I thought she jumped the shark two years ago. Just proves we've gotta get our asses in gear. Have you given any more thought to a disease?

KELSEY: I don't know, what's not taken?

MOMMA: Well, there's lupus.

KELSEY: What's lupus?

MOMMA: I think it's the one where your nose falls off. They're looking for somebody hot.

KELSEY: Ohmigod, Momma, I've got so much shit chasing me. I can't focus on a charity right now.

MOMMA: Baby, you need a disease. Didn't you see the Star this week? You were voted Biggest Ego, Most Selfish, some stupid award like that. Ink is ink, but you don't want a reputation as a loner.

KELSEY: I wasn't alone last week. There was another stalker—this time in my bathroom.

MOMMA: Yeah, I've got a note to speak to Vinnie about that.

KELSEY: Don't bother, Momma. Vinnie's history.

MOMMA: Vinnie left?

KELSEY: Yeah, he left. After I fired his silly ass.

MOMMA: Without consulting me?

KELSEY: Momma, the dude was totally useless, the guy came in here, took a dump while Vinnie was playing Foosball in the living room.

MOMMA: Well, you should have called me before you fired him. I hate to imagine you all alone in that gigantic house.

KELSEY: I know. I'm sorry. I should have consulted you.

(Doorbell chimes.)

KELSEY: I hear my doorbell, Momma.

MOMMA: Are you expecting someone?

KELSEY: No, not tonight.

MOMMA: Well, find out who it is, and send them away. We've got tons to discuss.

KELSEY: OK, Momma, I'll get rid of them. Hold on a second, all right?

MOMMA: I'm here, baby.

(KELSEY presses a button on an intercom phone.)

KELSEY: Who is it?

ROMAN: *(over)* LAPD, ma'am. Can we talk to you?

KELSEY: *(yikes)* What's this about?

ROMAN: *(over)* I believe we've found your stalker. The one who used your toilet? We need a positive I.D., or else we can't hold him.

KELSEY: I wasn't here when he broke in. I have no idea what he looks like.

ROMAN: (*over*) Chances are you saw him around. We like to avoid mob scenes at the station house. It's for your benefit, ma'am.

KELSEY: OK, but can we make this fast? I'm up the stairs, second door on your left.

(*KELSEY hits a button on the phone. Distant buzz sound. KELSEY stashes the joint in a drawer.*)

KELSEY: Momma, I have to go. The LAPD is here. They found my stalker.

MOMMA: Thank the Lord. Listen, call me back the instant they're gone, the Summers Eve people are calling.

KELSEY: Summers Eve, are you sure? Isn't that a middle-aged product?

MOMMA: To me it says you're pure and clean.

KELSEY: To me it says my pussy reeks.

MOMMA: Then how about Acutane? They're clamoring for you too.

KELSEY: An acne cream? Yikes.

MOMMA: Baby, we've gotta get back on the radar. You've been out of the tabs for two weeks.

(*ROMAN and MILO appear.*)

KELSEY: Momma, the cops are here. Bye.

MOMMA: Step on a crack, break your momma's back.

KELSEY: Of course I love you, do you love me?

MOMMA: Always.

KELSEY: No, say it. I love you, you're the best and you deserve the best.

MOMMA: You're the best. We're the best.

KELSEY: Count of three. One...

MOMMA: ...two...

KELSEY: ...three.

MOMMA AND KELSEY: Love you bunches!

(KELSEY hangs up.)

KELSEY: *(to ROMAN and MILO)* You found me. Come in.

ROMAN: Hello, ma'am. We appreciate you giving us your time.
Mind taking a look at the mug shot?

KELSEY: Sure sure, let's see the picture.

MILO: By the way, your last video was awesome.

KELSEY: Thank you.

MILO: And that movie you did. I thought you were great. The reviews were so nasty. You really rocked that sundress.

ROMAN: Milo, we don't have to get into this. Show her the pictures.

(MILO hands her a picture. ROMAN wanders the room, turning his head this way and that.)

KELSEY: Didn't I see this guy on CSI?

MILO: No. We know who you mean, though.

KELSEY: Yeah, this was taken at one of my carpets. How come you guys have this picture?

ROMAN: It's from our files, ma'am.

KELSEY: (*to ROMAN*) Is something wrong? You keep looking around the room.

MILO: It's a really nice room. Did your mom decorate it?

KELSEY: We both did.

MILO: You guys do everything together, don't you?

KELSEY: What about it?

MILO: Hey, I think it's great. I wish I woulda had a "helicopter mom."

ROMAN: Milo, we're not here to discuss her family relations. Just show her the pictures.

(*MILO hands her another picture.*)

KELSEY: What's this supposed to be? This looks like the picture that comes with the frame. (*warily*) Tell me, guys, how's Vinnie doing?

ROMAN: Vinnie?

KELSEY: I hear he's rising fast in your division.

ROMAN: I'm not sure we know this Vinnie.

KELSEY: Big handsome guy, handlebar mustache?

MILO: Oh that Vinnie. He's doing great, right, Roman?

KELSEY: I'm glad he's doing great, 'cause he let my stalker walk right past his nose. (*to ROMAN*) Tell me, "officer," how long does that hat hold a charge?

ROMAN: Ma'am, I don't know what you're talking about.

KELSEY: Milo, that's a cute name. Would you like to go clubbing sometime?

MILO: Me? With you? Sure.

ROMAN: Milo, shut up, she's pulling your leg.

KELSEY: *(to MILO)* Why haven't I seen you at any of my carpets?

MILO: Maybe 'cause I'm new?

ROMAN: Milo, that's enough! We're getting off-track here.

KELSEY: Holy gym shorts, guys. You can go to prison for impersonating cops.

ROMAN: Ma'am, you're not making any sense.

KELSEY: Fine. Cuff me. Take me down to the station house. I'll get dressed.

(KELSEY starts undressing.)

ROMAN: That won't be necessary.

KELSEY: What's the matter? Oh right, you didn't come in a squad car. Let me guess. You came in a ratty old Ford Explorer. The one Britney bashed in with her umbrella when she was bald and crazy.

ROMAN: Ma'am, have we been doing some drugs tonight?

KELSEY: The answer to that is yes. And as everybody knows, when I'm trashed I'm liable to do anything.

(KELSEY takes a pistol out of her dresser drawer.)

ROMAN: Hey. Kelsey. Put that away.

KELSEY: Come on. I just pulled a gun on a cop. Take me down. Go ahead.

MILO: That's not even a real gun. That's an Elvis tribute gun.
The one John Mayer gave her.

ROMAN: Don't be ridiculous, she never dated John Mayer. Kelsey,
come on, you wouldn't keep a loaded gun around.

(KELSEY fires the gun in an offstage direction. Something shatters.)

ROMAN: *(to MILO)* I told you to let me do the talking.

KELSEY: Roman, take off the hat.

ROMAN: Come on, Kelsey, be reasonable.

MILO: We don't mean you any harm.

ROMAN: We just wanted a glimpse of the inner sanctum.

MILO: Help put you back on the map.

KELSEY: *(points gun)* Take off the hat!

(ROMAN takes off his hat, hands it to KELSEY. She puts it on.)

KELSEY: This lens is wide-angle, right? It's seeing you both from here? Talk to the hat.

MILO: Yeah, it's like 18 millimeters.

KELSEY: Good enough. Now drop your pants.

ROMAN: Kelsey, have a heart, we're just trying to make a living—

(KELSEY points the gun. ROMAN and MILO drop their pants.)

KELSEY: Now kiss.

ROMAN: *(to the hat)* The world should know, we're doing this under protest.

KELSEY: I can edit that out. Kiss him.

(ROMAN *and* MILO *kiss lightly.*)

KELSEY: No, grind it. Make it real.

ROMAN: Oh Jesus.

MILO: Come on, Roman, what do you care?

ROMAN: I can't. I won't. I'd rather be dead.

MILO: Oh, screw your dignity.

(MILO *grabs* ROMAN *and kisses him deeply.*)

KELSEY: That's better, guys. Now pick up your pants and go.
Before I call the real police.

(ROMAN *and* MILO *button their pants.* KELSEY *gets on her smartphone.*)

ROMAN: What are you doing? Who are you calling? Please don't call the cops.

KELSEY: Momma, I'll be with you in a second. (*to* ROMAN *and* MILO) Guys, you're free to go.

ROMAN: Come on, Kelsey, sweetheart, you need us. Without us you're nothing! Performers! Entertainers! Too many of you anyway! Ask your mom how important we are! We anoint you! We bring you down to earth! Who else is gonna do that, the *N.Y. Behind The Times*? We're the Papers of Record, not them! We were up for the Pulitzer Prize! Without us the terrorists win!

MILO: He gets this way when he doesn't get his way.

ROMAN: You won't get away with this! Mark my words!

(ROMAN *exits.* MILO *ducks back in.*)

MILO: It was really nice to meet you.

(MILO exits. Spotlight on ROMAN and MILO. ROMAN is keying in a number on his phone.)

MILO: What are you doing? Who are you calling?

ROMAN: Don't worry. No way we're gonna let this shit flow.

(ROMAN and MILO exit. KELSEY is back on her cell.)

MOMMA: Whoa, baby, what was that all about?

KELSEY: Momma, I was invaded.

MOMMA: What do you mean, invaded? Not that stupid stalker again!

KELSEY: No. These were paparazzi! Dressed as cops! He had a camera in his cop hat!

MOMMA: What, they have footage on you now?

KELSEY: No. I have footage on them! Kissing with their pants down.

MOMMA: Oh gosh, that's worth a million hits! Thank you, God!

(Blue and red light sweeps across the room. Doorbell.)

KELSEY: Just a second, Momma.

(KELSEY gets on the intercom.)

KELSEY: Yeah, who is it?

COP'S VOICE: *(over)* LAPD, Kelsey.

KELSEY: You guys are really begging for it, aren't you?

(KELSEY hangs up. Doorbell. KELSEY gets on the intercom again.)

KELSEY: I said go home! Get a life!

COP'S VOICE: (*over*) Either you come out, Kelsey, or we're coming in.

(KELSEY *sees the blue and red light. Uh-oh.*)

KELSEY: (*on phone*) Momma, hold on, I've got another situation here.

(KELSEY *returns to the intercom.*)

KELSEY: What's this about? Can you tell me?

COP'S VOICE: (*over*) Did you just have some visitors?

KELSEY: Yeah, I had visitors. Two paparazzi. They wormed their way in here, dressed in LAPD uniforms. It's over. I'm not pressing any charges.

COP'S VOICE: (*over*) That's not the point here, Kelsey. We have a report you went Phil Spector on their ass.

KELSEY: Sorry, I don't get the reference.

COP'S VOICE: (*over*) Yeah, you do. High on drugs, you threatened them with a loaded gun, and you fired it. Do you want to say something about that?

(*Pause.*)

KELSEY: (*to herself*) Momma, help. (*aloud*) No. I don't want to say anything.

COP'S VOICE: (*over*) Then, Kelsey, you leave us no choice.

KELSEY: Great. Break in without a warrant. See where that gets you.

COP'S VOICE: (*over*) No warrant necessary, Kelsey. (*to other Cop*) You hear that sound?

SECOND COP'S VOICE: *(over)* What sound? Oh right, yeah, I hear it.

COP'S VOICE: *(over)* That's her flushing the toilet.

KELSEY: That's total bullshit!

(SOUND of a lock splintering. KELSEY picks up her phone.)

KELSEY: Momma? Hello? Where did you go? You gotta call, ohmigod I'm blanking on his name, what's our lawyer's name? Momma? Call him! Call our lawyer!

(Blackout. Squawk of police siren. Over, multiple VOICES:)

VOICES: *(over, variously)* "Kelsey, over here." "Kelsey, who did you shoot?" "How high are you, Kelsey?" "Kelsey, one more." "Kelsey, roll down the window."

(The VOICES die out, and then, in darkness:)

VOICE OF JUDGE: *(over)* Do you have anything to say before I sentence you?

