

BEES ARE IN THE PARK

By Bobby Keniston

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CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

4 males, 4 females, 8 total

BILLY: A man in his late 20s, early 30s. He is nervous but happy to be spending time with Suzy today. He was engaged to Suzy's mother, but the relationship fell apart, and he hasn't seen Suzy since then.

SUZY: A little girl of six or seven (though should be played by someone older, acting like a little kid). She has missed Billy, but starts out angry, not understanding why he went away. She should have a very slight speech impediment with her s's.

TRIXIE: A girl who is about to graduate from high school. She is scared of a number of things: her future, losing her best friend Seymour, and her less than perfect relationship with her boyfriend.

SEYMOUR: A boy who is also about to graduate from high school. He is very much in love with his friend Trixie and wants to tell her. He is funny, but, at times, awkward.

MYA: 70s. She is peaceful and serene, though still has some fire in her. She is accustomed to speaking her piece. She wears a distinctive shawl and speaks with an Irish accent. She loves her husband very much and wants what is best for him.

COLIN: 70s. He loves MYA with all of his heart, and wants to take care of her, to somehow hold onto everything they've had. In this short play, he travels from doting husband, to a man finally accepting a great loss. He also speaks with an Irish accent.

RACHEL: A woman in her mid-twenties. She is very overprotective to her special needs son, Albert. She is a single mother, and sometimes blunt in her conversations.

ALBERT: A boy of five. He is autistic, but verbal and high-functioning. Very shy and easily scared. Perhaps recognizes that his mother is a bit overprotective with him.

Note: It is possible to perform this play with 2 males and 2 females, each playing more than one character. I think this could make for a very exciting evening of theater, and teach young actors how to stretch.

LIST OF SCENES

ACT ONE

SCENE 1: SUZY AND THE WOULD-BE STEPDAD

SCENE 2: SIMPLE ARITHMETIC

SCENE 3: A FORGETFUL REMEMBRANCE

ACT TWO

SCENE 1: NURSING

SCENE 2: SANDBOX

SCENE 3: KNOWING WHAT'S RIGHT

SCENE 4: THE NEW MATH

SCENE 5: EPILOGUE: TOO MUCH

FURNITURE / PROPS

NOTE: Many of the furniture pieces are merely suggestions, and can be done in a representational way, or struck completely. I leave this at the discretion of the director or set designer.

Teeter-Totter (ACT I, SCENE 1)

Stationary Car (ACT I, SCENE 1)

Swingset (ACT I, SCENE 2)

Park Bench (ACT I, SCENE 3)

Wastebasket (ACT I, SCENE 3)

Picnic Table (ACT II, SCENE 1)

Sandbox (ACT II, SCENE 2)

PROPS

Blue Backpack (BILLY)

Sunblock (BILLY)

Goldfish Crackers (BILLY)

Picnic Basket (TRIXIE)

2 Juice Boxes (TRIXIE)

Snow Cone (COLIN)

Backpack (RACHEL)

Shovel and Pail (ALBERT)

NOTE ON COSTUMES

The costumes are pretty well-described in the stage directions, but there are a few necessities. For one, MYA definitely requires a distinctive shawl. Secondly, both SUZY and ALBERT are older kids dressing to look like little kids. This is a delicate balance, and should be achieved on the side of simplicity, rather than overdoing it.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

This is a very simple play to produce. As a series of short vignettes for one male and one female actor, there is great potential for character development, which is what drives this play. The scenes are all interconnected, and, of course, take place in different areas of the park. The idea is that all scenes are happening at the same time in Act One, and then, in Act Two, all scenes are happening at the same time once again, only a few minutes later.

Settings should be very simple, and are explained in each scene description. You needn't worry if it is necessary to make certain set pieces representational--- for example, the swingset in "Simple Arithmetic". The swings could simply be two chairs that the actors mime swinging in. Again, this is a play that is truly about the characters and

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their interactions. The sets can be as simple or as complex as the director would like to make them (although, I wouldn't recommend making them TOO complex--- it is very important to keep the play moving along quickly from scene to scene).

This play can be done with a total of 4 male actors and 4 female actors, which would be one actor for each character. Or, another exciting possibility would be to do the play with 2 male actors and 2 female actors, each playing more than one part. As each scene is set-up with only two characters onstage at a time, the other actors could always be backstage preparing for the next scene. I think this would be a great way to have young actors stretch themselves, and could be very exciting for the audience as well, watching the actors jump into different roles.

This play is dedicated to Tracy Sue, because this play comes directly from the heart. Thanks for everything, Tracy.

BEES ARE IN THE PARK

Written by
Bobby Keniston

ACT ONE

SCENE 1: “SUZY AND THE WOULD-BE STEPDAD”

SETTING: A park. Beautiful day. This area of the park has a teeter-totter and a small stationary car with a moving steering wheel. There is also a picnic table.

AT RISE: *BILLY, 25-30, has a big blue backpack that he is rummaging through, looking for sunblock.*

BILLY: *(calling offstage)* C'mon, Suzy-Bean. Come here for a sec.

(SUZY, 6, enters. SHE is pretty, but presently in a bad mood. SHE has pigtails and is dressed like a tomboy, except for the pretty ribbons in her hair. SHE has trouble with her “s’s”---SHE slurs them.)

SUZY: What?

BILLY: We gotta put some sunblock on, pumpkin.

SUZY: I don't want sunblock, and my name's Suzy, not pumkin'.
Pumpkins are squash.

BILLY: Okay, you're not a pumpkin, but you do need sunblock so you don't get a sunburn.

SUZY: Fine, but I won't get a sunburn.

(SHE stomps over to BILLY, who starts to apply sunblock to her arms, but SHE pulls away.)

I can do it myself!

BILLY: Okay.

(HE hands her the sunblock tube. SHE starts to make a mess almost immediately.)

Suzy-Bean, you're making a mess. Here...

SUZY: I don't need help!

BILLY: *(Soft)* Okay. *(beat)* Make sure you get some on...

SUZY: I know! Mommy lets me put it on all the time! So does daddy!
And so does Shawn!

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BILLY: Shawn?

SUZY: He's mommy's friend who lives with us like you did, but he's got a bigger car and makes more money, and...

BILLY: Okay. *(beat)* I'm really glad I get to spend time with you today. *(beat--HE is nervous)* It's been so long since I've seen you. Look how big you've gotten.

(SUZY says nothing, but finishes with the sunblock and tosses it at him.)

You're mad at me.

SUZY: Nuh-uh.

BILLY: No? Are you sure? You look mad, Sweet Pea.

SUZY: *(as if for the hundredth time)* My name's not Sweet Pea, it's Suzy.

BILLY: I'm sorry, you used to like being called that. Can you tell me why you're mad at me?

SUZY: I'm not mad!

BILLY: All right, you're not. Then what's wrong?

SUZY: Nuthin'.

BILLY: Something is. I can tell.

SUZY: I wanna go on the slide.

BILLY: Okay, I'll go down the slide with you.

SUZY: I can do it myself! I'm a big girl!

BILLY: You're right. I guess I just remember... you're right, Suzy, you can go play on the slide. *(beat)* Do you want me to wait down at the bottom to catch you?

(SUZY is quiet a moment, then rushes to BILLY and hits him on the arm. SHE immediately turns away from him.)

Hey, what was that about? Suzy? Come here, look at me.

(SUZY grudgingly obeys.)

