



## Sanctuary City

*Martyna Majok*

201.893.8828  
martynamajok@gmail.com

Olivier Sultan  
Creative Artists Agency  
405 Lexington Avenue  
New York, NY 10174  
212.277.9000  
olivier.sultan@caa.com

ANNA

And poor Katey when you're away? What does she do?

*Anna looks at Kate.*

KATE

Oh, I continue.

- Harold Pinter, "Old Times"

## **Folks.**

<b>G</b>	ages 17-21, female
<b>B</b>	ages 17-21, male
<b>Henry</b>	older, male

G and B were born in other countries and brought to America young.  
Henry is first generation. Born in America of immigrant parents.  
All have American mouths. All raised working class.

## **Place.**

Newark and thereabouts.  
2001-2006.

*A bare stage. And then a surprise.*

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*indicates a new memory*

## **Dialogistics.**

Slashes // indicate overlap.

Ellipses ... are active silences.

(Non-italicized parenthesis) within dialogue are meant to be spoken.

## **Notes.**

The countries of origin can suit the actors chosen though no character is Western European in origin. The characters have grown up within working class multicultural America. They do have connections, feelings, and opinions about their countries of origin (or, in Henry's case, the country of his parents) but I limited moments of this in the script in order not to specify which countries. This was done in an effort for wider, more inclusive casting across subsequent productions, which need not replicate the casting of the original production. I hope this translates to more opportunities for actors. G or B or Henry can be Vietnamese, Pakistani, Ecuadorian, Uzbek, Eritrean, Indian, Haitian – just some among many options. B wants to stay in America because his life is here, not because he does not love where he comes from. He feels his home to be here, as well as the specific future he imagines for himself.

If your production and actors allow, please consider concealing the existence of a third character in this play until his appearance onstage.

There are no props or mime in the first part of the play beyond the two objects specified.

Avoid sentimentality. It has no currency in these characters' world.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(Knock knock knock on a window. Late night. Winter 2001.)*

- G Can you let me in
- B You climbed up the fire escape?
- G Can I come in
- B What time is You know I have a test // tomorrow—
- G Open the window
- B *(cont'd)*—first period—
- G Quick before someone calls the // cops
- B No one's gonna No one ever calls the // cops
- G Or just come downstairs and // let me in
- B *(working to open window)* Hold on
- G It's freezing
- B Hold on
- G it's freezing
- B HOLD—*(window's open)*
- G I didn't wanna wake yer mom, // buzz the
- B It's freezing
- G *(cont'd)* so I climbed up the
- B Where's yer // coat?
- G I know it's late
- B Where's yer coat? It's freezing.  
Fuck it's freezing.

G I know.

*(A gust of wind.*

*He sees her.*

*He knows.)*

B What happened.

G Can you close the window.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

*(Knock knock knock on a window. Spring 2002.)*

B She's goin back

G *(surprised to see him here)* what the fuck

B She's goin back!

G What? Who—

B // Back—

G Hold on, Manager's lookin at me.

B I don't know what to do.

G *(cont'd)* Just—meet me outside.

B I don't know what to do.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

B What happened.

G Can't wait to get away from—

B Yer neck

G *(cont'd)*—one day I'll—

B Did you see yer neck?

G It's at home.

B What?

G My coat.  
Didn't have a chance to grab it.

Can you close the window?, (*re: hurt, can't*) My arm's

B Yeah.

G I never wanted to hurt someone so fuckin bad.  
For him to hurt so fuckin

First opportunity I get, man, I'm outta there.

B Is your mom okay?

...  
...

G Can I get under yer blanket real quick?

B Yeah.

G It's cold.

B Better?

G Yeah.

B Good.

G Can I crash with you tonight?

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G What happened.

B She's goin back

G Who?

B Back home, my mom

G // Back—?

B (*coded short hand language of being in public, finality*) She's goin back.

She's afraid of stayin in the country. There's some shit at work, she said. Boss keeps takin money from her tips cuz, y'know, he can, what's she gonna do?, report it?, to who? And she's afraid what happened to Jorge's gonna happen to her and so she's goin back. And cuz of September.

G keep yer voice // they think i'm in the bathroom

B (*re: 9/11*) Like now anything can happen. Now anything can happen here too now.

She didn't say that but

So she's goin back.

G What about you?

B She said I can decide.

G Decide what.

B If I wanna stay. // Or go back.

G WHAT.

B Yeah.

G Did she give you a day—?

B Like now Like she'd love to know right now. Soon. Real soon.  
I'm 17, she says. Almost grown, she says. So, she says, I can decide what I wanna do.

G She didn't wanna wait til you finish school?

B No.

G But it's just one more year!

B // No—

G Yer senior year!

B No she doesn't wanna wait.

I've been here ten years, man Ten years, we've been That's half my life More than half  
my I got everything here. Yeah, like, my family's there. But everything from over half *my*  
life?: that's all here.

G Why would she just go?

B I don't know what to do.

G Without you?

B ...

G She came here fer you. So why would she be goin back? Without you?

...  
...

Did something happen?

...  
...

B I don't know what to do.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(Late night. Quiet. In bed.)*

...  
...  
...

G I got blood on yer sheets.

B Oh—

G From my arm. I'm sorry.

B It's okay.

G I'm sorry.

B It's okay.

It's fine.

I'll say it's mine.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

G But then what're you gonna do about next year? Can you graduate?

B If I stay.

G What about college?

B I can't go.

G Why!?

B Unless I pay for it myself.

Which

I can't go.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

B What are you gonna say at school tomorrow?  
About yer arm, yer neck—

G I'm not goin.

B Yeah.

Yeah prob'ly you should maybe don't.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

B What are you gonna say at school? About yer face—

G I'm not goin.

B Yeah.

Yeah prob'ly you should maybe don't.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

B What are you gonna say at school? About yer eye—

G I'm not goin.

B Yeah.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B What are you gonna say at school? About—

G I'm not goin.

B Yeah.  
Yeah prob'ly you should maybe // don't.

G Last time this shit happened, (remember?, my eye?), Miss Romano saw, sent me to the nurse, nurse called my mom, mom said I fell, then she freaked the fuck out on me when I came home. She said to say I fuckin fell, whatever. Said to say I always fall, I fell. Which I think they'll buy *once*.