Scene 2

(Spotlight on KELSEY, in skintight designer clothes, facing an unseen JUDGE. It's weeks later.)

KELSEY: Yeah, what about those two paparazzi? Why aren't they standing here instead of me? The LAPD took the word of two phony cops, claimed they heard me flushing drugs, which was an absolute total lie. Yes, I fired a gun, if I'd shot both those paps I would have been totally within my rights as a property owner—

JUDGE: *(over)* Young lady! We're not retrying this case. If we were, I would advise you, as your lawyer obviously didn't, to dress more appropriately for court.

KELSEY: Ohmigod, that is so sexist, I can't believe it—

JUDGE: *(over)* Quiet! I'm tired of seeing your kind in my courtroom. The drug conviction stands. I reserve the right to revisit the felony gun charge, unless you agree to a 28-day stay in a rehabilitation facility.

KELSEY: Fine. I agree.

JUDGE: I warn you. This will not be Promises or Betty Ford or any place of your choosing. I'm referring you to the Department of Human Services. The assignment will be entirely private.

KELSEY: No such thing for me, Your Honor.

JUDGE: Every precaution will be taken. You will be driven to the facility in an unmarked vehicle. There will be no publicity, no perp walk, no paparazzi, no public knowledge of any kind, owing to your insatiable need to have your every single move recorded in the media. Bailiff, remove the prisoner.

(Blackout. Flashbulbs popping. Offstage overlapping VOICES:)

VOICES: *(over, including ROMAN AND MILO)* Kelsey, this way!...Kelsey, how do you feel?... Kelsey, are you relieved you're not going to prison?...Kelsey, where are they sending you?...Kelsey, flash me, sweetheart!...

Scene 3

(The VOICES die out. Lights up on the main room of Aspiration House. Chairs, a couch, a computer, a TV, coffee table with old magazines. One window to the outside. Signs on the wall: AREN'T YOU SICK AND TIRED OF BEING SICK AND TIRED?...COMPLAINTS? CALL 213 900 9000... NO NON-APPROVED SNACKS!

BAXTER, a bearded, weather-worn street person, is talking with CARMEN, a Latina. She's listening with therapeutic intensity.)

BAXTER: I'm all about suicide prevention. First thing I do, I get rid of all my sharps. My scissors, my screwdriver, my box-cutter, my Swiss Army Knife. Throw them all down the sewer if I have to. Then, step two, I build myself a fire. All my flammable belongings, I put them in a pile, then I set a match to the pile. Whoosh. Up in flames. So then I have to swat out the fire. So I'm swatting out the fire and I'm saying to myself, Baxter old man, if you're going to the trouble of saving your belongings, why the hell would you ever kill yourself?

CARMEN: *Bueno.* Your method appears to be working.

BAXTER: It's downright infallible.

CARMEN: How do you feel at this very moment?

BAXTER: How am I feeling? I'm worried shitless.

CARMEN: Shitless is a bad thing to be. What worries you, Baxter?

BAXTER: My mom's funeral.

CARMEN: I am sorry for your loss. But what specifically is the trouble?

BAXTER: I haven't shed a tear.

CARMEN: Tears will come, *cariño*.

BAXTER: No, they won't.

CARMEN: Why not, Baxter?

BAXTER Because I'm glad she's dead!

(KELSEY, dressed in jeans, sweat shirt, sunglasses—celebrity incognito—enters, carrying a small Louis Vuitton duffel bag and talking on her phone. Spotlight on MOMMA, on the other end.)

KELSEY: *(on phone)* —Momma, I'm just walking in the door. Now I'm inside.

MOMMA: What about your escort?

(KELSEY looks out the window.)

KELSEY: They're still in the parking lot. They're waiting for me to shut the door.

MOMMA: Is there anyone else out there?

KELSEY: No, they sent out a decoy at the station house.

MOMMA: Nobody followed you?

KELSEY: No.

MOMMA: That's too bad. I'll get on it.

KELSEY: Momma, we don't want to piss off the judge.

MOMMA: Why the hell not? That asshole, he deserves to have this whole ruling blow up in his face.

KELSEY: OK, but let me check it out first. *(to BAXTER and CARMEN)* Excuse me? Am I in the right place?

MOMMA: God, I'm so worried I can hardly breathe—

KELSEY: *(to BAXTER and CARMEN)* Is this Aspiration House?

CARMEN: Yes, may I help you?

KELSEY: I'm reporting for, um, treatment? They gave me some paperwork to give you.

CARMEN: Let me see.

(KELSEY *hands over the forms*. CARMEN *studies them*.)

CARMEN: *¿Es esto verdad?* This is you?

KELSEY: Yeah, they didn't warn you?

(KELSEY *takes off her sunglasses to reveal her famous face*.)

CARMEN: (*alarmed*) Why do you stare at me?

KELSEY: I wasn't staring. Are those papers OK?

CARMEN: You don't realize who I am. *Obviamente*.

KELSEY: You're the person in charge.

CARMEN: I am the one hundred and seventh *iteración* of Maleeka, *la reina de Urano*. I am the victim of clerical error, that is why you see me here and not on my home planet. Maybe you are a victim too.

BAXTER: (*to KELSEY*) My advice? Don't get into it.

CARMEN: (*to KELSEY*) And my advice? Don't listen to a homeless vagrant.

BAXTER: Hey. Not homeless. Residentially challenged. And I'm not a vagrant. I have a permanent location, the parking lot of Bryson's Appliance Repair, 1416 Santa Monica Boulevard. You want stability in your life? Join the World Wrestling Federation. Call yourself the Coooco from Uranus. Sew that right into your trunks, your robe, tattoo it on your gorgeous ass.

(KELSEY, *during this, has moved away*.)

KELSEY: Momma, I can't do this. No fucking way. These people are nuts. It's a nuthouse. I'm in a nuthouse.

MOMMA: Oh, that judge, I could murder him.

KELSEY: Ohmigod, here comes another one.

(DARNIQUE has entered.)

DARNIQUE: Baxter, have you been picking on Carmen again? Don't say no, I could hear you from upstairs. *(to KELSEY)* Let me see those papers.

KELSEY: I need to know who you are first.

(DARNIQUE grabs the papers out of KELSEY's hand.)

DARNIQUE: I'll tell you who I am. I'm the person you've got to listen to, otherwise you'll be serving hard time in the California penal system. Hang up the phone and follow me.

KELSEY: *(on phone)* Momma, I'll call you as soon as I can.

(KELSEY hangs up, follows DARNIQUE. Spotlight down on MOMMA as they exit.)

CARMEN: If I was you, Baxter, I would go live in the woods.

BAXTER: The woods, are you kidding? I'd be eaten alive. All my survival skills are urban.

CARMEN: The Cities of Earth are evil.

BAXTER: I couldn't agree more. I'm definitely part of the problem.

(Lights dim on the main room. Lights up on DARNIQUE and KELSEY in the administrative office. Desk, visitor chair, closet, and a valet-park-like key-cabinet hanging on the wall. A chart with the names of the clients, listing their dates of arrival and planned discharge, plus a column for infractions. A sign: YOUR RIGHTS AS AN EMPLOYEE. DARNIQUE starts filling out a form.)

DARNIQUE: Social Security Number?

KELSEY: No idea.

DARNIQUE: Look in your wallet.

KELSEY: For what? All I've got is a credit card.

DARNIQUE: To what substances have you been addicted?

KELSEY: None.

DARNIQUE: What about alcohol?

KELSEY: I can hold my liquor fine. Whatever that bad gene is, I don't have it.

DARNIQUE: What about other family members?

KELSEY: What about them? (*lying*) No.

DARNIQUE: Then why did you bring up genetics?

KELSEY: (*lying*) I don't know why. I just said that to say something.

(KELSEY's cell rings. KELSEY answers.)

KELSEY: Yeah, hi, what's up?

(*Spotlight on MOMMA.*)

MOMMA: Baby, I just had a brainstorm. There's a celebrity/police golf tournament at this Donald Trump course in Rancho Palos Verdes. You pair up with police officers, proceeds go to families of murdered cops. Isn't that just what the doctor ordered?

KELSEY: Yeah, it sounds plausible. Except I've never played golf.

MOMMA: You think Heidi Klum plays golf? She was in the tournament last year. Cop holds you in his arms, shows you how to swing the club, it's a classic photo op.

DARNIQUE: Hang up the phone.

KELSEY: Yeah, it's a cute shot, but there's a dart board at the station house with my picture on it.

MOMMA: Exactly my point! You've been dissing the LAPD, this is a perfect way to take the hex off—

DARNIQUE: I said hang up the goddamn phone!

KELSEY: Momma, I gotta go.

MOMMA: And tell Nurse Ratched to go fuck herself. Love you, baby.

KELSEY: Love you bunches!

(KELSEY ends the call. Spotlight down on MOMMA.)

KELSEY: You were saying?

DARNIQUE: Do you take amphetamines?

KELSEY: No.

DARNIQUE: Barbiturates?

KELSEY: No.

DARNIQUE: Cocaine?

KELSEY: No.

DARNIQUE: Dilaudid? Ecstasy? Fentanyl?

KELSEY: I get it. Alphabetical order. Listen, I can save us both a lot of trouble. When I was 13? I smoked cigarettes. A pack a day. On my 16th birthday I quit. I didn't sweat. I didn't shake. I just quit. Seriously, are you listening? I never wanted another cigarette. I smoked opium for, I don't know, a month. Then I stopped cold. No problem.

DARNIQUE: You were busted for marijuana.

KELSEY: Yeah, illegally. I was totally railroaded.

DARNIQUE: How much do you use in a day?

KELSEY: Like nothing. Like an ounce every six months.

DARNIQUE: I know all about you one-toke wonders. You're lying to yourselves.

KELSEY: Right, I've only written five hit songs on weed.

DARNIQUE: And what if you didn't smoke?

KELSEY: What if Shakespeare didn't smoke? Would he have ever written *Hamlet*?

DARNIQUE: Are you telling me Shakespeare was a pothead?

KELSEY: Yeah, a bisexual stoner, you didn't know that?

DARNIQUE: Because it isn't true.

KELSEY: Are you calling me a liar? Oh right, I'm in rehab, anybody in rehab is a junkie, all junkies are liars, so anything I tell you is a lie. You know what? You've been in this job too long.

DARNIQUE: Every photograph I see, you're wasted. You and your mother both.

KELSEY: Oh, you never heard of Photoshop?

DARNIQUE: How often do you black out? Have you ever had a seizure?

KELSEY: I told you, I don't get drunk!

DARNIQUE: Open your bag.

KELSEY: I swear to God, there's nothing in there.

(DARNIQUE *grabs the duffel bag, empties it on the desk, proceeds to confiscate a nail file, an eyelash curler, and various bottles.*)

DARNIQUE. No sharps...no shampoo...no perfume.

KELSEY: Oh shit, really?

DARNIQUE: And no profanity. Is your lithium prescription being faxed over?

KELSEY: What lithium? I don't take lithium.

DARNIQUE: According to your psych eval, you're Bipolar Disorder N.O.S.

KELSEY: What, that court-appointed shrink? He called me bipolar?
I'm sorry I gave him an autograph.

DARNIQUE: What about your sex addiction?

KELSEY: What sex addiction?

DARNIQUE: Three famous boyfriends, one after the other.

KELSEY: Two famous and one bodyguard. I broke up with all of them. Cold turkey. Zero withdrawal.

DARNIQUE: Maybe 'cause you don't connect with people.

KELSEY: Oh here we go.

DARNIQUE: Look, Kelsey. If you're here, you've got a problem.

KELSEY: Whatever. I give up.

DARNIQUE: These papers spell out your rights. And this one says you won't share anything about the other clients. That means no tweeting about Aspiration House. Tweeting about this facility will land you behind bars. No porn on the computer, and no pizza deliveries. Sign next to the arrows.