It's okay that you're mad at me. I know this is weird, hanging out with me again after so long. So we can talk about it. But we don't hit. It's not okay to hit, no matter how mad you are. You understand?

SUZY: Yes.

BILLY: Is there something you want to say?

SUZY: Sorry.

BILLY: Do you mean that?

SUZY: Yes. *(beat)* I don't want to go on the slide.

BILLY: Why not?

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(SUZY shrugs.)

Why not, Suzy?

SUZY: I don't want to. (*beat*) They won't let me.

BILLY: Who won't let you?

SUZY: (*pointing off*) They won't let me.

BILLY: Those boys over there? Why wouldn't they let you?

SUZY: They just won't.

BILLY: Do you know them?

SUZY: No.

BILLY: Then why wouldn't they let you, sweetie?

SUZY: I don't know, but they won't. (*SHE looks very sad, almost weary about it*) They won't let me.

(*SHE sniffles. BILLY kneels down to try to comfort her.*)

BILLY: Oh, baby, has someone been being mean to you?

(*SHE shakes her head no.*)

No? Then what's wrong? Why would you think these boys wouldn't let you play with them?

SUZY: I don't know!

(*BILLY tries to give her a hug. SHE lets him at first, then pulls away, walks away.*)

(*mostly inaudible*) Didn't come to my birthday...

BILLY: What, Suzy?

SUZY: (*spinning around, loud*) Didn't even come to my birthday! You didn't come! My party was gonna be fun, and you didn't come to my birthday!

BILLY: (*really effected by this*) I know, but I wish I could...

SUZY: I turned six, and had a party, and you weren't even there! And mommy and Shawn were mad at each other, and we got pizza, but... (*SHE trails off*)

BILLY: (*Soft*) But what, Sweet Pea?

SUZY: And the kids from my class were there, and I asked mommy where you were, and she got mad, and I said I didn't want cheese pizza, so mommy got me a little bacon one, but I went to the bathroom, and when I came out, my bacon pizza was gone! I didn't get to have any!

BILLY: Oh, I'm sorry, sweetie...

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SUZY: And then I just got clothes for presents! And you didn't give me a present at all!

BILLY: I wanted to. I even bought you a present and everything.

SUZY: Nuh-uh.

BILLY: I did, I promise. I really did.

SUZY: Then why didn't you give it to me?

BILLY: Your mommy didn't want me to see you, or even give you a gift.

SUZY: Why?

BILLY: Your mommy was mad at me, Suzy-bean.

SUZY: You still could give me a present.

BILLY: No. Your mommy told me not to, and that's okay. Don't be mad at her for it. She thought she had a reason at the time.

SUZY: What was it?

BILLY: I don't know how to explain. You'd have to ask your mommy.

SUZY: No, what was the present?! What was the present?!

BILLY: Oh, the present. You remember the princess movie you like so much?

SUZY: Yes.

BILLY: I got you a doll of the Princess, and, a pair of ballet slippers just like the princess wears in the movie.

SUZY: You did! My own Princess slippers?

BILLY: Yup.

SUZY: Nuh-uh!

BILLY: Honest.

SUZY: Can I still have them?

BILLY: You have to ask mommy.

SUZY: Oh....

BILLY: I'm sorry, sweetie, it's not up to me.

(SUZY is disappointed. Beat.)

Can I tell you something?

SUZY: *(a little grumpy)* What?

BILLY: I'm sorry I had to go away and couldn't see you.

SUZY: Mommy said you had to go home. Why wasn't Suzy home with you?

BILLY: I have to tell you something. Even though you didn't see me, you still thought about me, right?

SUZY: Yes. I got sad.

BILLY: Me too. But I thought about you every day. Every single day. And I was so happy when your mommy said I could see you again. 'Cause I missed you so much. It was like a piece of me was missing. You are so deep in my heart, Suzy-bean. And you taught me so much.

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SUZY: *(laughs)* I'm not a teacher, silly-goose. You're a grown-up.

BILLY: *(letting himself go)* You're right, I am a grown up, and I am a silly goose. *(HE honks like a goose)* Honk! Honk!

SUZY: That's not what a goose sounds like. They sound like this... Honk! Honk! Honk!

BILLY: Well I guess Suzy's the silly goose then. *(HE tickles her)*

SUZY: *(laughing)* Stop it, Billy-Billy! Stop it.

(SHE laughs some more and BILLY stops.)

You tickled me Billy-Billy.

BILLY: Yes I did. *(beat)* I missed you saying that. Billy-Billy. And you used to say, "I love you too much!"

SUZY: I don't say that anymore.

BILLY: No?

SUZY: No.

BILLY: How come?

SUZY: 'Cause it's wrong.

BILLY: What do you mean?

SUZY: You're supposed to say "I love you too" or "I love you so much," Shawn says.

BILLY: You know what I think? I think it's okay to say I love you too much.

SUZY: But it's wrong.

BILLY: I think it's cute.

SUZY: But it's wrong.

BILLY: Okay, you're the boss. *(beat)* Here we are at the park... don't you want to play?

(SUZY goes to the car and sits in it, and pretends to drive it during the following.)

SUZY: I know a song about a park. Vroom! Vroom! Want to hear it?

BILLY: I would love to.

SUZY: *(singing)* Flies are in the city,
Bees are in the park
The boys and girls are kissing
In the D-A-R-K dark!

BILLY: Where did you hear that?

SUZY: At Ronna's house.

BILLY: Who's Ronna?

SUZY: That's where I go when Mommy's at work, Silly-Billy, after school.

BILLY: Oh, that's your daycare.

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SUZY: Yup. Vroom, vroom, vroom. *(beat)* Help me out.

BILLY: What do you say?

SUZY: Please.

(BILLY helps SUZY out of the little car.)

BILLY: You hungry? Want some fishies?

SUZY: They're goldfish, not fishies.

BILLY: You used to call them fishies.

SUZY: I'm a big girl now.

BILLY: Do you like it at Ronna's house? Are there other kids?

SUZY: *(suddenly grumpy)* Yes. Lots of other kids.

BILLY: Are they nice to you?

SUZY: I guess.

BILLY: Are you sure?

SUZY: I don't like Olivia. She calls me stupid.

BILLY: You're not stupid. You love to learn.

SUZY: And she says I talk funny. And I do. Shawn says so too.

BILLY: *(after a pause)* You don't talk funny, Suzy-Bean. You talk pretty.

SUZY: Nuh-uh.

BILLY: Uh-huh.

SUZY: Suzy's not pretty. Suzy's a baby.

(SUZY gets goldfish out of backpack and begins to eat them as BILLY digests what SHE's said.)

BILLY: Who says that to you, Suzy?

SUZY: *(eating goldfish crackers)* Nobody, nobody, nobody.

BILLY: Does someone at Ronna's say that to you?

(Suzy shakes her head "no.")

At school?

(SHE shakes her head "no.")

Does Shawn say that to you?

(SUZY puts away the goldfish and stands up)

SUZY: Why did you go away? I liked it when you lived with me and Mommy.

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BILLY: So did I. *(beat)* I wanted to stay with you, but your mommy and I stopped getting along so well. But believe me, I never wanted to leave you. I wanted to be your step... *(beat)* I wanted to stay with you.

SUZY: Can't you and mommy be friends again?

BILLY: Well, she let me spend time with you today. That's good, right?

SUZY: I guess. I want to play in the sandbox.

BILLY: Okay. Go right ahead.

SUZY: *(pointing off)* He won't let me.