B I can bring you the homework.

G Say I'm sick.

B The flu?

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B I can bring you the homework.

G Say I'm sick.

B The flu.

G Used flu last time.

B A cold?

G Yeah just say a cold.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B I'll bring you the homework.

G Say I'm sick.  
B A cold?  
G Something longer.  
B Right.  
G (*cont'd*) Need a few days this time.  
B Chicken pox?  
G Yeah. Say chicken pox.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B I can bring you the homework.  
G Say I'm sick.  
B Chicken // pox.  
G Used that already.  
B Right. Measles?  
G (*'no'*) Mm.  
B Mumps.  
G The fuck's mumps?  
B Stomach bug.  
G No.  
B Why.  
G Cuz no that's nasty no.  
B Lice.  
G NO.  
B Crabs.

*(She is not amused.  
He is.)*

A cold.

G Yeah I think it's fine to use a cold again.

B A cold.

G A bad one.

B A really bad // cold.

G DON'T SAY LICE.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B I can bring you the homework.

G Say I'm sick. The flu.

B Are you sure you don't just // wanna tell—?

G *(finality)* No.

She's scared they'll send us back if they find out what's goin on at home.

B Who?

G *(cont'd)* Or just her.  
She's scared they'd separate us.

B Who would send you back?

G America. If they wanted to investigate. If they like—checked. She's been usin a fake social security for years.

Everyone's more, y'know—*(careful/nervous)*

B Yeah.

G —cuz of September. Or maybe they'd put me in some kind of—some place for kids—separate us. I don't know if she even knows specifically what to be afraid of but she is. She's scared. There's that place on Fish Kill Road. In South Kearny. The place Rogelio's dad got sent to.

B That's just for guys, that place, // I think.

G I don't wanna get separated. Or for her to go to Fish Kill Road.

B It's just for guys.

G So where do you they send women? They gotta have somewhere to put the women.  
Where's the women go?

B I don't know.  
Further.  
I guess.

...

G I don't wanna get separated.  
  
I don't want anything like  
Like Fish Kill  
I know there's people Even if it's just for guys  
I know there's people there on Fish Kill Road.  
Behind wire.  
I see them. We drive by and I see.  
There's barbed wire and people and I don't wanna go.

B *You* wouldn't hafta go—

G That place is real.  
  
It's just better not to talk about anything that happens at home. Better I say I fell.  
Or have the flu.

B Maybe it would be good to be separated.

G Not from my mom.

B No but—

G (*firm finality*) She's never gonna leave him. You think I haven't asked?  
  
I asked.  
  
...

You want me to hide under yer bed?, from yer mom—

B It's okay.

G (*cont'd*) Or I can just jet right now. Before she wakes up. If you need me out.

B It's okay, my mom won't care.

G (*cont'd*) I'll just walk around the neighborhood. Go to Paolo's, whenever they open, hang out there. Eat some eggs. I didn't finish the math anyway.

B You can just stay here.

G I've been comin by a lot.

B So stay. Eat breakfast with us.

G You eat breakfast?

B Not usually but. I could.

...

G Yeah?

B We could. Together, yeah. I got eggs.

Stay.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

G Don't go.

B Then I'd end up just like her. If I stay in the country, I'd be just like my mom, doin whatever job—shitty job—whatever shitty job would take her just to fuck her over down the line.

G But you went to school—

B (*cont'd*) Always scared.

G You did like, all of school here.

B Doesn't matter. My mom brought me over. And she kept me over.

G So?

B So when she overstayed her visa, so did I.

G But you were a kid.

B We were supposed to go back 9 years ago.

G And you were supposed to know that? You were supposed to buy a plane ticket? At fuckin, 8—?

B Doesn't matter.

G You were a kid.

B It doesn't matter. If they find out how long we've been here, we won't even be allowed back for another 10 fuckin years.

G Don't go.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

*(The urban version of crickets.)*

...

...

G Yer mom's gonna think we're sleepin together.

B We are sleepin together.

G I mean like, *together*.

B I don't think so.

...

G Why the fuck not.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

B Which  
I can't go.

G But why?

B Cuz I can't pay for that! For college? By myself?

G Neither can I but—aid.

B I can't apply for aid.

G Why.

B CUZ I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO BE HERE.

...  
...

G okay wow cuz I never scream at you when you ask me // questions

B We came here legal but we didn't stay here legal. We *over*-stayed. So I'm a fuckin criminal, according to Here. I could *pay* for school. If I *could* pay for school. They'd like, take my money—If I *had*—like, happily Listen I could do a lotta things if I had money.

*(finality)* I can't get aid. Scholarships. Can't apply for federal financial aid. Can't go.

G Yer mom can't help?

B *(firm finality)* My mom is leaving.

...  
...

G What about community college—?

B No.

G But you could // still—

B No fuck that you know how fuckin hard I worked since comin here fuck that.  
I get better grades than fuckin, everyone in there.  
I work harder than  
Fuck that.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G G'night.

B G'night.

G Hey.

B Yeah?

G Thank you.

B No problem.

G For real though. Thank you for lettin me stay.

B It's okay.

G'night.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

G Hey.

B Yeah?

G Thanks.

B All good.

G'night.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

G Hey—

B *(impatient)* Yeah?

...

G *(quietly, feeling like a burden)* thank you

...

B *(truly)* Anytime.

Goodnight.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

G We'll find a way for you to stay.

B There isn't one.

G We'll make one.

B I don't know if I can even Like how would I even My mother's workin a full-time job for our roof AND she has to borrow money from me sometimes. Comin home like, half-a-person, after work, exhausted. How'm I gonna do all that AND school? How'm I gonna do that?

G You can live with me! At mine's!

B *You* don't even wanna live at yours.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

B Good//night.

G Hey.

B Yeah?

G Thanks.

B (*it is*) It's okay.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

G Thank you.

B (*it is*) It's okay.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

G Thank you.

B (*it is*) It's okay.

G I owe you.  
Thank you.

...

*(Nighttime.)*

...

...

B *(in G's first language:)* Goodnight.

...

G *(in B's first language:)* Goodnight.