(KELSEY *just sits there.*)

DARNIQUE: Fine. You'd rather go to prison. I can certainly make that happen.

(KELSEY grabs the papers off the desk, signs them. DARNIQUE hands her a plastic vial.)

DARNIQUE: Bathroom's second door on the left. Pee for me, pull the tab. I'll be waiting by the door.

KELSEY: This is totally fucked.

DARNIQUE: I heard that. You were warned.

(DARNIQUE puts a check mark next to KELSEY's name on the wall chart.)

DARNIQUE: Two more check marks, I call the judge, and you're on your way to Chowchilla. Hurry up, Group is starting.

(KELSEY exits the office with the vial. DARNIQUE takes a key from the key cabinet, unlocks the closet, stows the items she confiscated from KELSEY. In the closet are various bottles—hair tonic, mouthwash, etc.—and bubble-packed meds. Lights down on the office as DARNIQUE exits.)

Lights up on the main room as RACHEL enters, sets about rearranging the knickknacks, the magazines, removing dead petals from the flowers, picking lint off the upholstery, arranging the chairs in a precise semicircle, in a quiet OCD frenzy.

DAISY, a pre-op male-to-female transgender, enters.)

DAISY: Hi, Rachel. Hi, everybody. It's time for Group! How are you doing, Baxter. What's up, Carmen. Carmen? No hello for your friend Daisy?

CARMEN: I am not calling you Daisy. You're David.

RACHEL: Carmen, whatever Daisy wants to be called, we should try to honor that. Why don't we all take our seats?

(They all sit.)

RACHEL: Carmen, can you name three kinds of meat?

CARMEN: Horse. Dog. Kangaroo.

RACHEL: Yes, those are all forms of meat, that's completely true.
Would you find any of those meats in your supermarket?

CARMEN: I don't go to supermarkets. The food shows up in my
fridge. Whatever I need.

BAXTER: It comes from Arcturus. By cosmic elevator.

RACHEL: Baxter, I know you like to tease Carmen, and I know you
mean it affectionately. But let's give her a chance, OK?

BAXTER: I thought that's the whole point of these meetings—
humiliate each other till we get sick of ourselves.

(KELSEY enters, turning her phone back on.)

KELSEY: I was told to report for Group. Is this Group?

RACHEL: Yes, this is Group. Welcome to Aspiration House. I'm
Dr. Rachel. Why don't we all introduce ourselves?

BAXTER: I'm Baxter.

CARMEN: Carmen.

KELSEY: Hi. I'm Kelsey.

(DAISY is gaping speechlessly at KELSEY.)

RACHEL: And that's Daisy.

CARMEN: David! Not Daisy!

KELSEY: Is this it? Just us four? Where's everybody else?

BAXTER: It's the first of the month. They're all out there spending
their disability money. We get a spell of bad weather, you'll see
these fifteen beds fill up fast.

RACHEL: Kayley, wouldn't you like to have a seat?

BAXTER: Not Kayley. Kelly.

KELSEY: Actually, it's Kelsey.

DAISY: YOU PEOPLE ARE SO RETARDED! (*to KELSEY*)
Ohmigod! I love you! I totally love you! I shuffle your songs all
the time! I saw your movie four times! When the reviews came out
I got so depressed! (*to RACHEL*) I'm sorry, Dr. Rachel. I didn't
mean to call you retarded.

RACHEL: (*to KELSEY*) And I'm sorry I called you by the wrong
name. I do recognize you.

CARMEN: Well, I don't.

BAXTER: You're a musician?

DAISY: Musician. What a word. She's a rock star!

BAXTER: Like we need another one. There's enough music in the
world to last forever.

CARMEN: Name three kinds of meat.

KELSEY: Excuse me?

CARMEN: How much does dog food cost?

DAISY: Oh, how should she know.

CARMEN: What is the last time you changed a light bulb? Or
unwrapped a bar of soap?

RACHEL: Carmen, why don't we let Kelsey get used to the Group,
before we start peppering her with questions—

CARMEN: What's the last time you stacked a dishwasher?

DAISY: Her momma didn't have a dishwasher! Or a washing
machine! All the money went to dance lessons! Isn't that right,
sweetheart?

KELSEY: Yeah, that's right. Why all these stupid questions?
Aren't we supposed to talk about our families or something?

RACHEL: Well, we're talking about life skills today. Was there something you wanted to share about your family?

DAISY: She doesn't have a family. Only Momma.

RACHEL: Does your mom live with you?

DAISY: No! She bought her Momma this amazing place in Hancock Park!

BAXTER: Do you own or do you rent?

KELSEY: Own.

DAISY: You used to own. She sold her house in the Hills.

KELSEY: Am I missing something here? Not buying dog food? Not unwrapping my own soap? Is that so life-enhancing?

DAISY: She's too busy writing songs! She writes them in her dreams! She writes them on dope!

BAXTER: And then her producer does the real work.

DAISY: That's totally untrue! She's a stone genius! You should all be kissing her feet!

CARMEN: *Calma, David.* Your Adam's Apple is pulsating.

DAISY: *(to KELSEY)* You'll have to forgive Miss Loonyfeathers from Pluto....she's transphobic.

CARMEN: Pluto, no. Not Pluto. Venus.

DAISY: You mean Venus-zuela, honey.

CARMEN: *Y tú eres una puta del infierno!*

DAISY: Oh yeah? What's Spanish for crazy bitch?

CARMEN: *Perra loca*, you pathetic *maricón*.

DAISY: You asked for it, girlie. Now you die.

(DAISY lunges at CARMEN. They grapple. Furniture goes flying, objects topple.)

RACHEL: Stop it, now. That's enough. Both of you!

BAXTER: Catfight!

CARMEN: No catfight. She's a tom, not a kitty!

(RACHEL tries to separate DAISY and CARMEN, gets shoved aside. KELSEY suddenly starts to convulse. She keels over in her chair, heels drumming on the floor.)

DAISY: Ohmigod, somebody do something! She's having a seizure!

BAXTER: [laughs]

DAISY: Why are you laughing? You're a horrible person! *(to CARMEN)* Carmen, this is all your fault. She was picking up your stupid vibes. Somebody hold her tongue!

(DARNIQUE rushes in.)

DARNIQUE: No, don't hold her tongue, she'll bite your fingers off. Step back, give her some air, I'm dealing with this.

(DARNIQUE crouches over the supine KELSEY, turns her head to the side.)

DARNIQUE: *(to RACHEL)* I asked her if she ever had seizures. I knew she was lying.

KELSEY: [giggles]

DARNIQUE: What the fuck—

KELSEY: Hey. No profanity.

RACHEL: Kelsey, you were faking?

DAISY: Ohmigod, I'm so relieved! You see? You get it? She's not a terrible actress. She's a great actress! Those critics are jealousy monsters!

RACHEL: I'm curious, Kelsey. Why did you think you had to simulate a seizure?

KELSEY: I broke up the fight, didn't I?

DARNIQUE: Right, good job. You just earned yourself a second check mark.

RACHEL: Wait. Darnique? We need to get to the bottom of this.

(RACHEL *takes* DARNIQUE *aside*.)

DARNIQUE: (*aside*) Come on, that was bizarre and malicious. This girl will do anything to get attention.

RACHEL: (*aside*) That's my feeling too. Let me try to handle this.

DARNIQUE: (*aside*) Go ahead, coddle her. See where that gets us. (*to* KELSEY; *going*) Tomorrow you clean all the carpets.

(DARNIQUE *exits*.)

RACHEL: Group is over for the day. Baxter? Carmen? Daisy? Good job, everybody. We vented some feelings, and that's very important. Now could you let me and Kelsey have the room?

DAISY: (*going; to* KELSEY) You were right to do what you did. I would have murdered the dizzy cunt!

(DAISY, BAXTER, *and* CARMEN *exit*.)

RACHEL: (*to* KELSEY) Would you mind helping me put this place in order?

(RACHEL starts tidying up, restoring everything upended in the fracas to its precise original place. KELSEY doesn't move.)

RACHEL: Kelsey, maybe you didn't understand? I'd like you to help me.

(Pause. Wearily, KELSEY starts helping.)

KELSEY: If I go batshit in this place, I'm suing the State of California.

RACHEL: Tell me, is it true about you and your mom?

KELSEY: Is what true?

RACHEL: You're very close. That's the impression I've gotten.

KELSEY: From who?

RACHEL: Well, your life isn't exactly the best-kept secret....No no, that magazine doesn't go there, it goes on the little table....
But...correct me if I'm wrong...you never really knew your dad?

KELSEY: Yeah, so?

RACHEL: "Too Cute to Hug." I wonder if it's occurred to you...maybe that was a song about fathers and daughters? About not getting enough affection? Or the wrong kind of affection?

KELSEY: He split before I was born.

RACHEL: I thought you were three years old.

KELSEY: That's what you get for trusting Wikipedia.

RACHEL: I'll be more careful in the future. So...do you know where your dad is now?

KELSEY: At the bottom of San Francisco Bay. Sorry, that's not exactly true. But by the time the Golden Gate people fished him out, there wasn't that much left to bury. I guess the Wiki nerds missed that too.

RACHEL: I'm sorry. That's a lot to process.

KELSEY: Didn't you hear me? I wasn't born yet. I was minus six months old when he jumped off that bridge.

RACHEL: Well....I wonder if you've considered the possibility...that you actually did experience his absence as a loss. Did you have many friends as a child or were you mostly by yourself?

KELSEY: Whoa, where is all this coming from?

RACHEL: I wonder if you've ever considered....the limitations of your highly focused upbringing....the emphasis on success and stardom...what sacrifices you've had to make along the way....in terms of human relationships. Haven't you ever wanted to be part of something bigger than yourself?

KELSEY: Like what, Madison Square Garden? I've played Madison Square Garden.

RACHEL: I think you know what I mean.

KELSEY: Yeah, you're calling me a selfish little bitch. Welcome to the club.

(KELSEY's *phone rings.*)

RACHEL: Your mom?

KELSEY: Yeah, it's my mom. So what?

RACHEL: How often does she call you?

KELSEY: About as often as I call her. You have a problem with that?

RACHEL: (*pause*) I'll leave you two alone.

(RACHEL *exits. Spotlight on MOMMA, on the other end of the phone.*)

MOMMA: So did you tell Nurse Ratched where to get off?

KELSEY: I don't think she got the message.

MOMMA: What are the sanitary conditions? Is it a shithole?

KELSEY: Not a shithole. They keep it OCD clean. More of a hellhole.

MOMMA: Well, don't despair. You're gonna keep a rehab diary.

KELSEY: Momma, that's not an option.

MOMMA: Yes! You'll tweet your recovery.

KELSEY: What recovery? There's nothing to recover from.

MOMMA: You know that. I know that. We're playing to expectations.

KELSEY: I'm not allowed to tweet about this place.

MOMMA: That's ridiculous! What about the First Amendment? Never mind, no worries, I'll take up the slack.

KELSEY: I don't know, Momma. They're threatening to send me to prison. I could end up with a broomstick up my cooch.

MOMMA: Baby, we can't go totally silent. Another month off the radar, we might never get back on again.

KELSEY: OK, but be careful, all right?

MOMMA: Wait! I got it. I'll tweet about your stalker. He's still trying to find you, and he's been sighted at various rehabs.

KELSEY: You think that's wise? It might encourage the guy.

MOMMA: It's an empathy builder, baby. We need to keep that story alive.

KELSEY: OK, but don't mention Aspiration House.

MOMMA: My lips are sealed. And you hang in there, OK?

KELSEY: I'm trying, Momma. It's hard.

MOMMA: Just know that I'm thinking of you, every second of the day and night.

KELSEY: I know and I love you for it. Um, Momma?

MOMMA: What, honey?

KELSEY: Do I own or do I rent?

(Blackout.)

Scene 4

(Spotlight on ROMAN and MILO, in civilian clothes. MILO is looking through binoculars.)

ROMAN: Who is it?

MILO: Black lady. She works there.