BILLY: Sure he will. I promise.

SUZY: *(unsure)* I don't know.

BILLY: *(kneels down to her)* Suzy, look at me. I'm not going to let anybody be mean to you. I swear. I'm here with you, okay?

SUZY: You'll watch me? You promise that you'll watch me play, so that boy won't be mean to me, Billy-Billy?

BILLY: I'll watch you. The whole time.

SUZY: Okay. *(beat)* Okay.

BILLY: So go on ahead, Sweet Pea. I'm watching.

SUZY: Okay. *(SHE starts off, then turns and runs back and gives BILLY a hug)* Okay. You watch me.

BILLY: Okay.

(SUZY goes off. For a moment, BILLY closes his eyes, overcome with emotion. HE opens them.)

SUZY: *(offstage)* Are you watching me, Billy-Billy?

BILLY: *(calling)* Yeah, baby, I'm watching you. *(beat. Softly)* I love you, Suzy-Bean. I'm watching.

(BLACKOUT)

END OF SCENE

SCENE 2: "SIMPLE ARITHMETIC"

SETTING: A different area of the park, at the same time. It is by the swingsets. There are also some trees, and a teeter-totter.

AT RISE: SEYMOUR, 18, is sitting by himself next to the swing set. HE is dressed in black pants, a white button-up shirt, with a Radiohead t-shirt underneath and black sneakers. HE wears hip, geek-chic glasses. HE looks pensive. TRIXIE, 18, enters. SHE

looks very happy to be meeting with SEYMOUR. SHE has a picnic basket.

TRIXIE: Hey, stranger.

SEYMOUR: (*looking up*) Hi.

TRIXIE: (*mocking his voice*) Hi. (*normal*) Give me a hug. It's been forever since I've seen you.

SEYMOUR: (*rising*) It's been three days.

(*THEY hug.*)

Not that I haven't missed you.

TRIXIE: Three days is a long time for us. I totally missed you.

SEYMOUR: Totally? (*HE smirks a little*)

TRIXIE: Don't be a smartmouth. (*beat*) I brought goldfish.

(*SHE sits and SEYMOUR sits next to her.*)

So, seriously, what's going on?

SEYMOUR: What do you mean?

TRIXIE: Uh... duh.

SEYMOUR: What?

TRIXIE: You haven't answered my calls, my texts, e-mails...

SEYMOUR: It's been three days...

TRIXIE: Oh, come on, cancel that. You know what I mean. How would you like it if I didn't talk to you for three days?

SEYMOUR: (*after a beat*) I'd hate it. But I wasn't trying to avoid you or anything.

TRIXIE: You did a good job fooling me, mister.

SEYMOUR: No...

TRIXIE: I mean, you're my best friend, and I'm going off to college in a few weeks...

SEYMOUR: I know.

TRIXIE: I mean, my best friend. So what's going on? Seriously. I thought you were mad at me. I thought... look, it's going to be hard enough not having you with me every day next year. I'm gonna feel a huge black hole.

SEYMOUR: Me too. I just had some things to think about.

TRIXIE: Well, while you were busy thinking about things, I... (*TRIXIE trails off*)

SEYMOUR: You what?

TRIXIE: I thought I'd lost you. I thought you were pushing away from me. And that would kill me.

SEYMOUR: I'm sorry, Trix. Really. Do you forgive me?

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TRIXIE: Give me a hug.

(THEY hug.)

Of course I forgive you, freak.

SEYMOUR: I love your pet names for me. *(beat)* The truth is, I've been weighing the pros and cons of telling you something. That's all.

TRIXIE: You tell me everything, Seymour.

SEYMOUR: That's true. *(looking in basket)* All right, juice boxes.

TRIXIE: Toss me one.

(HE obliges.)

So what is it? Is it about your parents?

SEYMOUR: No. Not this time. I don't even want to deal with them.

TRIXIE: 'Cause I can relate to that, you know.

SEYMOUR: I know, sweetie.

TRIXIE: My father doesn't even speak to me. He grunts. That's it. No "hi" or "how are you" or anything like that. He just grunts. He doesn't even try to communicate with me. Here I am leaving home soon, and he doesn't even care.

SEYMOUR: Hey, it's his loss, really, darlin'.

TRIXIE: It doesn't bother me.

SEYMOUR: Sure it does. A little. And that's okay. I mean, it should bother you.

TRIXIE: You're too nice to me.

SEYMOUR: Probably. *(there is a pause. SEYMOUR rests his head on TRIXIE's shoulder)* I love you, Trixie.

TRIXIE: I love you too, Seymour.

SEYMOUR: I know. But I love you.

TRIXIE: I know. But I love you, too, Seymour. Is this a competition I don't know about? Because you know I love to compete. There is NO WAY you can love me more than I love you, pal!

(SHE laughs. SEYMOUR smiles, rises, and sits on one of the swings.

TRIXIE joins him on the swing next to him. THEY swing a little.)

SEYMOUR: Hey, get out of my bathtub.

TRIXIE: What?

SEYMOUR: You never said that when you were a kid?

TRIXIE: Uh... no. Not unless someone was climbing into my bathtub with me.

SEYMOUR: When you were swinging, and someone was swinging with you? You never...?

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TRIXIE: That doesn't even make sense...

SEYMOUR: It was just an expression...

TRIXIE: ...bathtub? That's dumb. *(beat)* Besides, I think Stevie would have a problem with that.

SEYMOUR: Ah, yes. Stevie. Boyfriend of the year.

TRIXIE: Please don't start with that, Seymour.

SEYMOUR: Fine. *(Beat. HE stops swinging and gets off, walks away from the swingset)*

TRIXIE: No, no, you can't do that... don't get all moody.

SEYMOUR: I'm not. I'm just tired of swinging.

TRIXIE: I'm sorry, okay? *(SHE stops swinging and goes to him)* I just don't want to talk about Stevie. Please.

SEYMOUR: Look, Trix, I'm sorry, but you don't want to talk about him, because you know he doesn't treat you right.

TRIXIE: He's trying...

SEYMOUR: Sweetie, I love you. And, I don't care if this makes you mad at me, but you deserve better than "trying". And you deserve a lot better than being pushed around.

TRIXIE: He hasn't done that in a long time.

SEYMOUR: I can't believe you make these excuses... *(beat)* No, look, I'm sorry. I don't want to argue about this. It's just that I care.

(beat) He must be happy that you haven't seen me in three days.

TRIXIE: He's been too busy hanging out with his friends.

SEYMOUR: Great priorities.

TRIXIE: Look who's talking. *(beat)* Look, there's that kid in the sandbox again.

SEYMOUR: What was his name?

TRIXIE: Albert, I think. I wish some kid would go play with him...

SEYMOUR: Me too.

TRIXIE: He looks so lonely. *(beat)* Want to go talk to him?

SEYMOUR: I tried to, once. His mom's very overprotective.

TRIXIE: So... are you going to tell me?

SEYMOUR: Tell you what?

TRIXIE: What you've been thinking about these last few days when you should have been spending time with me.

SEYMOUR: I don't know... I can't.

TRIXIE: C'mon. *(SHE gets in his face, trying to annoy him)* Just tell me. Tell me... we don't keep secrets from each other... *(moving his lips, speaking in a silly voice)* Hi Trixie, you're my best friend, and I can't wait to tell you why I've ignored you for the last three days...