...

B/G Goodnight.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

G I can help you pay rent.

B What?

G On this apartment. I'm over here all the time. We sort of kind of already live together here, sleep to—I sleep here sometimes. So I should help. I can pay.

B Fer a year and then yer gone.

G ...

B "First opportunity you get, man."

G Just—finish school at least.

B And then what?

Keep workin at the restaurant? Moppin floors? Washin dishes?

Or, shit, I could always go to war. *They're* not checkin papers. Could just ship out with all the seniors still failin algebra. Why not. 'Be like a high school reunion in Iraq.

...

G We'll find a way for you to stay.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(Knock knock knock on a door. Lost. Autumn 2002.)*

B *(heartbroken)* She left.

G What?

B She's gone.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(Knock knock knock on a window. Found. Autumn 2002.)*

G *(elated)* We're leaving!

B What?

G She's gonna leave him! We're leaving!

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B And how're you gonna help me pay rent?

G With my *job*.

B And how much you make? Hundred a week?

G Varies.

B Can't bank on varies.

G It varies but I'm there almost every day after school except Thursdays.  
Shit I've come away with a HUNDRED sometimes just on Fridays cuz of tip-out.

B Really?

G Almost once yeah almost.

If things keep goin how they're goin at home, I'll be at yer place a lot.

B *(concern, not inconvenience)* Really?

G Unless you don't want me to.

B No yer good.

G Doesn't look like anything's gonna change. So I'll prob'ly be here a lot.  
If you'll like, have me.

...

B I'll make you a key.

G So I'll contribute.  
That way, you won't hafta do this completely alone.  
And you can finish school.

...

B You sure?

G Make me a key.

B Yeah.

Yeah okay.

Yeah maybe I can do // this—

G And you can rent out the extra room!

B What room?

G For extra money. You can rent out the extra room in this apartment!

B ...

G When she. Eventually.

B ...

G Sorry.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

B Yer leaving?

G My mom 'n I!

B Where?

G Schuyler Ave! Like right on the border! Close!

B How did she—?

G She got naturalized!

B What?

G She's a citizen now! She was takin all the tests, secret! She got a naturalization certificate, a restraining order, and a fuckin *moving company*, all secret! We're gonna, when he leaves for work, we're gonna pack up all our shit and *GO*.

B When?

G Tomorrow morning. Today! In a few hours! TODAY! Movin guys are comin soon as he's gone then we gotta pack up everything we can and haul that shit out fast. We gotta be outta there by 4, when he's back from work.  
Back to an empty fuckin apartment!

She had this shit planned for months. (*proud*) Fuckin, *months!*

I can't believe it. We're finally leaving! And I don't even hafta switch schools!

B (*something off*) That's great.

G I know!

B Congratulations.  
To yer mom.

G We're both moving!

B On becoming a citizen.

G Oh and I'm one too!

B What?

G She squeaked in right under the deadline.

B What do you—?

G Right under the wire. Cuz if yer under 18, if the kid's under 18 when the parent gets it, then it gets transferred to the kid. Automatic.

B So you didn't hafta pay none of those fees?

G Guess not!

B Or hafta take the test.

G Nope!

B ...

G I'm // sorry—

B You gonna need help?  
With packing?

G We got the guys—

B I know but do you need more help? You gotta pack up an entire apartment in how long?

G Yeah but it's during school.

B So how are you gonna—

G My mom's gonna call 'n say I'm sick.  
She planned that shit too!

B So I'll say I'm sick.

G No but you'd hafta miss school.

...

B (*he did*) I didn't do the math anyway.

...

G Okay.

Okay! Tomorrow, then—

B You wanna crash here? Tonight?  
One last time?

G Why one last time?

...

*(And she realizes.)*

B *(‘right,’ an end)* I’ll make eggs.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

G And you can rent out the extra room!

B What?

G For extra money. You can rent out the extra room in this apartment!

B ...

G When she. Eventually.

B ...

G Sorry.

B It’s okay.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

G When?

B *(heartbroken)* This morning.

...

...

G *(doesn’t know what to say)*...did she say goodbye to you?

B *(not an answer to her question)* I rode the train with her to the airport.  
Helped carry her stuff.

They don’t let you wait anymore. Did you know that?

They don’t let you wait with yer person that’s gonna board the plane.  
Cuz of September.

So if yer not gettin on a plane, they don’t let you past security.

I watched it out the window.

Watched for hours.  
Imagined her in one of em.  
Knew she was in  
*one* of em.  
Flyin away.

...  
...  
...

fuckin, of course we said goodbye

G     sorry

B     We've been sayin goodbye since she bought the fuckin ticket.  
You wanna crash?

G     Tonight?

B     With me? At mine's?

I don't wanna go back there.  
By myself—

G     Yeah. // I can.

B     I know you got yer new place now.

G     I'd love to crash.

B     She left a glass of water on the table.  
She drank out of it this morning and left it on the table.

It'll still be there.

There's gonna be parts of her all over the apartment.  
Things she left. Clothes she wants me to donate.

I don't think I can...

G     It's okay.

B     Thanks.

G     It's okay.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B There's so much to pack.

G *(thrilled)* There is  
so much  
to *pack!*

B I mean you *could* just leave him a mess right? If there's shit you don't want.

G True.

B *(cont'd)* Shit you don't wanna clean.

G Yeah.

B Yer never comin back so leave that Fuck a mess.

G I thought about pissin in his bed.

B Why don't you.

...

G *(unspoken: 'actually...')*

B *(unspoken: 'just sayin...')*

...

G We'll see how we're doin on time.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B *(heartbroken)* Would *you* want any of em?

G What.

B Her clothes?

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G Let's start with the clothes.

B     *(on a mission)* Clothes.

G     I can do that if you wanna box the books.

B     *(on a mission)* Books.

G     I dunno how I coulda done this shit alone. Even with the guys.

B     *(gimme the)* Tape.

Yeah I dunno how you coulda either, those guys're garbage, get yer money back.

G     I'm gonna miss this place.

...

B     How could you miss this place?

G     Twelve years.

B     Yeah but.

G     Longer livin here than anywhere else.

Than

Longer than I known you even.

B     Still.