ROMAN: What's she doing?

MILO: She's keying in a bunch of numbers. Shit, her body's in the way. I think the first digit's 9.

ROMAN: Gimme those binoculars.

MILO: Too late. She's gone inside. Maybe we should just forget it.

ROMAN: And maybe you want the whole world to see us playing tonsil hockey. With our pants around our ankles, lest we forget.

MILO: So how come she hasn't posted that video already?

ROMAN: Son of Sam Law. She can't profit from a crime.

MILO: Or maybe she's waiting till she's done her time.

ROMAN: And that's exactly why we've gotta get in there.

MILO: Nobody's ever cracked a place like this.

ROMAN: All the more reason. In the eyes of the world we're leeches. You and I know we're not leeches. We're sleuths, and this is our golden opportunity to prove it. If we pussy out now, Milo, we're disgracing our entire profession. Kelsey, you conceited little minx, you haven't heard the last of us!

(Blackout.)

Scene 5

(Lights up on KELSEY's room at Aspiration House. A bed, a night table, and not much else. KELSEY is curled up in bed. DAISY tiptoes in, crouches at KELSEY's bedside, gazing at her adoringly.)

KELSEY bolts up in bed, waking from a nightmare.)

KELSEY: [stifled scream]

DAISY: Shh. Kelsey, honey, it's OK. You're awake now. Did you have a bad dream?

KELSEY: Yeah. I dreamed I was locked up in a halfway house.

DAISY: I know, right? I have that nightmare all the time. I feel like I'm dreaming right this second! I can't believe I'm talking to my idol!

KELSEY: How long have you been sitting there?

DAISY: About an hour. Kidding! I just got here. How are the bedbugs doing you?

KELSEY: Bedbugs? I thought bedbugs were a myth.

DAISY: Where you live they're a myth. Didn't you take biology in school? Oh wait, my bad, Momma home-schooled you. See this ring of bites around my ankle? That's where my socks leave off. How's Momma doing? She must miss you like crazy. I haven't talked to my mom in decades. When I was a little girl? She used to hold me between her legs and stroke me like a cock. According to Dr. Rachel, that's why my gender got so bent out of shape. Now I'm waiting on my reassignment.

KELSEY: Good luck with that. Listen, I should try and get some sleep.

DAISY: Well, can I at least get a picture?

(DAISY takes out her cell, tries to take a selfie of herself and KELSEY.)

KELSEY: Hey. No. Don't.

DAISY: Who do you think you are, Greta Garbo? Kelsey, I can help you. There's a reason you got those terrible reviews. I did love you in that movie, but you were so camera shy! You're a performer! You need that live audience! What drugs do you take to perform? Is it true you don't do blow? You're basically a pothead. Me too. I love weed. Why should we be at the mercy of our moods? Take a drink, smoke a joint. It's not self-medication. We're just showing our brain who's boss. Sometimes my brain tells me I shouldn't have the operation. They say if you're a woman, you have a higher chance of killing yourself. But I'll take that chance. Cuz it's more fun being a girl these days, right? We're the lawyers, we're the doctors, we're the pop stars, and meanwhile the guys are all turning into lazy douchebags, right? You've had horrible luck with men lately.

KELSEY: And I detoxed.

DAISY: I am so totally glad to hear that.

KELSEY: All by myself. I didn't need any counselor.

(Pause. DAISY suddenly grabs KELSEY and kisses her.)

KELSEY: Whoa, what the fuck!

DAISY: I knew you were sick of guys. I could tell from that movie. The chemistry was all with Miley Cyrus.

KELSEY: Dude, you have a dick.

DAISY: I don't think of it as my dick. I feel like my body got mixed up like The Fly's. I started out with no dick and during the trip between wherever souls come from and my mother's body, suddenly I had a dick. But that dick doesn't belong to me. It belongs to somebody else.

KELSEY: I get it. Weird feeling. Thanks for stopping by.

DAISY: You're throwing me out.

KELSEY: Fuck yeah, I'm throwing you out.

DAISY: Wow. The media's right about you. You're nothing but a selfish, stuck-up, skinny-legged, lip-syncing bitch.

KELSEY: I don't lip-sync. Get some rest, OK?

DAISY: Biggest Ego in the Business! When have you ever done anything for anyone but yourself?

KELSEY: Yeah, that's me. Deal with it.

DAISY: But if I didn't have a dick, you'd really be OK with it? 'Cause I'm halfway there! You should have seen me six months ago. I was a total hippo. I weighed 250 pounds! I hated being fat. Except for the boobs. So I signed up with Dr. Morgenstern, I lost the weight, and all I need now is the cash. See, I can't afford a trip to Thailand. And I'd need a year of high-cost therapy before Morgenstern will do the operation.

KELSEY: That's fucked up.

DAISY: You bet your sweet ass it's fucked up.

KELSEY: So make your mom pay for the therapy. She owes you.

DAISY: I just told you, I don't have a mom. Nobody ever comes on Family Day. And now I made an enemy of you! My favorite person in the world! Ohmigod, I hate myself. I'm gonna scream.

KELSEY: Don't scream! Dude, you're making me seriously nuts. Quiet down and you can stay.

DAISY: Ohmigod, thank you. You're the sweetest. You really are. I don't think you're selfish at all. I think you're really charitable at heart.

(DAISY crawls into bed, snuggles up, closes her eyes. Pause. KELSEY reaches for her phone, starts texting.)

DAISY: What are you doing? Who are you texting?

KELSEY: Nothing. Never mind. You made me think of something.

DAISY: I bet you're texting Momma. Tell Momma you just met your biggest fan. I bet you've never been one-on-one with a fan before. And now you're in bed with one!

KELSEY: Shut up! Stop talking! Go to sleep!

(KELSEY finishes texting. Blackout. In darkness, the whine of a vacuum cleaner.)

Scene 6

(Lights up on the main room. KELSEY is vacuuming. BAXTER is watching.)

BAXTER: You're doing that all wrong. See there? You missed a bunch of cookie crumbs. You want to use a lawnmower technique. Overlap the swaths.

KELSEY: What are you, an expert?

BAXTER: Assistant janitor at the airport Ramada, June 1976 to...July 1976. Seriously, your technique stinks. Very painful to watch.

(KELSEY turns off the vacuum cleaner.)

KELSEY: You do it, smartass.

BAXTER: No thank you. Darnique catches me doing your chores, we'll both be swabbing out the toilets. And I had my fill of toilet-swabbing at the Ramada, thank you very much.

KELSEY: So what do you do now?

BAXTER: For money? I beg at freeway off-ramps.

KELSEY: That must suck.

BAXTER: Are you kidding? I can make 50 dollars a day. That's almost twice the poverty threshold for my demographic.

KELSEY: Then what are you doing in this stupid place?

BAXTER: Excellent question. Gotta clean up. I've got a funeral to go to. Damn woman. I gave her more love than she ever gave me. "Your room smells like a pigsty." "You're stupid, you're ugly, I curse the day I had you." She wouldn't leave the house, so I did all her shopping. Did I ever get a thank you? A kiss goodnight? A cupcake on my birthday? When your mother turns her face away, it's like a permanent solar eclipse.

KELSEY: So why go to her funeral?

BAXTER: Because, Miss Pop Star, if I don't show up, and make a decent appearance, I'll be eighty-sixed from the Will.

KELSEY: Good luck, if that's your only suit.

BAXTER: (*sadly*) Yes, this is pretty much my summer wardrobe.

(DAISY *enters.*)

DAISY: [screams with happiness]

BAXTER: What? What happened?

DAISY: I can't believe it. I've been praying and praying and finally it came true.

BAXTER: What came true?

DAISY: My surgeon? Dr. Morgenstern? That I get my hormones from? He's gonna schedule my therapy, and then I can have the operation. (*to KELSEY*) Isn't that fantastic?

KELSEY: Yeah, that's awesome.

BAXTER: How are you gonna pay for all that crap?

DAISY: Hello. The money's already in escrow.

BAXTER: "Escrow." Now I know you're full of shit.

DAISY: I just spoke to the man! It's a done deal! Ohmigod, I need to hear some music!

(DAISY *goes over to the computer, keys in a website.*)

BAXTER: Where did this money come from? Not your family.

DAISY: Of course not my family. I'm betting it was Morgenstern. I was strumming on his heartstrings and he heard my song. What's the matter, Baxter, you don't look happy for me. You think 'cause I came into some money, you're not gonna get your inheritance. That's just wrong. That's glass-half-empty thinking. There's no law says we both can't be rich.

BAXTER: Yeah, there is. The Law of Luck.

DAISY: There's no such law.

BAXTER: There's only a finite amount of luck in any given city. If you had to panhandle for a living, you'd know what I'm talking about.

DAISY: Oh you're just an old Mr. Grumpypants. Here we go.

(A song comes up on YouTube—one of Kelsey's.)

BAXTER: What's this noise?

DAISY: Don't you dare call it noise. *(to KELSEY)* It's her latest and her greatest and I can't stop playing it. I'm totally addicted.

(DAISY starts to dance. CARMEN enters.)

CARMEN: *¿Qué pasa?* Why are you dancing?

DAISY: We're celebrating! They found a UFO on Mars!

CARMEN: *¿En serio?* No shit?

DAISY: *Absolutamente!*

(CARMEN joins DAISY.)

DAISY: There you go, Carmenita. Rock it out!

(DARNIQUE enters. KELSEY sees her staring daggers. Defiantly, she joins the dance.)

DAISY: *(to CARMEN)* Look who we're dancing with! Oh my heart! I can't stand it!

(DARNIQUE turns off the video.)

DAISY: What are you doing? Don't do that. We're celebrating! I can afford the operation! I'm gonna be a girl at last!

BAXTER: Her doctor put up the money.

DARNIQUE: Oh, your doctor put up the money. How generous of him. Listen, y'all find something else to do, I need to talk to Kelsey.

DAISY: Darnique, you can be such a buzzkill when you want to be. Which is pretty much all the time.

(DAISY *exits*. BAXTER *and* CARMEN *follow her*.)

DARNIQUE: (to KELSEY) I know what you're trying to do.

KELSEY: Oh please tell me, Oprah. Tell me what I'm doing. Tell me what I'm feeling. Tell me all about it.

DARNIQUE: She'll only spend the money on drugs.

KELSEY: I'm arranging to pay her doctor directly. And I want you to keep that a secret. Think you can do that?

DARNIQUE: What are you, the Lone Ranger of charity? Do you happen to know the statistics on post-op transsexuals? The suicide rates are terrifying and the murder rates are worse.

KELSEY: How about all the boys who want to be girls, and they kill themselves because they can't?

DARNIQUE: Yeah, you probably have a big gay fan base, I understand where you're coming from.

KELSEY: I saw how you were looking at me before.

DARNIQUE: How was I looking at you?

KELSEY: Like you were having an eyegasm.

DARNIQUE: Tell it to my three kids, OK?

KELSEY: Oh like that proves anything.

DARNIQUE: What's the matter with you? You think you can say anything to anybody, don't you? You'd better learn otherwise, girl, before you mess up somebody's life forever, the way you messed up yours.

KELSEY: I'm messed up? What about you? You're no different from the tabloids. Your life sucks ass and you're taking it out on me.

(KELSEY exits, past RACHEL, entering. DARNIQUE starts after KELSEY.)

DARNIQUE: You want another check mark? Fine. You got it.

RACHEL: Darnique, hold on. What's happening?

DARNIQUE: I'm gonna kick her smug little butt from here to Chowchilla, that's what's happening.

RACHEL: Whoa. No. She's reaching out. We need to encourage that.

DARNIQUE: It's nothing but a power trip.

RACHEL: I don't think so, Darnique. I think she's trying to be a good mother. The one she never had.

DARNIQUE: Well, somebody's got to set limits, and I'm tired of being that person, you understand?

RACHEL: Darnique, I know. Try to look at it this way. If she completes the program, it's a feather in both our caps.