SEYMOUR: *(pulling away, playful)* I wasn't ignoring you... *(doing a silly voice)* My name's Trixie and I need attention all the time or I die a little inside...

TRIXIE: *(starts to chase him)* Just tell me...

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SEYMOUR: You need to get used to disappointment, pretty girl...

TRIXIE: No I don't.

(SHE chases him about a little. Finally, SHE grabs him and brings him to the ground. THEY are both laughing.)

SEYMOUR: I think we're worse than little kids.

TRIXIE: Probably, sweetie.

SEYMOUR: Man. I'm going to miss you.

TRIXIE: I want you to be happy... and you have to come visit me...

SEYMOUR: I will. *(beat)* Oh, well, here goes.

TRIXIE: What?

SEYMOUR: So you're like my best friend in the world, right?

TRIXIE: Why ask questions that you already know the answer to?

SEYMOUR: And I trust you. And no matter what, you're always going to be my friend?

TRIXIE: Of course.

SEYMOUR: Because I have to tell you something. I owe it to you.
'Kay?

TRIXIE: All right.

SEYMOUR: Well, it's just a matter of simple arithmetic, really. But I don't know if you'll see it that way, and that's what scares me about it.

TRIXIE: I'm your best friend. What could you possibly be scared of telling me? News flash: we tell each other everything.

SEYMOUR: I know, I know, it's just... well, okay, but here's the thing: Do you mind if I just spit it all out before you say anything? I mean, it's not that I don't want you to talk, I love to hear you talk, it's one of my favorite things in the world...

TRIXIE: Thank you. Even though I talk with my hands a lot?

SEYMOUR: ...Yes... you're welcome... I just need to get this all out and over with, because maybe then I can release it if I need to.

TRIXIE: Whatever you need. I'll lock my lips. *(SHE mimes locking her lips and throwing away the key)*

SEYMOUR: Okay, so, hopefully this won't take long, and it will be over at least, so that will be good. All right: being your friend is one of the best things that has ever happened to me. And it's a great friendship, we both give and take, we laugh, we have fun, and I would never want you to stop being my friend. I mean, I don't know what I would do without you. I remember a time before you were in my life, but that seems insignificant now. It's as though I even see my memories of the past as just pre-Trixie days, days leading up to when we became friends.

TRIXIE: Please tell me you're not dying.

(HE gives her a look.)

Well, you're not, are you?

SEYMOUR: No, I am not dying.

TRIXIE: Good, because I need you here. So, okay, sorry, I know I interrupted, continue, please. Won't happen again. *(before HE can speak)* What did you mean about arithmetic, anyway?

SEYMOUR: Okay, sweetheart, I haven't gotten there yet. My point is, you always need to be my friend, okay, because it is a satisfying friendship. And what I'm telling you now has no bearing on how I feel for you as a friend---well, except in the sense that it is how I feel for you as a person, but I don't want to muddle things up.

TRIXIE: I feel really stupid, because I'm not following you. I appreciate all the nice things you're saying, but you don't have to say them. I mean, like you said, we're great friends. You show that to me every day by being you. You don't have to make some big declaration, Seymour.

SEYMOUR: Wait, here's where the arithmetic comes in. I know this has been rambling, but the first point that I wanted to make was that I will never stop being your friend. There's no way to subtract, if you will, the importance of our friendship.

TRIXIE: So, yeah, subtraction, I get it.

SEYMOUR: But here's the thing, the scary part for me to say, but here it is... please don't interrupt, okay, sweetie? *(takes a deep breath)* I have other feelings for you, that are outside the feelings of friendship, okay, but I don't want you to freak out, because it doesn't mean that you being my friend isn't enough, because it is, and it always could be, but you're my best friend, and I have to admit these other feelings to you, because to not do it, would be a violation of my trust in you. I love you, always will, but I've also fallen for you, and I have to admit that to you, because at first, I didn't want to admit it to myself, never meant for it to happen, but it did. One day I just was with you, and I realized I felt more than I did before. And I don't mean loved you more, because that's not possible. I'll always love you deeply and have for some time. I just mean, this was a case of simple addition. Along with my friendship love, I now have this other love, and it's okay if you never feel this other love for me too, I'm not telling you this with any expectation of you reciprocating, I just hope you really aren't completely freaking out right now, because, let me tell you, I have never tried to woo you or anything like that. Every gesture of friendship I've given you has been a sincere one, I've never tried to get to you through friendship, I just never expected this to happen, and not because

you're not amazing, because you know I think you are, but because I tried to keep you in the right category, you know, but it's just that being with you, laughing with you, sharing with you, our hopes, dreams, ambitions, fears, all of that, or even just comfortable silences, you know, and I realize that I'm happiest when I'm spending time with you, and not only that, but you bring out the person in me that I really want to be, you know. It's like I look at you to see my reflection, and I had to tell you these feelings because I don't want to be holding on to something that could be a lie, and, oh man, you look really freaked out right now.

(Pause)

TRIXIE: I have a boyfriend, Seymour.

SEYMOUR: I know. I just think... *(HE trails off)*

TRIXIE: What?

SEYMOUR: I just think you should choose me. And I don't get why you don't.

TRIXIE: That sounded like an expectation to me, Seymour.

SEYMOUR: I'm sorry.

TRIXIE: You're my best friend, Seymour. My best friend. How am I supposed to... well, act now, around you?

SEYMOUR: This does not have to be an awkward thing, it really doesn't.

TRIXIE: Oh no? You don't think so? Because I feel pretty awkward... I'm sorry, I'm not trying to hurt your feelings, I would never want to do that, and I don't know what to say. Of course you know I love you, and that was very sweet and all, probably the sweetest thing anyone has ever said to me... I'm sorry if I've somehow led you on or...

SEYMOUR: Listen: you haven't. It's not like that. If you don't have these extra feelings for me, that's okay, it's fine, you don't need to, that's not why I told you this. I love you, you love me, and our friendship is enough. I was just talking about addition. Let's not turn this into subtraction, please, and especially not division.

TRIXIE: I'm not gonna lie, this is kind of a bombshell.

SEYMOUR: It doesn't have to...

TRIXIE: No, I'm sorry, but maybe for me it does, okay? You've had three days to think about this, I haven't had three minutes...

SEYMOUR: That's true, you're right. I'm sorry.

TRIXIE: Come on, Seymour. You didn't expect me to just say thanks, that's great, I'll talk to Stevie and let you know, let's go get a snow cone, did you?

SEYMOUR: A snow cone does sound pretty...

TRIXIE: (*somewhat trying not to laugh*) See, I knew you were going to say that! You can be so predictable sometimes.

SEYMOUR: Yeah. (*there is a pause*) So what do you want to do?

TRIXIE: No offense, but I think I should be alone right now. I'm really hoping that we can just get back to normal, but I can't this second, okay?

SEYMOUR: (*after a pause*) Okay. That's cool.

(*THEY BOTH get up. TRIXIE looks like SHE's feeling awkward, so by ripple effect, SEYMOUR feels that way too.*)

Okay, just one more thing.

TRIXIE: What?

SEYMOUR: No matter what kind of time it takes, I'm not giving up on you. I love you with everything I have. You are my favorite person in this world, T. Always. And I'm not your dad, I'm not Stevie... My love for you is truly unconditional, and I will always be here for you. So please: even if you can't choose me right now, please don't give up on me. Please.