G     It's a place I was.

I'm *from* here.

Even though I was born in

I'm from *here*.

Wherever I end up endin up,

I'll have gotten there from this place. Here.

...

And it's closer to you than my new place is gonna be.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

B You don't have to // if—

G No—just—you sure you don't wanna keep this?

B If you like it, take it.

G You sure?

B Take it.

...

G Thank you.

B But don't throw it out okay. If you take it, don't just throw it out.

G Okay.

B Wear it.  
Like, sometimes.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G (*pissed*) There's another one.

B Another // what.

G We JUST moved and there's already another guy. Like a weed. Like a fuckin—  
At least he doesn't knock her unconscious—YET—that I KNOW OF—YET—Just—  
I dunno, man. I can't seem to keep a dick outta that woman.

...

B That woman gave you life.

G Yeah well so did yers and here we are.

Can I crash.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G You still can't sleep?

B ...

G Don't you have a test tomorrow? It's late.

B *(quietly)* There's so much stuff. She left a life of stuff.

G You don't hafta do this all right now. Come to bed.

B Would you want any of em?

G What?

B Her clothes?

...

...

You don't have to // if—

G No—just—you sure you don't wanna keep this?

B If you like it, take it.

G You sure?

B Take it.

...

G Thank you.

B But don't throw it out okay. If you take it, don't just throw it out.

G Okay.

B Wear it.

Like, sometimes.

...

G Come to bed.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

G Good//night.

B Hey.

G Yeah?

B Thanks.

G *(it is)* It's okay.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

B Thank you.

G *(it is)* It's okay.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

B Thank you.  
I owe you.

...

G *(it is)* It's okay.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

G No fuckin way

B Cmon

G It's racist!

B Not if I'm tellin you it's okay

G This is so fucked up

B So you'll do it?

G No

B Cmon!

G Why can't you just write a *note*? I could *forge* a note.

B Just be glad they didn't want her to come *in*.

I'm calling.

G No!

B It's ringing

G I'm not ready!

B You've heard her talk enough // times—

G This is so racist

B (*cont'd*)—you've had like, 9 years of research

G This is so

B It's ringing

G This is so Hello!

(*in B's mother's accent*) Yes—Hello! Good morning also to you.

B (*quiet*) yes!

(*G is mortified.*)

G Yes Hello Yes, Um, So, My—son

B (*quiet, finds this hilarious*) oh my god

G is sick.

The flu.

(*Sees B stifling laughter.*

*G sees this.*)

No sorry. Lice. He is disgusting yes and cannot be in school. Tell everyone. Thank you.  
Bye.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

B What'd they feed you tonight?

G Chicken Milanese.

B Nice.

G I brought some.

B WHAT.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B What'd they feed you tonight?

G Penne vodka sauce.

B YES.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B What'd they feed you?

G Penne vodka sauce.

B YES.

G With chicken.

B YES FUCK YES.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B What'd you get tonight?

G Spaghetti.

B Oh.  
Okay.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B What'd you get tonight?

G Chicken—

B YES.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

B What'd they give you? What'd you get tonight?

G Actually so they want us to eat family-meal at work now actually.

B Oh.

G Cuz people Yeah Cuz people take too much.

B Sure.

G Bring it home.  
For their actual families.

B Right.

G You eat?

...

B Yeah.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

B What's that?

G Chicken // Milanese.

B YES!

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

B What'd they give you tonight?

G Oh I'm so sorry. I forgot to grab food.

B You didn't eat?

G I forgot.

B Oh.  
Okay.  
You hungry?

G There might be somethin in the fridge.

B Not much. Want me to run // to the store—

G Why don't you check?

B Shop-Rite's // open still—

G Why don't you just check the fridge.

...

*(B suspects something.)*

...

G Check the fridge.

...

*(He looks at her, suspiciously.*

*He looks into an unseen fridge.*

...

*His face changes.*

***She lights a lighter.***

***This is the only time we see a physical object in this entire section.  
It glows between them.)***

G *(singing)* Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday to you, Happy—

*(serious, grave)* I'm sorry.

I meant it as a nice thing.

B *(resisting tears – of loneliness, not appreciation)* I know.

G I'm sorry.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G Where've you been?  
It's 3 in the—

B *(as he enters, passes her by, exits to bed)* Out.

*(A door shuts.)*

...

G *(alone, sass)* Okay.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G Where've you been—?

B Goodnight Out Goodnight.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B Where've you been?

G Where've *you* been?

B *(unspoken: Oh okay. You want a secret too.)*

G *(unspoken: Yeah I want a secret too.)*

B *(sass)* Okay.

G *(sass)* Okay.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B Where've you been?

G *('nowhere good')* Can I get under yer blanket real quick.

B Yeah.

G It's cold.

...

B Better?

G Yeah.

...

...

*(The feeling of home.)*

Yeah.

B Good.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

*(Knock knock knock on a window. Spring 2003.)*

B *(jumps, annoyed)* jesus christ.

*(Knock knock knock on a window.)*

G *(knocking)* Can you open the // window?

B the fuck—

G *(knocking)* Hello!

B *(to himself)* are you fuckin kidding me right now

G *(still knocking on window)* What? I can't hear you!

B I'm comin.

G *(can't hear, still knocking)* You gonna open the // window?

B I'M COMIN AND I'M OPENIN IT NOW.

...

...

...

G You mad?

B I'm exhausted. These fuckin essays, fuckin, homework I'm just not I'm not doin this fuckin math homework. Fuck math. Fuck all of math. They called me into work tonight and what could I say. Now it's 2am I'm so tired I don't even WHY DON'T YOU JUST TAKE THE FUCKIN STAIRS.

G Tradition.

B You have the key.

G I left it.  
Can I crash?

B I'm not doin well, you know.

G Yer sick?

B No. I'm // not—

G What's wrong?

B I'm tellin you. I'm not doin well. In school. I'm not doin well with any of it. Work. I can't keep up. I'm so tired. I'm so Like It's like I'm runnin in my sleep. Everywhere. All the time. Runnin. Use the key. Please. Next time.

G I got into school.

...

B What.

G I got // in—

B Where.

G ...Boston.

...

...

B Scholarship?