DARNIQUE: Maybe I should be Queen for a Day. Tap into those ill-gotten millions. Damn.

RACHEL: Shh. Take a breath. Listen to the silence.

(Lights down on RACHEL and DARNIQUE. Lights up on KELSEY entering her room, on her phone. Spotlight on MOMMA, on the other end.)

KELSEY: —I don't know the time of the funeral, book the limo for the whole day. He's gonna need a suit, too. Plain black, no fringe, no colors, no sequins—the guy needs to make an good impression.

MOMMA: Is he cute?

KELSEY: Is he cute? He's old enough to be your father.

MOMMA: So why are you doing this? First this trannie, now this old guy from the streets?

KELSEY: I don't know, Momma. It just struck me as a nice thing to do. Instead of being groped on the fairway by the Chief of Police.

MOMMA: Kelsey. Sweetheart. Random acts of kindness do not a charity make. A gala is what we're shooting for.

KELSEY: Well, maybe I need to start small. Please, Momma? I need something to make me feel good. Otherwise, I'm gonna lose my mind in here.

MOMMA: OK, shh. You know what? I kinda like where you're going with this. Something this human-interest, I can call the Enquirer.

KELSEY: I don't think you should call the Enquirer.

MOMMA: Baby, you're making me feel so frustrated!

KELSEY: Are you gonna buy the guy a suit?

MOMMA: Of course I will.

KELSEY: And rent the limo?

MOMMA: Your wish is my command. Count of three...One...Two...three...

(Pause.)

MOMMA: Hello?

KELSEY: *(pause)* Yeah. Love you.

MOMMA: Love you bunches!

(Blackout on KELSEY's room and MOMMA. Lights up on main room. DAISY enters, sees ROMAN and MILO.)

DAISY: Ohmigod, he was right, I am using up the luck!

(ROMAN and MILO enter, costumed as Orkin exterminators, wearing badges, carrying tanks of insecticide, spray guns, and hazmat helmets with dark-tinted astronaut-like glass.)

DAISY: You're here for the bedbugs, aren't you.

MILO: The bedbugs?

ROMAN: Yes! The bedbugs. Exactly. That's why we're here...*(pause)*...ma'am?

DAISY: Ma'am is the proper form of address. My surgery's paid for. As of today. I used to be a fat disgusting man and now I'm gonna be a beautiful skinny woman and now you guys are here? My karma runneth over! Third door on the left, up the stairs, that's my bedroom. You'll want to do all the bedrooms, but I'm the one the little chiggers stick to. Must be something sweet in my perspiration, don't you think?

ROMAN: Sounds right to me.

MILO: This couch looks like it might be infested.

DAISY: Really? Bedbugs in the dayroom? Ohmigod, I didn't realize.

ROMAN: Takes a truly expert eye. *(to MILO)* We'll start down here, work our way up to the living quarters.

MILO: Gotcha. *(to DAISY)* So how do you like this place?

DAISY: Today? I absolutely love it.

MILO: What about your fellow inmates?

DAISY: We don't call ourselves inmates. We're clients.

ROMAN: Milo, let's get down to work, OK?

MILO: I guess you get all types here, huh? Anybody...noteworthy?

ROMAN: That's none of our business, Milo. Time to suit up.

(ROMAN and MILO put on their hazmat helmets. CARMEN enters.)

CARMEN: *Dios mío! Los extraterrestres!*

DAISY: No, honey. These guys aren't from Mars. They're exterminators. Bug-zappers.

CARMEN: No! Confess it, you're in disguise!

ROMAN: Whatever you say, *chica*. Could we have the room, please? It's for your own protection. This stuff is murder on the lungs.

(DAISY starts out.)

DAISY: Come on, Carmen, let's let these nice gentlemen do their thing.

CARMEN: No. They're impostors. I must speak to Darnique about this.

DAISY: Carmen, didn't you hear what I said? They're not from outer space.

CARMEN: *¿Cómo lo sabes?* You don't know. Darnique, she knows.

(CARMEN exits, followed by DAISY.)

ROMAN: Hurry up, Milo, let's get this done.

(MILO plants a lipstick camera on a shelf.)

MILO: What about the showers? Kelsey's not gonna be naked down here.

ROMAN: Be a shame to miss that, huh?

MILO: Yeah. We need to see if she's got a Brazilian or just a landing strip.

ROMAN: Let's do it!

(MILO and ROMAN start toward an unseen stairway, stop in their tracks as they hear DARNIQUE is approaching.)

DARNIQUE: *(off)* Carmen, calm down, I'm dealing with this....

(ROMAN and MILO back off, pretend to be spraying.)

DARNIQUE enters, followed timidly by CARMEN.)

DARNIQUE: I'm sorry, what are you men doing here?

ROMAN: We're from Orkin, ma'am. We got word of a bedbug infestation. You do have bedbugs, don't you?

DARNIQUE: Yes, we have bedbugs. Let me see your work order.

(ROMAN hands over a dummy work order.)

DARNIQUE: I never called this in.

MILO: Somebody must have, or we wouldn't be here.

DARNIQUE: Did she say her name?

MILO: *(to ROMAN)* I don't think she did, did she?

DARNIQUE: Never mind, I have a pretty good idea who it was.

ROMAN: Tell you what, we won't charge you the full amount. No matter how many mattresses we have to disinfect.

MILO: Yeah, we hear the bedrooms are teeming with the little critters.

(ROMAN and MILO have started for the stairs again. KELSEY enters.)

DARNIQUE: Kelsey, did you call Orkin and ask them to disinfect your room?

KELSEY: No! What are you talking about?

DARNIQUE: *(to ROMAN)* Was this the person who called you? Do you recognize her voice?

ROMAN: *(attempting to disguise his voice)* No, ma'am. I don't think so.

DARNIQUE: *(to MILO)* Was it a woman or a man?

MILO: *(disguised voice)* I don't remember. *(re ROMAN)* He took the call.

KELSEY: Oh eff me. Who let these knuckleheads in here?

ROMAN: *(disguised voice)* Miss, I don't know who you think we are, but we didn't come here to be insulted.

(KELSEY lunges at MILO.)

KELSEY: Take off that stupid helmets!

(Frightened, MILO obeys.)

KELSEY: What's with this place? Anybody can just walk in, no locks, no Security? *(to ROMAN and MILO)* Back your asses out of here!

DARNIQUE: Kelsey, you recognize these men?

KELSEY: Hello. These guys are the reason I'm here.

(ROMAN and MILO are gathering up their equipment. DAISY enters.)

DAISY: Where are you going? What about my bedbugs? Don't go. I can pay. I told you, I've got money now.

KELSEY: Forget it, Daisy. These guys are the vermin.

CARMEN: (to DAISY) See, I told you. *Insectos* from Mars.

DARNIQUE: You gentlemen better leave. Before I call the police.

ROMAN: No worries, ma'am. We'll be on our merry way.

MILO: Nice seeing you again, Kelsey.

(ROMAN and MILO exit. RACHEL enters.)

RACHEL: What's going on here? What's the shouting?

DARNIQUE: We had visitors, Rachel. Courtesy of our newest client. I warned you this would happen. Open season on Aspiration House.

RACHEL: What were they, stalkers?

DARNIQUE: Stalkers? Stalker don't come in pairs. Enquirer, TMZ, whatever. I'm guessing she told them she was here.

KELSEY: Hey. Why don't you ask me if I told them?

DARNIQUE: Or her mother did. I don't care which, she can play it out in jail. I'm calling the judge.

RACHEL: Kelsey, were they the men who filed the complaint?

KELSEY: Yeah, you're catching on. That's what I'm up against, every god damn day of my life.

RACHEL: I completely understand. Kelsey, why don't you have a seat? I think I can be helpful here. Darnique? Everybody? Give us a moment?

DARNIQUE: You watch. She's gonna bring down this place around our ears. We'll be combing paparazzi out of our hair.

(DARNIQUE exits with DAISY and CARMEN. Spotlight on ROMAN and MILO. They've got a laptop and they're watching what's going on.)

ROMAN: God, don't let them send her to prison.

MILO: Yeah, God, it's not her fault. She didn't do anything wrong. *(off ROMAN's look)* Well, yeah, she made us drop our pants and swap spit....but yeah, God, if you have any respect for journalism, please let her stay.

(Spotlight down on ROMAN and MILO. RACHEL has pulled up a chair beside KELSEY.)

RACHEL: I'm getting a sense of how difficult your life is.

KELSEY: It was fine until this freakin' place.

RACHEL: You sometimes have trouble connecting with other people. Is that fair to say?

KELSEY: You can say it, Darnique can say it. Doesn't make it true.

RACHEL: Could it be because people are always connecting with you? And not in a good way?

KELSEY: Weren't you listening? I said no.

RACHEL: But you're helping Daisy. Is that a new feeling for you?

KELSEY: Frankly? I'm trying to get her off my back.

RACHEL: I wonder if you really mean that. Let me suggest something. I think maybe you identify with Daisy. She's someone who's trying to change her life. See if you agree: I think you've been hounded by other people ever since you were baby. I think your mom was the original paparazzi. Does that make any sense to you?

KELSEY: Paparazzo.

RACHEL: Sorry?

KELSEY: He was a character in an Italian movie. It's a guy's name—Paparazzo.

RACHEL: That's good to know. Thank you for that information.

KELSEY: And now you're trying to be my mom.

RACHEL: I'm trying to understand how you feel. Part of you hates being here. But I think part of you wants help.

KELSEY: I don't have "parts." I'm a whole person.

RACHEL: And you think you're all you need. Is that what you're saying?

KELSEY: If you're interesting enough, it is.

(KELSEY's phone rings. KELSEY takes out her phone, starts out.)

RACHEL: Is that your mom?

KELSEY: Yeah, the real one. Look, Rachel, I don't want to bust your chops. You're doing your job, you're trying to validate everything I say, and mainly you're getting your hours for private practice. Hey, think of all the people I could refer to you—every guy I ever fucked. So truce, OK? Excuse me, I have to take this.

(KELSEY exits past DARNIQUE, as DARNIQUE enters.)

RACHEL: I really think I'm getting through to her.

DARNIQUE: Is that what you think? Then you're the one who needs a shrink.

(Lights down on main room. Lights up on KELSEY'S room as she enters, talking on her phone. Spotlight on MOMMA, on the other end.)

KELSEY: *(on phone)* —Well how else did they find out where I am?

MOMMA: Baby, these paps have their ways. Maybe you'd be better off in prison.

KELSEY: Good thinking. Chowchilla, here I come.

MOMMA: Oh bite your tongue. I was joking.

KELSEY: Jail, home, halfway house, the cemetery...what's the fucking difference?

MOMMA: Spit out three times! I hate it when you go all pitiful on yourself. Everything last little thing I do, it's for your best interest. I would never sic the paps on you.

KELSEY: Momma, that's not really true, is it?

MOMMA: Of course it's true. When did I ever betray you to the tabs?

KELSEY: That time I went to Bulgari? When I came out, there they all were on Wilshire, waiting for me to come out. They practically crashed through a window.

MOMMA: You're blaming me for that? Seriously, where's the trust?

KELSEY: Did you alert the tabs or not?

MOMMA: Why are you grilling me like this? Didn't you get the most gorgeous gold watch out of the deal? It was win-win-win for everybody.

KELSEY: Who's wearing that watch today? Not me.

MOMMA: Don't you remember what you said? You said wearing a watch made you feel like a dork. You don't remember saying that?

KELSEY: Yes, OK, I remember.

MOMMA: Well then, give me a little credit. Did you see my tweets about your stalker? The feedback was fabulous.

KELSEY: Did you order that limo for the homeless guy? Did you buy his suit?

MOMMA: Not if you're gonna be so rude to me. Is this what they're teaching you there? To hate the woman who bore you?

KELSEY: Momma, nobody hates you.

MOMMA: Nobody except the world.

KELSEY: Now who's being pitiful? Momma, but I really have to go.

MOMMA: Please don't leave me like this.