(*HE takes a step to her and hugs her quickly, then turns and exits. TRIXIE watches him go.*)

TRIXIE: (*almost a whisper*) Don't go.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 3: A FORGETFUL REMEMBRANCE

SETTING: Area of a beautiful park where there are a few park benches and picnic tables, and a few wastebaskets. Any other decoration is at the discretion of the director.

AT RISE: MYA, 70s, is sitting on a park bench. SHE wears a simple dress and a very distinctive shawl. SHE looks around peacefully, as COLIN, 70s, enters. HE carries a snow cone, and sits down next to MYA, putting his arm around her.

COLIN: Are you sure you didn't want one?

MYA: Yes dear, I don't like cold things the way I used to.

COLIN: I suspect it's because you still have your own teeth. Ice doesn't chill my fake choppers.

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MYA: That could be it, dear.

(There is a pause. COLIN looks over to MYA, who is looking at something peacefully.)

COLIN: Do you have much pain today, Mya?

MYA: No, dear.

COLIN: I know what that means. Stop asking, Colin, am I right? *(HE chuckles)* I'm sorry, I can't help worrying about my girl. *(HE takes her hand gently)* Are you cold? I can get your jacket out of the car.

MYA: No, I'm fine. I just would like to sit with you for a while. *(slight pause)* And you didn't bring the car. You took the bus. Don't tell me that's slipped your mind already?

COLIN: Ah, yes. I took the... we took the bus. The bus driver didn't know what he was doing. I swear, they'd let anyone drive the bus these days! It's not like it used to be.

(MYA says nothing, but looks at him sweetly. HE smiles at her, happy, but there is an underlying uneasiness, a "trying-too-hard" quality about his demeanor.)

I've always loved this park. Remember when that area over by the swing set was nothing but trees?

MYA: Where?

COLIN: *(points)* Where that young couple is, right there.

MYA: Yes. That's where...

COLIN: ...you made me the happiest man in the world by saying yes. *(beat)* I hope it's as lucky a spot for that young couple. *(HE leans over and gives MYA a tender kiss)* I love you.

MYA: I love you, too.

COLIN: Been a long time since I've given my girl a kiss in this park.

But I want the world to see how much I still love my beautiful bride.

MYA: You with your love of blarney, Colin. You talk the collar off of a priest, to be sure!

COLIN: It isn't blarney, when it's truth.

MYA: Aye.

COLIN: You've still the most beautiful eyes of green and blue, my girl. Still the most beautiful woman I've seen on God's Earth.

MYA: *(smiling)* Please tell me you don't have the drink in you this early, boy-o.

COLIN: No, my constitution is not what it once was. Your beauty is seen by sober eyes, my girl.

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(There is a pause. COLIN finishes with his snow cone and tosses it into the garbage. HE seems to be trying to think of something to say, something important.)

MYA: What is it, my love?

COLIN: Our life together... was I...?

MYA: Were you what, dear?

COLIN: *(suddenly choked up)* Was I good enough? Because I ponder and do my best to remember, and I know I did my best. But I look back and I see so many mistakes with you. So many times I could have said things that I didn't. Times when I didn't make you feel as beautiful as I should have. Or you wouldn't need to accuse me of being unsteady when I tell you just how beautiful you are now.

MYA: My boy, you were as close to a perfect husband as a girl like me could have. Not to mention a most loving Da. I would not change a thing, and that's the God's honest, so it is.

COLIN: I still say you were too good for the likes of me.

MYA: Nonsense. Now really, dear, you shouldn't carry on like this. You must learn to relax and enjoy. Just enjoy.

COLIN: You've always been the expert at that. Yup-yup. *(note: when COLIN says "yup-yup", they are quick little inhalations of breath, almost an "American" affectation)* So much I should have learned from your example, Mya. So much. I feel like a fool.

MYA: Now, now. You know I could have only spent my life with a man who wasn't afraid of being a fool. So you should bless your foolishness and accept it as a virtue.

COLIN: Yup-yup. You always did have a way with words.

(There is a pause as THEY sit quietly looking about the park. Then, cautiously, COLIN sneaks a look at MYA to see how SHE is doing.)

MYA: I'm fine, dear. My bones are old, but I'm still here.

COLIN: I just worry, I can't help it. I'm a worrier. You know that. Can't we call that a virtue, as well?

MYA: *(with a note of stern concern)* Now you know there is absolutely no reason to be concerned about me. *(pause)* Colin? You do know that, right dear?

COLIN: *(after nodding vaguely)* I just don't want you to be in pain, so I don't.

MYA: *(Gently)* There is no pain. Not anymore. You know that.

COLIN: *(evasive)* Yup-yup. *(beat)* I have always loved you in this shawl.

MYA: I know.

COLIN: Do you remember when I bought it for you? We were in the old country for our... I believe it was our fifteenth...

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MYA: Sixteenth, boy-o.

COLIN: Oh, now, I don't think so, Mya. We took a special trip to Ireland to celebrate our fifteenth anniversary.

MYA: That was the original plan, dear, but we couldn't, don't you remember? Sean had to go into the hospital, and we didn't want to leave him. So, we celebrated...

COLIN: ...our fifteenth anniversary on our sixteenth anniversary, yup-yup. Now I remember. Beautiful trip. What I can recollect of it. I remember a few games of "down the hatch," with my one hundred ten pound wife.

MYA: If you remember, Colin, I won every round!

COLIN: That's right, too, by Heaven! (*with pride*) My bride could always hold her drink. (*quickly*) Not that you were ever much of a drinker, Mya.

(*MYA smiles. THEY hold hands, and are silent for a while, looking about the park.*)

My, my. See that little blonde girl there?

MYA: Where?

COLIN: Over there... her daddy's got the blue knapsack.

MYA: Oh, yes. She looks precious.

COLIN: She looks to have a bit of fire in her as well! (*chuckles*) Makes me think of our Jenny.

MYA: Yes. Only without the red hair.

COLIN: Yup-yup.

(*There is a silence as THEY watch. After a moment, MYA decides to speak, with great tenderness and caution.*)

MYA: Colin?

COLIN: Mmmm?

MYA: It's been too long, dear.

COLIN: What now?

MYA: You know what I mean.

COLIN: Now, Mya...

MYA: Sean and Jenny must be worried. You haven't seen them since...

COLIN: Mya, you shouldn't concern yourself with such things. You need to worry about your own health.

MYA: Look at me, Colin. (*beat. Then, gently:*) Look at me.

(*Beat. HE does.*)

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You know that's not true. Don't you?

COLIN: (*evasive*) I speak with them on the telephone.

MYA: Sean even offered to have you move in with him...

COLIN: What, now? That doesn't even make sense. First of all, who's going to take care of you...

MYA: Colin, that's enough, it's too much...

COLIN: ...and Sean has his own family and own concerns, and he seems to think I have some kind of problem...

MYA: He loves you. And so does Jenny.

COLIN: Yup-yup, and I love them too...

MYA: Then why haven't you seen them since...

COLIN: (*a pleaded warning*) Mya, don't. I love my children, Mya. I love them with every bit of this old heart. We made ourselves a family of love, and there's not one ounce of me that doesn't love my children.

MYA: (*gently*) I know that my love.

COLIN: They seem to think the roles have changed. I'm still their Da. I'm not a child, and God bless me, I shall not be treated as one.

MYA: You have not seen either of our children in a year.

COLIN: We've been busy. You and I have our lives, and they have theirs.

MYA: (*with a hint of fire*) No. We have not been busy. Or to get right to the truth of it, my boy, YOU have not been busy. And well you know it, Colin.