...

...  
...

B *(re: in her bag)* What's that?

G A bottle.  
The rest of a bottle.  
To celebrate.

B ...

G You can copy my math.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B Check the fridge.

G Why.

B Why don't you just check the // fridge.

G It's not my birthday // Why're you stealin my idea.

B Just—  
Check the fridge.

...

*(She does, suspiciously.*

*Her face changes.)*

There isn't a song for it but

Congratulations.

...

Oh no.

// Oh no.

G *(through tears of appreciation)* We clearly can't put shit in fridges!

B No.

G Thank you.

B Congratulations.

...

G (*you have no idea how much*) Thank you.

\* \* \*

\* \* \*

B So you wanna go with me?

G To the fuckin—?

B Cmon!

G (*lame*) That shit's so—

B What.

G You like that shit?

B You don't wanna dress up?

G Isn't it like, \$70? Don't they want like, 70 a head?

B Yeah but.

G And then I gotta buy a *dress*?

B It doesn't hafta be expensive though.

G A limo—

B The bus, man, I don't know who you think I am.

G And I gotta hang with these clowns all night?  
For \$70?

B There'll be food.

G For \$70!?!

(*no way*) I dunno, man.

I dunno.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B You look so good.

G *You* look so good.

B No you look so // good.

G Shut the fuck up.

B You do You look so good.

G I'll punch you in the face.

B I'd punch you in the face you'd *still* look good.

G Where do I put this expensive ass flower shit?

B (*moved*) You got me a—?

G It's fuckin tradition.  
You wanna do it yerself?

B No you.

G Okay how do I—?

B I think you—Here, there's a—

G Yeah

B Just yeah pin it on my FUCK OW // FUCK

G SORRY

B TAKE IT OUT

G SORRY

B FUCK

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G When did we meet?

B Third grade.

G What school.

B Franklin.

G Where was it located?

B Hundred Davis.

G In?

B Kearny.

G You went to a public school in Kearny but listed in your application your address during that time as being in Newark?

B I lied. Gave a friend's address in Kearny. So I could go to the better school.

...

G I don't know if you wanna tell em that.

B You asked!

G We'll hafta figure that one out.  
Okay. Who was the teacher?

B Which?, when?

G Third grade, when we—

B Miss Ramirez.

G What color was her hair?

B Gray.

G What's the best pizza in town?

B It asks that?

G No but—

B Can we skip to the harder ones?

G We should start with the basics.

B But we know this shit.

G We should start with the basics.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B I got you some flower shit too.

G Aw.

B Fer yer wrist.

G Aw.

B But now there's blood on the petals.

You wanna put it—?

G No you. You put it. You Can Put It On My Wrist, Sir.  
No wait!

B What.

G Do it on the *bus*.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B Just skip to the harder questions—

G They could trick us.

B How? All this shit is true. There's nothin to memorize. No new information.

G What if you forget?

B I'm not gonna forget where I went to school. Or where we met.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(A lame, far too earnest song that was popular in 2003.)*

*They have just entered prom.*

*Looks of judgment. They are above this. Everything. Ugh. Regret.)*

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G *(annoyed, challenging)* Fine. What did the two of you have in common? Where did you go for dates? When did your relationship turn romantic? Wanna start there? When did your relationship turn romantic? Wanna start there?

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(A LOUD song that was popular in 2003. They're having a great time.)*

G THIS IS THE WORST.

B YEAH.

G I HATE THIS.

B I KNOW YOU DO.

G I HATE THIS SO MUCH.

*(She's having the greatest time.)*

SPIN ME!

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G *(cont'd, still annoyed, challenging)* Did your parents approve of the match? Why or why not? Have you ever had an argument that resulted in one of you sleeping in another room? Who, and which room—?

B *(‘stop’)* Okay.

G *(still annoyed)* No where you wanna start Where do *you* wanna start You don't like how I started so where do *you* wanna start?

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(Distant popular music from 2003. Near the end of the night.*

*They are somewhere more secluded, apart from the rest of prom.*

*A slowness. They smoke. Smoke around them.*

*They stare forward.*

*They're connected enough to not need to look at each other.)*

...

...

...

G He knew I was watchin.

...

*(They stare ahead.)*

...

...

There was this dog on my street.

My old street.

Neighbors' dog.

Big.

Ugly big.

Head like a fist.

A big grey fist.

In summers, they'd keep it chained out in front, to the fence, while they were inside makin dinner—

B How you know they were makin dinner?

G You could hear the pots and pans from the street.

And everything else you could hear that too.

Which I guess meant people could hear everything that was goin on in *our* place.

They could hear it from the street.

Which I guess meant nothing at all to people, I guess.

B You want any of this?

G (*'no'*) I'm good.

They kept the dog tied up outside cuz I guess it got in the way when they were makin dinner.

My mom's boyfriend would be comin back from work or from wherever, the bar, someone's stoop, and...

I think he knew I was watchin.

That from the window, I would watch him.

I think he knew cuz, on his way home, he'd stop at that dog.

He'd kneel down next to that dog.

And he would pet its big ugly head with the softest hands I ever seen.

He knew I was watchin.

He knew I was watchin him care for something.

That he had the capacity to be good to something.

That he was able to do that.

If that was what he wanted.

I started a lot of the fights—

B *(fact, not pandering/comforting)* No you didn't.

G Didn't stop em.

Didn't ignore him.

If I'd just kept my mouth shut and more often.

Prob'ly wasn't always worth The Last Word when the guy's got a shovel in his hand.

Kitchen knife.

B I got another bottle if you, in my jacket, // the pocket—

G Nah.

Wait what kind.

B Vodka.

G Nah yeah I thought you might have something else.

Still got the vodka I DuckTaped to my leg.

B That's gonna hurt later.

G Probably.

B There are easier ways to do things.

...

*(They stare out.)*

...

...

...

G It was worth it. I guess.  
The \$70.

*(They stare out.)*

B That chicken parm.

G Yeah that was bomb ass chicken fuckin parm.

*(They stare out. Smoke.)*

*(Exhale.)*

B That cheese—

G Hey.

B Yeah.

G Thank you.

B It's okay.

G Do you miss her?

...

...