KELSEY: Yeah, OK, fine. One...

MOMMA: Two...

KELSEY: Three....

MOMMA: Love you bunches!

(KELSEY ends the call. Flings herself on the bed. Blackout.)

Scene 7

(Lights up on the main room. Group is getting underway. It's the next day.)

RACHEL: Where's Kelsey?

DAISY: Kelsey's not feeling too well. I think she's still freaked about those paparazzi.

CARMEN: Ah, *si*. From the mothership.

DAISY: No, Carmenita. They weren't here to abduct her. They're the reason she was sent here. If you ever watched Earth news, you'd know that.

RACHEL: Daisy, do me a favor, go get Kelsey. Tell her we're doing a guided meditation. Please say I need her here.

(DAISY exits. RACHEL begins the guided meditation.)

RACHEL: Let's all sit as naturally as we can...hands on your knees if you like, palms facing upward if that's comfortable for you...and bring our attention to the fact that we're breathing....*(to CARMEN)* If we start to hear voices, let's not give ourselves a hard time about it, just let them be, and focus on our breath...

(Lights down on the main room. Lights up on KELSEY's room as DAISY enters. KELSEY's lying in bed, staring up at nothing.)

DAISY: Come on. Get up. You're missing Group.

(KELSEY ignores her.)

DAISY: It's not Q & A. All you have to do is sit there, pretend to be in a trance.

(Pause.)

DAISY: Dr. Rachel wants you there. You brought magic to this place, and she knows it. Seriously, Kelsey, get up, sweetie. Flat on your back is the worst place to be.

(DAISY pries KELSEY out of bed. Lights up on main room.)

RACHEL: ...Feel your belly expanding with each in-breath...and deflating with each out-breath....

BAXTER: Sorry, I can't hack this today. I've got a funeral tomorrow.

RACHEL: You're thinking about your mom. That's perfectly natural. If you have a mind, it's going to wander.

BAXTER: Yeah, it's wandering toward my inheritance. What chance do I have of getting it, looking like this? Zero. What if I catch the flu this winter? The rats chewed holes in my sleeping bag. I'm gonna die of pneumonia.

RACHEL: See, you're starting to punish yourself with worry. Wanting something doesn't make you a bad person. Just acknowledge what you're thinking...then bring your attention back to your breath...

(WYATT has entered. He's in his 20s, very cute.)

RACHEL: Can I help you?

WYATT: Yeah, I'm checking myself in?

CARMEN: What do you think this is, a four-star hotel? You can't just walk in here.

WYATT: My caseworker faxed my paperwork. At least I think she did.

RACHEL: *(to the group)* Why don't we continue to sit quietly...while I check on—

WYATT: Wyatt.

RACHEL: Wyatt's paperwork. Wyatt, this is Baxter...and this is Carmen.

(RACHEL exits.)

WYATT: Hey, Baxter. Hi, Carmen.

BAXTER: What are you here for, kid?

WYATT: Quite honestly? I needed a place to crash. My girlfriend kicked me out of her apartment.

CARMEN: *Ay*, poor baby. I take back what I said.

WYATT: I started urging. My mom's in the east, and I don't like living in my car. And I lost my temp job.

BAXTER: One excuse per customer, sonnyboy.

(DAISY and KELSEY enter.)

WYATT: (*to KELSEY*) Hi. I'm Wyatt.

KELSEY: Hey. I'm Kelsey.

WYATT: Hi, Kelsey.

DAISY: (*mocking*) "Hi, Kelsey." Don't pretend you're not impressed.

WYATT: Why should I be impressed? (*looks closer*) Oh. Yeah. Hello.

DAISY: "Oh yeah hello." People are so pathetic!

WYATT: See, I'm more of a blues person.

KELSEY: Hey, no problem. Welcome to Aspiration House.

DAISY: Ohmigod. OK, so he's cute. No reason to drool all over the place.

BAXTER: Nobody's drooling, Daisy. Simmer down.

DAISY: Please, she's totally turned on! She's relapsing as we speak!

(RACHEL enters, with DARNIQUE.)

DARNIQUE: Is your name Wyatt?

WYATT: Yeah, did you get my paperwork?

DARNIQUE: We found it. Is that your car in the lot?

WYATT: Yeah, the ratty old Honda. I'm looking to sell it, if anybody's interested. Am I in the right place? Doesn't seem that terrible.

DARNIQUE: What do you mean, it doesn't seem that terrible?

WYATT: Nothing. Forget it.

DARNIQUE: I'm asking you what you meant.

WYATT: There was something on the Net. Some gossip site. No biggie.

RACHEL: Kelsey, did you post something about Aspiration House?

KELSEY: No, why would I do that.

DARNIQUE: Or maybe you tweeted.

KELSEY: Fine, don't believe me.

DARNIQUE: Give me your phone.

KELSEY: No way. I didn't do anything.

DARNIQUE: I said give it here.

KELSEY: Go fuck yourself.

DARNIQUE: *(to KELSEY)* Perfect. You just got yourself another check mark.

KELSEY: Good. Then fuck you again. Fuck you as many times as it takes. Send me to prison, fine, go ahead, it's fucking ridiculous. I'd rather be raped by six hairy lesbians than have to deal with your bullshit anymore. I'm out of here.

(KELSEY starts out. RACHEL steps in KELSEY's way.)

RACHEL: *(to KELSEY)* I need you to go upstairs. For your own good. You don't want to go to jail. Please. I care about you.

(KELSEY considers.)

KELSEY: *(to DARNIQUE)* Give me back my phone.

DARNIQUE: Not a chance.

RACHEL: Please, Kelsey. We'll deal with all this later.

(KELSEY starts toward the unseen stairway.)

WYATT: Um, it was nice to meet you, Kelsey.

(Behind the others' backs, KELSEY signals "phone" and points to WYATT. He gives her a thumbs-up. KELSEY exits.)

DAISY: You're wrong to blame Kelsey. She's the Narcissist of Life, but she always speaks the truth. If she says she didn't tweet, she didn't tweet.

DARNIQUE: Your loyalty is noted. *(to WYATT)* Come on, Wyatt, let's get you processed.

WYATT: *(to the others)* Good meeting you all.

DAISY: You had no right to take away her phone!

(WYATT and DARNIQUE exit.)

DAISY: What are you all staring at? He's not even her type. She only dated famous guys. OK, and one bodyguard. And that's over. She's off men. She totally detoxed. She told me that herself.

(DAISY sinks unhappily onto the sofa. KELSEY enters her room, flings herself on the bed. Spotlight on ROMAN and MILO, with their laptop.)

MILO: You posted something on a gossip site? Thanks for telling me.

ROMAN: I didn't post anything.

MILO: Then who...oh wow.

ROMAN: That's right.

MILO: Momma.

ROMAN: Momma.

MILO: I knew she was one of us.

(Blackout.)

Scene 8

(Lights up on KELSEY's room. KELSEY is lying in bed, staring at the ceiling. It's early morning, pre-dawn. WYATT approaches.)

KELSEY: What? Who is it?

WYATT: Wyatt? The new guy? I've got my phone. Didn't you want to use my phone?

(WYATT enters, hands KELSEY his cell.)

KELSEY: I've been waiting for you to show up.

WYATT: I was waiting till everybody else was asleep. And then I fell asleep by mistake.

KELSEY: Lucky you. I haven't slept a wink.

(KELSEY keys in a number.)

WYATT: I shouldn't have mentioned that Internet thing. I'm really really sorry.

KELSEY: Not your problem, dude.

(Spotlight on MOMMA on the other end.)

MOMMA: Hello, who is this?

KELSEY: It's me, Momma.

MOMMA: Kelsey? What's this number you're calling from?

KELSEY: I had to borrow a phone, they confiscated mine. Why the fuck did you tweet about this place? I told you never to mention Aspiration House.

MOMMA: I didn't. I didn't name the place.

KELSEY: If you didn't name the place, how did this guy recognize it?

WYATT: From her description.

KELSEY: He says you described it to a T. How could you do that to me? Are you drinking again?

MOMMA: Baby, I didn't do it to make trouble. I did it to keep you in the public eye.

KELSEY: Yeah, I know. You're the Original Paparazzo.

MOMMA: The original what?

KELSEY: Do you want me to suffer? Is that what my life has been about?

MOMMA: I'm gonna pretend you didn't say that.

KELSEY: No, I said it, and I'll say it again. Your whole agenda is to fuck with me.

MOMMA: Baby, you're upset.

KELSEY: Oh, how can you tell?

MOMMA: What does he look like?

KELSEY: What does who look like?

MOMMA: The guy whose phone you're using.

KELSEY: Oh fuck me.

MOMMA: I'm just asking.

KELSEY: Is he cute, you mean? Yeah, he's cute. You know what? I realize why my dad jumped off a bridge.

MOMMA: I don't think I want to hear this.

KELSEY: So he'd never be tempted to come back to you.

(Silence.)

KELSEY: Momma?

(Silence.)

KELSEY: Momma, are you there? You're not going to kill yourself now, are you?

(Sound of panicky breathing.)

KELSEY: Oh wow. You're crying, right? Don't start crying. OK, I'm sorry. That was ugly. I needed to get it off my chest.

(Pause.)

KELSEY: Momma, I'm hanging up now.

(Silence.)

KELSEY: Momma?

(No answer. Spotlight down on MOMMA as she hangs up. Pause. KELSEY hangs up.)

WYATT: Moms can be really toxic. I mean I know mine was.

KELSEY: OK if we don't get into it? Does that work for you?

WYATT: Especially if you're famous.

KELSEY: Seriously, dude, I'm not feeling too good right now.

WYATT: Do you want to call her back?

(Pause.)

KELSEY: Yeah, maybe I'd better. *(Pause, then:)* No. Fuck it.

(KELSEY hands back WYATT's phone, sits on her bed.)

WYATT: I think your mom needs you to be famous.

KELSEY: You think?

WYATT: I guess that's obvious, huh? That's gotta suck. I mean, sometimes.

KELSEY: (*fiercely*) No, it doesn't suck. Fame doesn't suck at all.

WYATT: I meant your mom. Harping on it all the time.

KELSEY: You know that guy in that movie, *Psycho*? Who dressed up as his mom?

WYATT: Yeah. He looked just like my mom.

KELSEY: Whenever he felt bummed, he'd go for a walk, like on Fifth Avenue in New York City. And he'd get off on all the people staring at him.

WYATT: Wow. Lucky him.

KELSEY: And then there's this other dude, this writer, everybody who reads books, they know his name, but nobody knows where he lives or whether he has kids or who he votes for. He doesn't give interviews, he's never been on TV, there's not one single YouTube showing his face. That's another kind of fame.

WYATT: Which guy are you?

KELSEY: I'm the first guy.

WYATT: 'Cause of your mom.

KELSEY: (*realizing*) But I'm trying to be the second guy.

WYATT: Whoa. That's deep. But hey, forget it, you're never gonna be anonymous. Until you're like, too old to recognize. Which means you'll never be alone until it sucks to be alone. My mom, she was always with me in my head.

KELSEY: I know what you mean.

WYATT: That's why I used to get so wasted. I was hoping to lose my memory, wake up, not realize who I am or who she was. That would be so cool.

KELSEY: Just disappear.

WYATT: Vanish completely.

KELSEY: Leave everything behind.

WYATT: Leave everything behind...forget the ties that bind.
(*realizes*) Whoa. That could be a song. "Leave everything
behind...forget the ties that bind." Do you write the lyric before you
write the tune?

KELSEY: No, the riff comes first.

WYATT: With me it's the lyric.

KELSEY: (*warily*) You write?

WYATT: Yeah. I mean, I've been known to. You know what I
think? It's totally normal, wanting to disappear. I don't think
there's anything wrong with either of us.

KELSEY: So how come I can't get to sleep?

WYATT: 'Cause of this place, and the judge who put you here, and
your mom sic-ing the paps on you when you specifically asked her
not to. I bet you sleep great at home. I bet you tell yourself, I'm
famous, I'm a rock star, and you fall asleep thinking about that.