COLIN: Do we need to talk in this manner?

MYA: As it has always been, I shall speak my piece. You must expect that even now.

COLIN: Do you have to sport with me on such a beautiful day? Let's keep to the rainbows and not the clouds, can we? Please.

MYA: You haven't seen them since my funeral, Colin.

(*COLIN seems to deflate. MYA looks at him tenderly. There is a long silence.*)

Isn't that right, dear?

COLIN: I remember a year after we were married. We had nothing. It was before I was made foreman in the plant, remember, so we were stony broke. Loose, patched clothes, remember? No money to celebrate our anniversary. (*beat*) I was so ashamed. You were working as an operator, then, wasn't it?

MYA: Yes.

COLIN: And I hated you having to work, hated not being able to take care of you, like I had promised you, and your mother and your father. Couldn't even buy you a present for our anniversary. (*beat*)

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But you never made me feel like a failure. You always took... well, I don't know how else to say it... always took such good care of me.

MYA: Our first anniversary was right over there, where the swingsets are now. Just a blanket, two corned beef sandwiches, and two people holding each other, looking at the stars.

COLIN: Yup-yup. *(beat)* And dreaming.

MYA: And dreaming. *(beat)* And a good deal of those dreams came true, didn't they, my dear? A house of our own. Beautiful children. A trip to Ireland. Many happy years together. *(beat)* You and I had a wonderful life together. And yes, my boy, I remember the lean years, the years you couldn't pinch a spot of fat on either of us. But you filled me with love. *(beat)* You know what always mattered most to me?

COLIN: What's that, now?

MYA: That no matter what, whether we were kissin', fussin', sportin' or fightin', each night, before we fell off to sleep... every night for forty-seven years, you said the same thing to me, before my eyes closed and the dreams came.

COLIN: Aye. I still say it to you every night. *(HE looks in her eyes with unfathomable love)* Thank you, Mya, my girl, for once again givin' me the greatest day I have ever known.

MYA: How you could say that to me every day, and truly mean it each time, is still a marvel to me.

COLIN: It's because the truth is easy to say. Always and forever, my one sweet girl. Always and forever.

MYA: *(soft)* Thank you.

COLIN: I don't want... *(HE trails off. Silence)*

MYA: You don't want what, dear?

COLIN: It wasn't supposed to be like this. I was supposed to take care of you...

MYA: You did, Colin.

COLIN: And I never wanted you to be the first to go, it's not right, it's not natural. But worse, and I hate to say it, because I never wanted to leave you alone, but I never wanted to have to live without you. Because I don't know how, anymore, I don't know how. And I don't want to. I don't want to be here, pretending.

MYA: You have life left in you yet, old man. And its not for sitting around in a park with my old shawl.

COLIN: It's just that I forget, Mya. I forget when I wake up in the morning and you're not there with me. I forget when I pour out a cup of coffee in your favorite mug, two cremes, one sugar. I forget how good you made our house smell, and I don't know how to do it myself. I forget when I hear a joke on the TV and I want to look over next to you and laugh with you, but you're not there. And I

don't want to hear Sean and Jenny telling me I need to let go, because I don't know how. We lived together as man and wife, as Mamma and Da, and then, as man and wife of an empty nest, but you were always the constant. Me climbin' into bed with you next to me, your rump nestled all next to me, feeling you breathe. Your heart beating. I don't know how to live without you. I forget what it's like, and now I just don't want to have to learn again. I'm just an old fool, filled to the brim with blarney and emptiness without you laughin', and cussin' and sportin' with me. I don't think I can learn again, Mya. I just don't think I can. But more to the point of it, how can I choose that? How can I choose to live without the one who filled me up, made me whole? Each day without you, I feel the cold, I feel my own self slippin' away. I can no longer tell where you ended and I began. They talk about phantom pains for one who loses a limb. I have phantom pains of your hand in mine. Your eyes lookin' deep into my very heart. Phantom pains of your breath on my skin. How do I live without that now?

(There is a pause. MYA slowly removes her shawl and puts it into COLIN's arms. HE clings to it as though HE is hugging her. SHE stands and walks behind the bench. COLIN stares straight ahead. Behind him, SHE leans down and kisses him on the cheek.)

MYA: You will, my love. You'll learn. Just enjoy. Enjoy it all. The sun, the rain, the happiness, and even the hurt. Yes, my love, the hurt, because to hurt is to be alive, and being alive is a very special gift. And not a permanent one. So enjoy. Do you remember when we first met? When I was betrothed to another? But you told me you it didn't matter. That I was your girl, no matter what?

COLIN: Aye.

MYA: And what kept you believin' this silly lass would come to you?

COLIN: Faith, my girl. Faith in my love for you being so strong, and burning so bright, that it would one day have to guide you to my side.

MYA: And so have that faith now. You will be by my side again, my dear Colin. And when next you see me, I'll be waitin' for you on the Green Isle, young again, my legs warmed by the sun, and those freckles you love so much on my face. And you will see my eyes shinin' with fun, and we'll run, jumping rock to rock like we did in our youth. And you'll be strong. And I'll hold your hand, and we will walk into the next great journey together. As you once waited for me, I shall wait for you, and once again, our patience will be rewarded. Believe this, my boy. Believe this here *(SHE places her*

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hand on his heart) and here. (SHE places her hand on his head) I love you, Colin. Always and forever.

(SHE kisses him on the cheek again and exits off. COLIN continues to look straight ahead, holding onto the empty shawl. HE embraces it tightly, hoping to somehow make her live again, to feel her in his arms once more. After a moment, HE speaks:)

COLIN: Thank you, Mya my girl, for once again giving me the greatest day I have ever known.

(HE holds the shawl, and stares straight ahead.)

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT ONE

Do Not Copy

ACT TWO

SCENE 1: NURSING

SETTING: A few minutes later from the previous scenes. We are at a picnic table. The sandbox is just out of view beyond the fourth wall.

AT RISE: BILLY is sitting at a picnic table with the blue backpack at his feet, looking off, to where SUZY is presumably playing. RACHEL, mid-20s, sits at the other end of the picnic table. SHE also has a backpack with her. THEY watch for a moment.

RACHEL: She's beautiful.

BILLY: (*startled*) I'm sorry?

RACHEL: Your little girl. She's beautiful.

BILLY: (*about to explain but doesn't*) Thank you.

RACHEL: That's my little boy. With her. In the sandbox. Albert. His name's Albert.

BILLY: Oh. (*beat*) Very handsome boy.

RACHEL: Thanks. He's got Autism. He's very high-functioning, though. Very mild Autism, mostly social awkwardness. The doctors don't want to call it Asperger's yet, but I'm sure that's what it is.

BILLY: Oh. Well, that's good, that he's high-functioning and all.

RACHEL: He can talk. Albert, I mean. He can talk.

BILLY: Yes.

RACHEL: I mean, in case you're wondering. He's verbal. Not all children with Autism are, but he is. He's very high-functioning. Really, it just comes off as shyness.

BILLY: I see.

RACHEL: I have him on a special diet, and it helps.

BILLY: Oh, yeah, I think I've read that diet can make a big difference...

RACHEL: Oh it does, it really does. When you're a parent of a child with Autism, you have to become an expert.

BILLY: I imagine you would have to, yeah.

(*An awkward beat.*)

RACHEL: What's your little girl's name?

BILLY: Suzy.

RACHEL: Oh, that's cute. I'm Rachel, by the way.