B I'll send her the pictures of us.  
You in yer dress.

G She prob'ly thinks we're sleepin together.

B I don't think so.

...

G What're you gonna do about next year?

B Keep workin.

G At the—

B Yup. Pays. Close to home.  
And they feed me after shifts.

G Did you hear back? From any of the // schools—

B *(end of conversation)* Can't afford it. Cmon let's go inside—

G I wanna help you.

B You can help me go inside.

G I'm serious.

B ...

G I wanna help you.

*(a proposal, already knows how)* How can I help.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G *(still annoyed)* Have you met each other's parents? How often do you see each other's parents? Where do they live? When was the last time you saw them? Where? For how long? What color are their kitchen curtains—?

B Let's skip back.

G Back to the—?, // uh-huh thought so.

B The more basic ones, yeah.

G Okay.  
When did you meet?

B Third grade.

G What school.

B Franklin.

G Where was it located?

B Hundred Davis.

G In?

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G I wanna help you.

B You can help me go inside.

G I'm serious.

B ...

G I wanna help you.

*(a proposal, already knows how)* How can I help.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(Alone. Private. Quiet.)*

B what time does your spouse arrive home from work  
who takes care of payin the bills  
do you have a joint bank account  
where

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G I wanna help you.

B You can help me go inside.

G I'm serious.

B ...

G I wanna help you.

*(a proposal, already knows how)* How can I help.

B ...

G I'm a citizen now so.

How can I help.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(Alone. Private. Quiet.)*

B     who gets up first  
       what time  
       how much does your  
       name of your spouse's boss  
       do you attend regular religious  
       where

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(The last song at prom.)*

B Hey.

G I step on yer feet?

B Hey.

G Yeah.

B *(the biggest gift in the world)* Thank you.

...

G It's okay.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(Alone. Private. Quiet.)*

B     what did the two of you have in common

who proposed to  
did your parents approve of the  
why or  
when did your  
why not  
when did your relationship turn romantic

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(The late night public transit bus ride home from prom. Enthusiastically drunk.)*

B “How many people attended the wedding?”

G I love how yer not the only one on this N.J. Transit bus in a tux.

B “Where was it held?”

G Could we elope? // You wanna elope?

B Oh shit *could* we // elope?

G *I’d* elope.

B Then we wouldn’t hafta feed people.  
“Did you go on a honeymoon? // Where?”

G Yeah, man, where we goin!

B Are we really doin this?

G I’m really doin this are you really doin this?

B Cuz I’d really do this.

G THEN LET’S REALLY DO // THIS.

B (*not so loud*) Okay. // It’s late.

G WE’RE REALLY GONNA // DO THIS.

B That man’s starin at you.

G I’M GETTING MARRIED STARE ALL YOU WANT.

B He looks mad.

G I CAN TAKE HIM.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(G is over these questions. She knows this.)*

B What size is your bed? Twin, // Queen, or—?

G Twin. But eventually Queen.

B Do you have a mattress, futon, or waterbed?

G Waterbed, who wrote // these? Yeah we have a twin waterbed.

B Who sleeps on each side of the—?

G *(points to self)* Left.  
*(points to B)* Right.

B What form of contraception (birth control) // do you use?

G I know what contraception—

B I'm just reading what's there what's written there.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

...

*(The quiet of task-doing.)*

...

B Yer not gonna fold that?

G I did fold that.

B You just sorta rolled it.

G That's folding.

B You'll need warmer clothes than that.

G They give you sweatshirts there.

B You gotta buy those.

G No everyone wears one they give you them.

...  
...

*(as if to self, not happy)* There's so much to pack.

B Can I keep this?

G What.

...

No I'm takin that with me.

B Can you bring it? When you come back? At break?  
We're gonna need pictures. Proof. Of years together.

G We can take more before I go. And at break.

B You'll need to leave me some of your things.

G What things?

B For my room. In case of a home visit.  
They surprise you sometimes, drop by where you live.

G What.

B Yeah. Personal things. Things you'd leave at a—y'know. Makeup. Underwear.  
An earring.

G ...

B Just leave me something of yourself.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G When was your wife's Oh Jesus when was your wife's last menstrual period?

B Yer gonna hafta make me a chart.

G Have you ever had an argument that resulted in one of you sleeping in another room?

B ...

G Who, and which room?

B ...

G Why?

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B Just leave me something of yourself.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G Who, and which room?

B ...

G Why?  
What do you disagree about?

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B Just leave me something of yourself.

Before you go.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G I'll be back in December.

B Not Thanksgiving?

G (*re: things at home*) Depends.

B Really?

G Depends who she's got in that apartment with her, yeah.

B Just come stay with me.  
If you came down for Thanksgiving, we could just do it then.

G I'll be back in December. For winter break.  
But we can call all the time. We'll talk all the time.

B Okay.  
December.

G I'll see you again, at the latest, in December.

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B What do you disagree about?

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

B Hey.

G Yeah?

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

G What do you disagree about?

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(The bus stop.)*

G These bags, it's like I'm movin my whole life away.

B Boston's not far.

G Feels far, Boston.

B You'll be back soon.

G I'll be back in December.

B Not Thanksgiving?



B You'll be back soon.

G *(a threat, to someone offstage)* HEY MAN.

B He's just // It's okay

G *(a threat)* HEY.

B *(cont'd)* He's just gonna put em under // the bus.

G WHAT IF THEY FALL OUT.

B They won't.

G WHAT IF SOMEONE TAKES MY SHIT.

B I think you made it pretty clear to everyone on this bus they shouldn't.

G I don't like they took my bags.

B It's okay.

G *(cont'd)* I don't like any of this.

B Hey.

G *(cont'd)* I don't wanna—

B Hey.

***(He holds out a ring.***

***This is the only other time we see a physical object in this section.)***

B *(a proposal)* Thank you.

...  
...  
...

G where—

B My mom left it for me.  
In case.

...  
...

*(Carefully and respectfully, he takes her hands.  
Is this the kindest way a man has ever touched her hand?)*

*He puts the ring in the palm of her hand.*

*They hold all four hands.  
And look at each other.)*

...

B Good luck.

...

G Good luck.

...

...

B/G I'll see you soon.