KELSEY: Sometimes I do.

WYATT: That must be so great.

KELSEY: It is. It's the one great thing about the deal.

WYATT: So you never needed Benadryl.

KELSEY: No, what's that?

WYATT: Seriously, you never tried Benadryl? Benadryl's the best.
You don't need a script. You can get it at CVS. Get high on it or go
to sleep. Do you want me to get you some?

KELSEY: Dude, I'm not interested in getting high.

WYATT: I'm just saying. For sleep. Wait here. I'll bring some back.

(WYATT exits. KELSEY lies back on her bed, closes her eyes, sits up again. Exits. Lights down on KELSEY's room. Lights up on the office as WYATT enters. He tries the closet door. It's locked. He opens the key cabinet. KELSEY enters.)

KELSEY: I changed my mind. I need to call my mom back.

WYATT: No, you don't. You're upset. You need a good night's sleep.

(WYATT tries a key from the cabinet. The closet doesn't open.)

KELSEY: Dude, what if somebody comes?

WYATT: They woulda heard us already. Night staff is always sleeping on the job. Here we go.

(The second key opens the closet door. WYATT sorts through the contents.)

WYATT: Depakote...Haldol... Zyprexa. Whoa, M&Ms? Somebody's trying to cheat temptation. My mom, she used to hide the vodka bottle from herself. Here we are, Benadryl. Two pills should do it. I mean, if you're really not looking to get high.

(KELSEY takes the bag of M&Ms.)

KELSEY: Thank you, I'll settle for M&Ms.

WYATT: OK, me too.

(KELSEY sits on the desk. WYATT dips into the bag of M&Ms, slides next to her. His hand brushes her knee.)

KELSEY: Whoa. Don't get handsy, OK? Give me your phone.

WYATT: No, don't. Seriously. You'll just go off on her again.

(DAISY enters. KELSEY quickly stuffs the bag of M&Ms back in the closet.)

DAISY: *(to KELSEY)* What are you doing in here?

KELSEY: Shh, Daisy, not so loud.

DAISY: *(to WYATT)* What are you try to do to her?

WYATT: What do you mean? I'm not doing anything.

DAISY: Are you guys getting loaded together? Are you nuts? Do you want her to go to jail? *(to KELSEY)* You told me you were detoxing. I knew you were lying. Well, you'd better marry him before you get old and fat and nobody wants to fuck you. You're Ginger Rogers, you're Sally Struthers, you're the type that blimps out as soon as they hit forty. My past is your future. Just don't expect me at the wedding.

KELSEY: There's no wedding, Daisy. Settle down.

DAISY: Oh excuse me for having a human emotion! Ohmigod, I'm going to toss my cookies.

KELSEY: Go back to your room. Get some sleep.

(KELSEY starts out.)

DAISY: Where are you going? Are you gonna fuck him? Please don't fuck him!

(KELSEY exits. WYATT grabs a packet of Benadryl and follows her. DAISY starts after them... then spots the bag of M&Ms. Anguished pause--then. DAISY opens the bag of M&Ms and starts shoveling them into her mouth. Lights down on the office. Lights up on KELSEY's room as KELSEY enters. WYATT barges in after her.)

KELSEY: Whoa, what are you doing?

(WYATT shows her the packet of Benadryl.)

KELSEY: Didn't you hear me? I said three times I don't want to get high.

WYATT: I just thought you might want to calm down. Before calling your mom back.

KELSEY: Well I'm not calling her, so could you please go?

WYATT: Yeah, you're right, we shouldn't get caught together. That might be misinterpreted. They might even send you to prison. They'd have to put you in solitary, wouldn't they? For your own protection. But hey, you'd probably prefer that, wouldn't you.

KELSEY: Seriously, dude, please leave.

WYATT: I mean, where does that come from? Wanting attention for being bad.

KELSEY: From the attention. Don't make me call Security, all right?

WYATT: "From the attention." That's genius! Wow. That's what "Shame Me Forever" is all about. That whole album.

KELSEY: I thought you said you weren't a fan.

DAISY: *(off)* [half-scream]

(DAISY lurches into the room. She's breathing rapidly, clutching her belly, writhing with pain.)

KELSEY: What's wrong? What's the matter?

DAISY: I ate them all. All the M&Ms. I ate the whole bag.

KELSEY: What are you, allergic?

DAISY: Ohmigod, my stomach's gonna explode.

KELSEY: Shh, no, you're just having a gas attack.

DAISY: No! It's not a gas attack! I'm diabetic!

KELSEY: Ohmigod, really?

DAISY: You made me eat those M&Ms. You made me lose my mind.

KELSEY: What do you need? Do you need insulin?

DAISY: (*realizes*) Yeah. I need insulin. Ohmigod, I'm going blind!

KELSEY: Did you bring any insulin with you?

DAISY: Yeah, I don't know where they keep it.

KELSEY: (*to WYATT*) You do. Go get it.

(*WYATT doesn't move.*)

KELSEY: Dude, did you hear me? (*no answer*) Forget it. (*to DAISY*) Come on.

(*KELSEY exits with DAISY. When they're gone, WYATT picks up KELSEY's pillow, buries his face in it, inhaling deeply.*)

(*Lights down on KELSEY's room. Lights up on the office as KELSEY and DAISY enter. KELSEY rummages through the closet.*)

KELSEY: How long have you had diabetes?

DAISY: Forever and ever. Ohmigod, my hands are shaking. You do it, please, I can't manage the needle. Oh my heart!

KELSEY: Quiet, you're gonna be OK.

(*KELSEY finds the insulin.*)

KELSEY: Where do you want it?

(*DAISY bares her buttock.*)

DAISY: Here. Go ahead. Now. Please.

(KELSEY *injects her.*)

DAISY: I'm sorry I went off on you. Jealousy is such a killer, isn't it? You forgive me? You didn't fuck him, did you? You wouldn't ever do that?

KELSEY: Not even with your dick.

(DARNIQUE *enters.*)

DARNIQUE: What the hell are you two doing?

DAISY: I had an episode. She's giving me insulin.

DARNIQUE: (*to KELSEY*) Get out. That does it. Pack your things. You're going to prison.

DAISY: Don't yell at Kelsey. She saved my life!

DARNIQUE: (*to KELSEY*) Didn't you hear me? I said go pack your bag. Now.

(KELSEY *exits. DARNIQUE bends down, picks up the empty M&M bag.*)

DAISY: Were they yours? I'm sorry. I'll buy you a new bag.

DARNIQUE: Who opened this closet?

DAISY: I did.

DARNIQUE: Don't lie to me. It was Kelsey, wasn't it?

DAISY: It wasn't Kelsey! I swear to God!

(DARNIQUE *exits. Lights down on the office. Lights up on KELSEY's room as KELSEY enters. WYATT flings aside the pillow.*)

KELSEY: What are you doing here? For the last time, leave me alone, go back to your room.

WYATT: No, please listen. Your mom was right to post what she did. This place is toxic. It should be reported to the Department of Mental Health.

KELSEY: Yeah, well don't bother on my account. I'm outa here.

(KELSEY starts packing her Louis Vuitton duffel bag.)

WYATT: You know what? We should leave together.

KELSEY: Forget it, dude. You don't want to go where they're sending me.

WYATT: Wow. That really sucks. Oh Jesus. Don't go yet. Can I please play this for you first?

KELSEY: Play what?

(WYATT takes his phone out of his pocket, fiddles with it, hands it to KELSEY.)

WYATT: It's a song I wrote. When my girlfriend dumped me. I swear you'll love it, it's about a lonely person who starts a whole new life.

(KELSEY takes her bag and bolts out of the room.)

WYATT: Oh God. Oh God. Oh God.

(Lights up on the main room as KELSEY enters. No one's there. WYATT enters.)

KELSEY: Dude, get the fuck away from me!

WYATT: Just listen to my song, OK? You don't have to release it if you don't like it. But it's totally in your comfort zone.

KELSEY: How long have you been stalking me?

WYATT: I don't like that word.

KELSEY: Dude, you used my toilet.

WYATT: Only because I had to. I'm like the cavemen. They followed women to the river.

KELSEY: What river?

WYATT: Where they were washing their clothes. You have to get them pregnant or the race will die out.

KELSEY: Back off, dude, you're tripping.

WYATT: Hey, I don't do drugs anymore. I just said that to get in here.

KELSEY: (*calling*) Darnique!?!)

WYATT: Please don't do that. They'll just send me back to lockdown. I can't let that happen.

(*BAXTER enters, freshly showered, clean-shaven, no beard.*)

BAXTER: I'm good to go. How do I look?

KELSEY: You look great. The limo should be here any minute. Do me a favor, go get Darnique.

BAXTER: What limo?

KELSEY: In the parking lot. You can change on the way.

BAXTER: Jesus H, I never expected—

KELSEY: I know you didn't. Go find Darnique. Or Rachel.

BAXTER: Why, what's going on? Is this fella bothering you?

KELSEY: Go get somebody! Now!

(*BAXTER starts out. WYATT takes out his cell, steps in BAXTER's way.*)

WYATT: Unh-unh. Sit the fuck down, old man.

BAXTER: Hey, take it easy, slick.

WYATT: Listen closely. Both of you. All I gotta do is call a certain phone number. This whole place gets vaporized.

BAXTER: Sonny, that's crazy talk. That takes a very special expertise. I doubt very much you possess that knowledge.

KELSEY: Wyatt, why would you want to vaporize us?

WYATT: I'm not saying I want to. Only if I have to.

KELSEY: So what do you want?

WYATT: Record my song.

KELSEY: That can happen. Give me your phone.

WYATT: Yeah, right.

KELSEY: Dude, they took mine. I'll call my producer.

WYATT: Don't bullshit me, Kelsey.

KELSEY: Well, I can't record it here. Not with you threatening to blow us all sky-high.

(DARNIQUE enters, followed by RACHEL.)

DARNIQUE: What's all this yelling? What's happening here?

BAXTER: We got us a little problem. Wyatt says he's gonna blow us up, if Kelsey doesn't record his song.

RACHEL: All right, let's all calm down. Wyatt, do you need to talk to your caseworker?

WYATT: I don't have a caseworker.

DARNIQUE: Then who faxed your paperwork?

WYATT: I did, OK? I'm miles ahead of all of you. *(to KELSEY)*
That's why you're gonna listen to what I wrote.

KELSEY: First let Baxter go. He's got a funeral to go to. His whole future depends on it.

WYATT: Fuck do I care about Baxter. You care about him and you don't care about me.

KELSEY: What if I said I'd sleep with you?

RACHEL: Kelsey, no.

KELSEY: Rachel, I'm dealing with this. *(to WYATT)* They think I'm a friendless sex addict. Honestly? We'd be water in the desert to each other.

WYATT: You'd really do that?

KELSEY: Hey, I'll marry you, dude. A marriage made in rehab.

WYATT: Stop that. How crazy do you think I am?

KELSEY: How crazy do you want to be? I'm there.

WYATT: Shut up! Stop teasing me!

RACHEL: Wyatt, we'll get you something to calm you down.

WYATT: You don't have enough Benadryl to calm me down.

RACHEL: Sit down. We'll talk this out.

(RACHEL takes a step toward him.)

WYATT: Whoa. One more step and we all disappear.

KELSEY: Rachel, I really need you to back off, OK? You too, Darnique.

(DARNIQUE and RACHEL back off.)

KELSEY: (*to WYATT*) Wyatt, this is a waste. You don't want to die. You're too talented for that.

WYATT: How do you know I'm talented?

KELSEY: Takes one to know one. Where were you in lockdown?

WYATT: Brotman Hospital.

DARNIQUE: That's in Culver City.

WYATT: Culver City, that's right. That's where my mom came to visit. They let her out of Hell, in case her sins skipped her mind.

KELSEY: How long ago did she die?

WYATT: I didn't kill her, if that's what you mean.