BILLY: (*moves closer to shake her hand*) Billy.

RACHEL: (*SHE takes his hand*) Nice to meet you. (*beat*) Suzy's friendly, right?

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BILLY: Pardon? ...oh, yes, she is. Little stubborn sometimes, but she's friendly.

RACHEL: Good, good. Albert doesn't get many opportunities to interact with kids his age, and a lot of times when I bring him here it's deserted, so, uh, I'm glad he's getting a chance to meet someone today. It's good for him to learn, kind of trial-and-error how to interact and such.

BILLY: Well, Suzy's definitely a good talker.

RACHEL: Albert talks. He can talk. He just comes off as shy, that's all. He's just as normal as anyone else, really.

BILLY: Definitely.

RACHEL: You seem nervous. Are you nervous?

BILLY: No, not really.

RACHEL: Because you don't have to be. I know, I've been rattling on, and I must come off a bit hyper-active about my kid's disability, but you don't have to worry about being super politically correct or saying the right thing. I sometimes just talk to hear myself. I don't usually run into other parents here. And if I do, it's usually a mother. *(beat. Quickly)* Not that you being a man makes any difference, of course.

BILLY: It's fine. I'm fine. To be honest, I'm a bit lost in my own world today. I'm sorry.

(Another awkward beat.)

RACHEL: I suppose I'll have to call him out of there in a few minutes. He'll be getting hungry soon.

BILLY: Yeah, it's getting about that time. If you want, Suzy and Albert can have lunch together.

RACHEL: Oh, that's nice of you. Maybe. *(beat)* I mean, sure.

BILLY: If you want, of course, you don't...

RACHEL: No, that's a very nice offer. Sure. I mean, after... well, you see, he's still nursing.

BILLY: Oh. *(long beat)* Yeah, okay, after you get done with that, if he wants to eat with Suzy, that's cool. I'm sure she would like that.

(Another silence. THEY both act like THEY are watching their respective little ones in the sandbox. RACHEL glimpses over to BILLY. Finally:)

RACHEL: Five.

BILLY: I'm sorry?

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RACHEL: He's five. Albert. Albert's five. That's what everyone asks after they find out he's still nursing. And it's usually in a snotty way. (*demonstrating*) "Oh, he's five? And he's still nursing?"

BILLY: Oh, gosh, no, I don't...

RACHEL: It may seem weird, but there are some cultures where children are nursed until they're ten, sometimes older.

BILLY: Really? What cultures are those?

RACHEL: What? Are you testing me? Giving me a pop quiz?

BILLY: No, no. I was just curious... the whole thing is none of my...

RACHEL: It's good for him. Albert. We don't have very many moments of connection, and when he's nursing, it's a very strong moment of connection, and I think he needs that.

BILLY: Honestly, Rachel, you don't have to explain...

RACHEL: I mean, it can kind of suck sometimes, because you know, I can't really have a few drinks to relax or anything, and I have to be really careful about pain medications and stuff. And now that he's bigger, and his teeth are bigger...

BILLY: Rachel. I have no judgments about you nursing your son. None. Really.

RACHEL: No?

BILLY: No. (*beat*) I mean, hey, I'd probably still be nursing if I had the opportunity. (*his joke falls flat*) Sorry, I was just...

RACHEL: It's all right.

BILLY: Truth is, it's your life, right? The way I see it, it's nobody's business if you're still nursing your son.

RACHEL: Well, then you're the only one. I swear, if my mother gets on my case about it one more time... (*beat*) And I could be wrong, but I have my suspicions that that's why his dad left.

BILLY: (*uncomfortable*) Huh. (*beat*) Did he leave recently?

RACHEL: This morning. (*beat*) But I think it was too much for him, having a son with special needs. Some people just can't handle it.

BILLY: This morning? Who knows? Maybe he's not really gone.

RACHEL: He flew to Rio. With a girl called Candy.

BILLY: Ah. I'm sorry.

RACHEL: Eh. Don't worry about it. I'm not. (*beat*) She must look like her mom.

BILLY: What?

RACHEL: Suzy. She must look like her mom. She doesn't look like you.

BILLY: Oh, no. Yeah. Yeah, she looks like her mom.

RACHEL: I don't see any of your features in her at all. I mean, no offense. Maybe she has your toes for all I know, right?

BILLY: No, she doesn't have my toes. (*beat*) She's not my daughter.

RACHEL: Yeah, I didn't think so.

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BILLY: I dated her mother from the time she was one to the time she was about five. I used to live with them. So, in many ways, I was like her dad for all that time. On a day-to-day basis.

RACHEL: Well, it's nice of her mom to let you spend time with her still.

BILLY: Actually, this is the first day I've seen her in a year and a half.

RACHEL: This isn't like a kidnap situation is it?

BILLY: What? No!

RACHEL: I was just kidding.

BILLY: Her mother called me up last night and said Suzy still asked about me all the time, and she thought maybe we could try spending some time together again.

RACHEL: Well that's good. You must have missed her.

BILLY: Every day.

RACHEL: *(after a beat)* Can I ask you a personal question?

BILLY: I suppose.

RACHEL: I mean, after all, I told you about my nursing.

BILLY: True. You sure did. I didn't ask, but you did tell me.

RACHEL: Are you still in love with Suzy's mother?

BILLY: No. *(beat)* I don't know. *(beat)* Maybe... No. I'm not.

RACHEL: So you are.

BILLY: No, I don't...

RACHEL: Well, the thing is, maybe if you weren't, still in love with her, I mean, it would be easier for her to let you spend time with Suzy.

BILLY: What do you mean?

RACHEL: She could be worried that you would just use Suzy to try and win her back. But if she knew definitely that you weren't still in love with her...

BILLY: But I don't think I am in love with her. I think I only stayed in the relationship as long as I did because of Suzy.

RACHEL: Have you been serious with anyone since her?

BILLY: No.

RACHEL: Have you dated?

BILLY: Not really, no.

RACHEL: Sorry, but if you want my honest opinion, you're obviously still in love with her. And that's what makes it hard in terms of Suzy. And if you keep nursing these feelings for Suzy's mother...

BILLY: Nursing? I'm not "nursing" any feelings for Suzy's mother. My feelings are for the loss of a little girl that made me feel like a father, and taught me an entirely different kind of love. But it's funny you should use the word "nursing".

RACHEL: Huh?

BILLY: Sorry, I just think, if you want my honest opinion, that you're hung up on this idea of nursing your son, because you are nervous and afraid about raising a child who has special needs, so nursing

him is more of a comfort to you than it is to him. I think you need that connection more than he does. So there you go.

RACHEL: So you're angry at me for saying you're still in love with your ex, is that it?

BILLY: No, I just don't think you should judge me for it. Listen, we don't know each other, but I'm just like you, except in one big way. You get to be with your kid every day. You have a legal right and obligation to be with your kid every day. I don't. But when I am, I'm just hoping that I set a good example, and don't make too many mistakes. And that's all any of us can do. And if you're still nursing, then that's fine. And if I can't let go of Suzy and the family I almost had, that's my problem, and I'm dealing with it the best way I can. But don't psychoanalyze me after just meeting me. Please.

(There is a silence.)

RACHEL: I'm sorry.

BILLY: *(Pause-feeling a little guilty)* No, I'm sorry. I was out of line. I shouldn't have attacked you like that. I'm in such a weird space, today, I apologize.