*(A light goes off.  
Dark.)*

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(In dark, they part.)*

*(Two people stand apart, alone, in different cities.)*

*(Weeks.)*

*(Months.)*

*(Years.)*

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*

*(A light goes on.)*

*(Winter 2006. A few days away from a new year. Very late night.)*

B *(off)* Hold on I can't find my—

G *(off)* Oh I've got mine.

*(A key in a door.)*

*(A string of Christmas lights has been turned on.)*

*(A small apartment in the Ironbound section of Newark.*

*A top floor of a four-storey building located on a residential street, just around the corner from the main drag.*

*This place belongs to people who work often and work late.*

*It is a mixture of things bought at the ABC store on Ferry St, the Goodwill or the Kmart over the bridge in Kearny, and inherited from roommates now long gone. And family who came over for a summer to work, now also long gone.*

*On the walls are a few things brought over in a suitcase from across an ocean many years ago, now collecting dust. Things made of straw or wicker. Art purchased at the dollar store.*

*There is nothing intentionally kitschy about this place.*

*It is someone's genuine attempt to make a home out of the things they have on hand or can afford.*

*Beyond the windows, we hear the last of the night's drinkers, a car or two pumping merengue.*

*A cat walking up a fire escape.*

*Nighttime in a small city.)*

*(They enter.*

*Tension between them.*

*B is not happy to see her. G feels it.)*

G *(re: lights)* That's nice. Where's the tree?

B Not this year. You need water?

G *(re: drinking more)* Actually I thought we could—

B I'm getting you water.

*(He goes into the kitchen.*

*She, alone in the space, taking it in.)*

G Did you take it down already? The...?

*(He enters with water.)*

Did you take it down?

The tree?

B No.

Just didn't really bother after that first year. *(re: mother/family)* It's different without—

G Right.

B Yeah—family—anyone—So I didn't think, a tree, // y'know—

G Right.

B —that there was really any point.

...

Not you though.

G What?

B Different.

G *(pleased)* Yeah?

B Still drink like // it's yer last meal.

G Oh.

B Like everything's just—yours.

G Well if it's free, I'm gonna drink it. I'm not wasteful.

B Who said that shit was free?

G What?

B That shit tonight was not free.

G // Wait.

B (*cont'd*) None of that shit that you consumed tonight // was free.

G Did you hafta pay for all those?

B I woulda, yeah, if someone saw. So next time you ambush me at work—

G Next time you won't be workin when we've made plans—

B (*jab*) I will always have to work.

...

...

G Why'd you keep refillin my glass // if—

B Had to give you something to do.

G I came to see you.

B Yeah but I got called into—I said we'd reschedule.

G (*sore point*) We did. Couple times. Been tryin to see you since I got in but said they got you workin every day.  
Even Monday.  
When they're closed.

B Holiday season's different. You looked up the schedule?

G I remember the schedule.

B You thought I was lying // to you?

G No.

B Look I'm sorry—

G It's okay.

B (*jab*) —I'm sorry *I* had to work.  
  
(*fuck you*) Here's yer water.

G     *(fuck you too)* Thank you.

...

...

B     *(re: ending the night)* So listen I'm gonna // need to head to bed soon—

G     Oh shit did I give you this? Here. It's wine. Merry Christmas. Belated.

B     You shouldn't have—

G     Yer welcome.

B     *(cont'd)* —I work at a bar.

G     Can I crash tonight?

...

B     Bus is still runnin.

G     I brought a bottle.

B     And thank you but do I hafta drink it now?

G     I'm goin back in a few days.

B     And I've been workin all night.

G     I didn't get a chance to talk to you at all // at the bar.

B     I was workin. On gettin you free // drinks.

G     I didn't want free drinks.

B     You seemed to.

G     I wanted to see you.

B     And you saw me. You saw the place. Like you wanted. You got everything you wanted—

G     How's yer mom—

B     You already asked me that. So I can order you a cab or you can catch the—

*(CRACK. She cracks the wine open.)*

G It's a twist off.

*(An irrevocably open bottle of wine between them.)*

I didn't know where we were gonna be at the point at which this would become useful so I didn't want any barriers and/or obstacles I'll grab glasses.

*(She exits to the kitchen.  
He stands there, alone. Angry to be trapped.)*

G *(re-entering with glasses)* It's good to be back. This place. The fire escape. I'd missed this place—

B No you haven't.

G What?

B I think you need to go home.

...

G You called me down here.

B I called you last month. And you didn't come.

G You told me not to!

B *(re: forget it, 'you should just go')* It doesn't matter—

G *(cont'd)* When I called you back, you told me don't come.

B Well you had exams. So.

G I told you I would though! I said fuck exams, soon as there's a bus, there's no bus outta Boston at 2 in the morning, what could I do—

B It doesn't matter—

G *(cont'd)* And then you said don't come—

B And you listened. So.

G I'm here. I'm here now.

B Well it was nice of you to stop by on your way to a future.

G ...

B Nice of you to make the time. The trip. The effort. Eventually. Nice to finally fuckin see you. You know they cost a *dollar*, some of these busses? If you book early. Here, here's a dollar. Hope your next visit three and a half years from now will be just as pleasant.

G Wanna practice?

...

B What.

G Where did you meet?  
What school?  
What did the two of you have in common—?

B Why'd you back out.

Wanna start there?

How bout Why'd you back out, wanna start there?

G ...

B What.  
Please.  
Cuz all I got was a letter. A letter. After three years of waiting. Three and a half years of planning. Tellin me you changed yer mind.

G I changed it back.

...

B Just like that.

G I'm here.

B So am I. I've *been* here. For three and a half years, I've been *here*.  
I felt like I had the key. A key. In my hands. I never felt that before in my entire life. I made plans. Schools. What schools I might—Doors opened up for me, everywhere, in my mind, the things I could imagine for myself. There were things I was finally able to really imagine for myself. I was gonna join the world I live in. The world *you* got to live in for three and a half years.  
And then—a letter.

G There were stories comin out every day, what could happen, if we were caught.

B I was always up front about what you'd be risking.