KELSEY: She visits your brain. We both know how that feels.

WYATT: She was shedding tears of blood, everybody in the dayroom saw that.

KELSEY: That's because of your talent. You know how to share what's in your head.

WYATT: I went to this house where we used to live.

KELSEY: Go on. Tell me.

WYATT: After my dad split.

KELSEY: I've been there.

WYATT: The motherfuckers started coming.

KELSEY: Which motherfuckers?

WYATT: The uncles, she called them.

KELSEY: She was turning tricks, wasn't she.

WYATT: Yeah, that's what she was doing.

KELSEY: So you went back to that house.

WYATT: They wouldn't answer the door, the people who were living there. So I broke in. She was already dead and buried, but I was tripping hard.

KELSEY: You went off your meds.

WYATT: Yeah, they said I had a knife in my boot. So maybe I deserved to be locked up. In the dayroom they were playing your new album. I knew that was a sign from the Cosmos, telling me to find you. I started following you on Twitter, I followed your mom's tweets, I was totally frustrated, 'cause I knew my song was perfect for what you're into lately, it's about a girl who gives up everything and goes to live in Tibet.

KELSEY: I'd love to hear it. Put the phone down. We'll work out a deal.

WYATT: Yeah, I don't know. I don't like this feeling I'm having.

KELSEY: I know you don't. It's a lonely feeling. Own it, dude. Don't drag other people into it. You went looking for your mom. You wanted to catch her turning a trick, tell her to cut that shit out and pay you some real attention. She sounds like a monster. Maybe she couldn't help it. Or maybe she enjoyed it. Either way, you were stalking a dead woman. Let's all stop bitching about our moms, OK? Can we start from there? I'll listen to your song, and then I'll try to sing it. Wyatt, is that your real name? Wasn't there some great hero named Wyatt? Some famous dude?

WYATT: Wyatt Earp.

KELSEY: Wyatt Earp! Yeah! I saw that movie!

(During this, BAXTER has been edging closer to WYATT. KELSEY now signals "Do it." BAXTER lunges for WYATT, grabs his wrist, twists it. WYATT squirms loose from his grasp.)

WYATT: Fuck you all.

(WYATT starts keying in a number. ROMAN and MILO burst in, disguised as cops—badges, hats, shades, cop shoes—with the new addition of facial hair.)

ROMAN: Freeze, motherfucker!

(Startled, WYATT raises his arms, but holds tight to his phone.)

ROMAN: Toss it here. Come on, son. You don't want to kill two cops. I guarantee they will execute your ass.

WYATT: Get away from me.

ROMAN: Milo, help him do the right thing before I blow his fucking head off.

(MILO lunges for WYATT, wrestles the phone away. It falls to the floor. WYATT dives for it. MILO gets there first.)

MILO: Whoa, I used to have the same phone. You were bluffing about a bomb, weren't you, kid?

WYATT: Yeah, I was bluffing.

MILO: How do you turn this thing off? Wait, I remember.

ROMAN: Milo, give me that.

MILO: I got it. I got it.

(MILO hits a button on the phone. Offstage, the sound of an explosion.)

MILO: Oh shit.

(BAXTER goes to the window.)

BAXTER: *(to WYATT)* I stand corrected, son. You really do know your stuff.

(MILO joins BAXTER at the window.)

MILO: *(to WYATT)* That's your Honda out there?

WYATT: *(miserably)* Yeah, that's my Honda.

BAXTER: Good luck selling it now.

MILO: You forgot to unload the device.

WYATT: I didn't forget.

MILO: You must really hate that car.

WYATT: Both of us deserve to die.

KELSEY: Shh, stop talking like that. *(to DARNIQUE)* You got a fire extinguisher?

DARNIQUE: In the storeroom.

KELSEY: Go get it, please.

(DARNIQUE heads out.)

ROMAN: Milo, go with her. I'll deal with the perp.

(ROMAN unclips handcuffs from his belt. MILO exits with DARNIQUE, as CARMEN and DAISY enter.)

CARMEN: *No no no!* My papers are at my house!

BAXTER: Carmen, it's OK. He's not here for you, you don't need your papers. *(to ROMAN)* She thinks she's on this planet illegally.

DAISY: What in heaven's name is happening?

BAXTER: Wyatt had a little meltdown.

DAISY: I knew it. I knew he was punchy the minute I laid eyes on him.

KELSEY: Daisy, quiet.

(KELSEY crouches next to WYATT as ROMAN cuffs him.)

KELSEY: You OK, dude? How are you feeling?

WYATT: With my fingers.

KELSEY: *(to the others)* He's still tripping. *(to WYATT)* I know you didn't really want to hurt anybody.

WYATT: I wanted to be in your presence. I still do.

KELSEY: I know you do. But I have to stay here and you can't. Brotman Hospital, is that what you said?

WYATT: Yeah, they know me there.

KELSEY: *(to ROMAN)* That's where he belongs. They'll just fuck him up worse in prison. Any questions he can't answer, fill them in.

(MILO and DARNIQUE enter. KELSEY is looking around for the hidden camera, spots it.)

MILO: The fire put itself out. Back window's blown out, and the upholstery's fucked up. What's going on with Stalker Boy?

ROMAN: *(to MILO)* We're taking him to Brotman.

MILO: *(to WYATT)* Excellent plan. Don't worry, dude, you'll be back on your meds by dinnertime. *(to KELSEY)* Lucky we got here in time, huh?

KELSEY: I doubt if luck had much to do with it.

ROMAN: *(to the others)* Just so you know, we've had our eye on this guy.

MILO: Yeah, he's been in our sights for quite a while, right, Kelsey?

KELSEY: Yeah, you guys are always on the case. *(to WYATT)* When you get a chance, send me that song. You know my address. You've been there.

WYATT: Wow, sure, I'll do that.

ROMAN: The world should know about your heroism, Kelsey.

KELSEY: These people here are the heroes. They deal with this crap every day.

ROMAN: Well, that's downright noble of you, Kelsey.

MILO: Does that mean we're OK? No, um, undue exposure or embarrassment?
No, um, video evidence of any kind?

KELSEY: Yeah, I guess we're even.

MILO: We're out of here, then. By the way, there's a limousine out there for somebody.

BAXTER: What kind of limo? It's not a Hummer, is it? That's where I draw the line.

MILO: Just a plain old black Mercedes. Are you Baxter?

BAXTER: That's me.

MILO: That's who he's waiting on. Bye, Kelsey. See you at your carpets!
Come on, kid, let's go.

(MILO and ROMAN take WYATT in tow.)

KELSEY: Hang in there, Wyatt. Stay on your meds.

WYATT: I'll try. So long, Kelsey. Thanks for listening.

(WYATT exits, hustled out by MILO and ROMAN.)

DAISY: *(to BAXTER)* How can you afford a limo?

BAXTER: Not in a hundred years. *(to KELSEY)* The suit is in the car? My size? It's not gonna bag on me?

KELSEY: Don't worry, Baxter, you'll kill.

DAISY: OhmiGOD!...how could I be so blind! *(to KELSEY)*
You're paying for my therapy! And my operation! I'm so embarrassed, why didn't you tell me? I can't stand it. You're so good and I'm so bad! *(to DARNIQUE and RACHEL)* Isn't she the best? Look at her! You oughta offer her a job!

RACHEL: She'd be good.

DARNIQUE: She can have my career. *(to KELSEY)* You expecting any more stalkers to show up?

DAISY: You never know. She's got trillions of fans.

DARNIQUE: *(grudgingly)* Well, go back to your room and unpack.

KELSEY: Can I have my phone back now?

(Pause.)

RACHEL: Darnique, I think she's earned that privilege.

DARNIQUE: Fine. Stop by the office on your way. Baxter, see that you're back here by sundown.

BAXTER: Don't worry, I'll be here. *(to KELSEY)* First thing I'm gonna do with my inheritance? I'm gonna buy me a Lexus, love it like a friend, and sleep in it safe and sound until I die. Later, everybody.

(BAXTER exits. DARNIQUE exits.)

RACHEL: Well. That's something we all need to put behind us. Kelsey, can I ask you to join us for Group?

DAISY: It's not an option, Dr. Rachel. She's part of the family now. *(to KELSEY)* You didn't know where your life was heading, and now you do. You were put on this earth to help others. And I think you know who I mean.

(KELSEY exits. DAISY and CARMEN sit.)

RACHEL: Let's begin. Hands in your lap....on your knees....whatever's comfortable....It's been a very exciting morning, but we're going to let all that fade away, fade into the mist, as we focus on our breath....

(Lights fade on the main room. Lights fade up on KELSEY's room as she enters, phone in hand, and sets down her bag. Spotlight on MOMMA as she answers.)

MOMMA: Baby, you got your phone back? I'm so relieved. Who'd you have to fuck?

KELSEY: Nobody, Momma. Just getting with the program.

MOMMA: You're not still mad at me, are you? I just had to go public about that place, I couldn't stand the thought of people being brutal to my child. And listen, if I ride your ass about boys, it's only because I want to see you happy. Companionship, baby, nobody can live without it. Where would we be without each other?

KELSEY: Momma?

MOMMA: What, baby?

KELSEY: We both need to detox.

MOMMA: What are you talking about? I'm three months sober.

KELSEY: I'll ask them to hold a bed for you.

MOMMA: Over my dead body! They brainwashed you to say that. I know how these places work. Put the blame on Mame. Don't reject me just 'cause they told you to.

KELSEY: I'm not rejecting you, Momma. I'm just trying to help.

MOMMA: We don't need help. We love each other.

KELSEY: Yeah, we love each other. So what?

MOMMA: "So what"? What else is there?

KELSEY: I'm not really sure.

(The light follows MOMMA as she joins KELSEY in her room.)

MOMMA: What do you mean, you're not sure? Are you laughing at me, Kelsey? Don't you dare laugh at me. I'm still your mother!

KELSEY: Maybe love is just another drug.

MOMMA: Baby, that's an ugly thing to say. God willing, you'll have a daughter someday. I just pray she doesn't treat you the way you're treating me.

KELSEY: Time for me to go, Momma. You go to sleep now.

MOMMA: You're not gonna hit me, are you, Kelsey?

KELSEY: No, Momma.

MOMMA: All those times I slapped you, I had my reasons. You wouldn't be top of the charts if I didn't. That time with the Easter Basket, remember? You were six years old and for Easter I bought you this giant Easter basket, the biggest one they had, with chocolate eggs and chocolate coins, enough to last till Halloween, and I came home from the IHOP and there was nothing but fake plastic grass in the basket and I said what happened, and you said, "I had a giveaway." That's what you called it, a giveaway, all the kids in Stoneridge Park were lined up outside our trailer, three times around the block you told me, and you really believed it, you believed your dream of making friends. And maybe I spanked you a little harder than I ought to, 'cause you ate all that chocolate yourself and you wouldn't admit it. And that night you were so sick. I had to stay up all night with you and hold your hand and bathe your forehead. You were so hot, so sick, don't you remember?

KELSEY: I remember. Bye, Momma.

(KELSEY has tucked MOMMA into bed.)

MOMMA: No! Please? Sing me to sleep? Otherwise I'll just be lying here.

KELSEY: You'll be fine. Don't let the bedbugs bite.

(Lights down on KELSEY's room as KELSEY plants a motherly kiss on MOMMA's forehead and exits. Lights up on the main room.)

RACHEL: ...Letting our bellies rise and fall...as our thoughts come and go....thoughts of the past...thoughts of the future....

(KELSEY enters the main room, takes a seat with the Group.)

RACHEL:Watching our thoughts take shape...then vanish...leaving only this moment...and the next moment...and the next...cherishing each and every moment as we cherish our presence together on this Earth....

*(Spotlight on KELSEY. Spotlight on MOMMA. Music rises:
WYATT singing his song—the demo. Sound dissolves to KELSEY
singing WYATT's song—full production. The lights slowly fade.
END OF PLAY.)*