RACHEL: It's okay. *(beat)* Can Suzy still eat lunch with Albert? I think that could be really good for him, to eat lunch with someone his age.

BILLY: Of course.

RACHEL: Suzy's nice, right?

BILLY: Yeah. She's very nice.

RACHEL: *(after a beat)* And maybe we could eat lunch together too, if you want.

BILLY: Sure. *(beat)* Why not?

(There is a silence as THEY sit and watch their little ones playing in the sandbox offstage.)

BLACKOUT.

END OF SCENE

SCENE 2: SANDBOX

SETTING: A sandbox.

AT RISE: SUZY is sitting in the sandbox, picking up handfuls of sand and letting them run through her fingers. ALBERT is in the sandbox with her. HE has a shovel and a pail. HE is five years old, and wears Osh Kosh B'Gosh overalls and a blue baseball cap. SUZY looks at him with curiosity. HE is very shy.

SUZY: Can I use your shovel? *(beat)* I want to shovel some sand.
(beat) Can I use your shovel? *(beat. SUZY rolls her eyes)* Please?
Can I use your shovel, please?

(Without a word, ALBERT hands her his shovel.)

Thanks. *(rolls her eyes)* Jeezum. *(SUZY shovels sand and dumps it on herself.)* I like sand at the beach. *(SHE continues to shovel sand and spill it on herself, and begins to sing, making up her own tune, for the following:)* I like sand at the beach, 'cause I go swimming and make a castle at the beach, and when I swim I look like a fish, and a fish can't go on saaaaaaaand! *(SHE stops singing)* My name's Suzy, and I'm a good singer. I go to the beach and when I go swimming, I get to go out far, because I'm a big girl, and the life-gart says I'm a good swimmer, 'cause I can do more than just the doggy-paddle, so there.

(Beat. ALBERT doesn't say anything. SUZY sings again, to her own tune:)

I met a monster at the beach and he tried to scare me, but I wasn't scared, so I splashed him with water at the beach, and he started to cryyyyyyyyyyyyy! *(SHE stops singing)* I'm gonna take my shoes off. Sand feels good on your toesies. *(true to her word, SHE takes her shoes and socks off and begins to pour sand on them)* Let's fill your bucket with sand!

(ALBERT says nothing.)

Let's fill your bucket with sand! *(SUZY tries once more, even louder)*
Let's fill your bucket with sand!

(ALBERT doesn't respond.)

Can you talk?
(ALBERT nods his head, shy)

Let's fill your bucket with sand!

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(ALBERT hands her his bucket. SUZY rolls her eyes)

Thank you. *(SHE begins to fill the bucket and sings:)* The boy in the sandbox has a bucket, but he can't taaaaaalk, but Suzy caaaaaaan!

ALBERT: *(very soft)* I can talk.

SUZY: Can you sing "The Wheels on the Bus?"

ALBERT: I don't know.

SUZY: Ummmm... can you sing "Twinkle, twinkle Little Star?"

ALBERT: Yes.

SUZY: So can I! I'm a good singer! Let's fill your bucket with sand!

(ALBERT obliges, and THEY begin to fill the bucket with sand.)

Olivia doesn't help me when we're in the sandbox, but I don't even care. Olivia's mean. *(singing)* Olivia's a meanie, but Suzy is niiiiice!

ALBERT: *(very soft)* My name is Albert.

SUZY: You should take your shoes off.

ALBERT: I can't. I'll get in trouble.

SUZY: Nuh-uh, my mom says it's a free country, so I took my shoes off. And my socks!

ALBERT: My feet will get dirty.

SUZY: So? I don't even care. Wanna play sand pirates?

ALBERT: I don't know.

SUZY: I'm a sand pirate, and I'm gonna take your sand.

Hahahahahaha! *(SHE takes sand out of ALBERT's hands)*

ALBERT: *(upset)* Don't! That's my sand!

SUZY: I'm just playing a game. Jeezum.

(ALBERT calms down, but it takes him awhile. HE rocks back and forth. When HE stops whimpering, SUZY speaks.)

I was just kidding. I'm not a pirate. I'm a princess. Billy-Billy bought me princess slippers, 'cause I'm a princess. Why are you rocking back and forth?

ALBERT: I don't know.

SUZY: I want to try. *(SUZY starts rocking back and forth like ALBERT)*

Rock, rock, rock. Rock, rock, rock. *(SHE stops)* Billy-Billy's not even my dad. But he used to live with us.

ALBERT: My dad went away.

SUZY: Now Shawn lives at my house. Do you go to school?

ALBERT: My mom does school at home.

SUZY: You go to school at home? I'm in the first grade almost. Can you sing ABCs? I can. I can sing louder than anyone in my class.

Miss Lewis said so. Ronna won't let me sing loud at her house, but

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I sing better than Olivia. Did you have a birthday party? I did, but it wasn't fun.

ALBERT: I don't know.

SUZY: You don't know what a birthday party is? It's when it's your birthday and you have cake and play games with your friends and get presents! You can come to mine next year, but only if you're nice.

ALBERT: Okay.

(THEY are quiet a moment. SUZY is trying to figure him out.)

SUZY: Why don't you talk more?

ALBERT: I don't know.

SUZY: Aren't you a big boy?

ALBERT: Yes.

SUZY: Then you should talk more. I talk alot!

ALBERT: My mom says I'm shy and tistic.

SUZY: What's tistic?

ALBERT: I don't know, but my mom says I am, and that's why I'm shy and don't talk much.

SUZY: I'm not tistic. I talk a lot.

ALBERT: I know.

SUZY: Olivia called me big mouth and I got mad, so I told Ronna on her. My mouth's not even that big, see? *(SHE opens her mouth wide)* You try.

(ALBERT opens his mouth wide.)

You're not a big mouth either. Want to see a scary face? *(SHE makes a scary face)* Suzy's a monster!

(ALBERT is troubled by this, and begins to whimper and rock back and forth again. SUZY stops making the face.)

Suzy's not really a monster. I was just pretending. Don't be scared, silly-goose.

ALBERT: I wasn't scared.

SUZY: Yes you were!

ALBERT: Just a little. My mom says there's no such things as monsters.

SUZY: I could beat up a monster.

ALBERT: No way!

SUZY: Could to, I bet. So there. And you could help me. And we could beat up ALL the monsters in the WORLD.

ALBERT: I can't. I'm scared of monsters.

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SUZY: You won't be with me. 'Cause I'm not scared of silly monsters,
and I'll help you.

ALBERT: You will?

SUZY: Yes. You're going to be my friend.

ALBERT: I am?

SUZY: Yes.

ALBERT: Why?

SUZY: Because I say so.

ALBERT: Okay. *(ALBERT takes off his shoes and his socks)*

SUZY: Let's sing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." My mom says the man
who made up that song was younger than me. He was only four.

ALBERT: Nuh-uh!

SUZY: Uh-huh!

ALBERT: Okay.

SUZY: Ready? One, two, three: *(singing)* Twinkle, twinkle, little...
(SHE stops) No, you have to sing with me.

ALBERT: Oh. Sorry.

SUZY: It's okay. Ready? One, two, three:

SUZY and ALBERT: *(singing)* Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are
Up above the world so high
Like a diamond in the sky
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!

(SUZY claps and then ALBERT joins her.)

SUZY: We sound really good! Let's finish filling the bucket with sand!

ALBERT: Okay.

(THEY continue to fill the bucket with sand, happily.)

BLACKOUT

END OF SCENE

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