G And it didn't sink in. It didn't sink in til it did. When you called.  
I'd ignored the papers, the news, the stories—all the stories. Lady jailed 5 years. Father of two, deported. Couple in Texas, fined a quarter-mill, both of em—and they had *kids*—*together*. I ignored my feelings—any feelings I *coulda* had—for anyone else. For three and a half years. I never even *kissed* anyone. *No one*. For three and a half *years*. I lived the story. I wore the ring. And then you called.  
At two in the morning.  
And I got nervous.  
And it sunk in.

...

...

You shoulda told me—

B I didn't tell anyone.

G Yeah but you should have told *me*.

B You knew. // You always knew.

G Yeah but not that you—

B (*cont'd*) That that could happen, you knew.

G It wasn't supposed to.

B You never asked me not to—

G I didn't think I needed to! If it's a quarter-mill or jail—

B So what did you expect—

G For you to be smarter.

B No one knew.

G (*cont'd*) And not *that*.

B What did you expect.

G (cont'd) Not a phone call // like that—

B No what did you *expect*.

G Nothing!

...

Congratulations.

...

...

...

B You can crash on the couch, if you have to.  
Had to get a roommate so the other room's got—

G Shit sorry. I've been loud.

B No she's gone this week. Got family in Philly so she's there now. Through New Year's.  
I just don't wanna go in her room while she's away.

G No problem.

B Trust, y'know. Cuz of trust.

...

G Yeah. Couch is fine.  
Or I could—

B What.

G No yeah couch is fine.

B I'll get you sheets.

*(He does. She feels strange here for the first time.*

*He returns with sheets. And she tries to change the temperature, lower the tension.)*

G Surprised you had as many people at the bar tonight. Figured people'd be with family.

B Well that's not a thing everybody has.

G ... I know that.

B Oceans away, for a lotta people.  
It's actually been a pretty good week for me at work. Busy, this neighborhood.  
*(re: immigration status)* There's a lot of us that *can't* go home.

*(He sets sheets down.)*

You for real?

G ...

B You'd do this?

*(She takes his ring from her pocket.*

*Looks him in the eye.*

*And puts it on her finger.)*

B When.

G Name the day.

B June 4th.

...

G My graduation?

...

Okay.

June 4th.

B Bring yer mom.

*(B challenges her throughout.)*

We would need one of our moms there. For photos. As a witness.

G And you already have yours?

Your person.

To witness.

...

B I thought about it. Yeah.  
(*floating the idea*) I dunno, it might be...

G Yeah.

B —nice. G Pretty fucked up.

...

B We would pay for yer dress. And everything else. And you would get a fee—

G I don't want money.

B Cuz it would be at least another 3-year process, after a wedding—

G And if I'm caught it's a quarter-mill fine or 5 years in jail. I know. I never wanted money.

B We saved—*been* savin—together. Not much but a couple K. A gesture. Our gratitude. So we would pay you. For your trouble.

G I'm not takin any money. So then if something happened, you could turn me in.

B I can't turn anybody in.

G But yer witness could. Could turn both of us in.

B That wouldn't happen.

G Yeah? So you feel safe? With your witness—?

B Yeah.

G —bein involved in all this? Cuz it's a lot. It's a lotta fuckin trouble.

B I know that.

G (*cont'd*) This would be both our lives if we're caught. So I would just need to know before June 4<sup>th</sup> if you feel safe. With your witness.

B Yeah.  
I do.

G Really.

B Yeah.

...  
...

G (*genuinely concerned, giving him an opportunity*) Really.

...  
...

B Yeah.

...  
...

G You think we'd need to answer personal stuff in the interview?

B Like about money?

G Like about our bodies.

B ...

G You think they'll ask about our bodies when they bring us into separate rooms?

B Like, what our bodies are like?

G Personal things, yeah. Things only we're supposed to know about each other.

B Why.

G You think they might?

B They might, maybe.

G So what should I know.

B What.

G About yer body.

B ...

G I head back in a few days—

B We don't hafta talk about this now.

G Then when.

B Are we really doing this?

G I'm really doing this are you really doing this. When would we talk about that.

B I don't know. The honeymoon.  
I guess we'd go over that on the honeymoon.

G Always looked forward to that.

B Me too.

G Never had a vacation.

B I'd always looked forward to it too.

...

...

*(Something transpires between them a moment.  
They remember who they have always been.)*

...

...

G I'm sorry.

...

...

B *(genuine)* Are we really doin this?

...

G I'm really doin this.

...

...

Are we really doin this?

...

...

You think we'd have to...

B What?

G ...on the honeymoon?

...

B I don't think so. Not like, actually.

G Then you'll have to describe it to me.  
What it might be like.  
With you.

...

...

...

What do you look like.

...

...

...

B ...I um—Really?

...

I...

I have one mole here. (*points somewhere on his chest*)

I think you saw that when we went down the shore.

And here. (*points somewhere else on his chest*)

And...here. (*points above his hip bone*)

G Where?

B There. *(points above his hip bone)* Here.

G I think I have one there too. And here. *(points to her collarbone)*  
And here. A few here. *(points to the back of her neck)*  
And here. *(points to one of her ribs)*  
And two here. *(points to the inside of one of her thighs)*

B You got a lot.

G There might be more. I can check later on myself. For you.

B Yeah I'll check on me too.

G You have one here.  
*(She touches a part of his face.)*  
You missed that one.  
...  
What are you like? When you—

B We're doin this right now?

G It's the only part we haven't covered. So if you wanted to tell me—or show me—now's the time. I'm here.  
I make noise when I'm—

B Okay.

G When I'm about to—

B I don't think they'd ask us this—

G What about scars.  
Things that might turn into scars.  
Bruises.

*(Keys in a lock.*

*They both turn toward the sound.)*

*(A man at the door.*

*Wearing an overnight backpack, carrying a bag of take-out and wine.)*

*(He sees a stranger in the apartment—and stops himself.)*

...

...

HENRY *(turning to leave)* Sorry wrong apartment.

B *(come back)* You don't have to—Henry.

...

HENRY *(turning back)* Did I just fuck everything // up?

B No.

HENRY Is it okay to come in?

B Yeah yeah she's okay. "Wrong apartment"?

HENRY It was either that or "somebody order delivery?"  
From apparently that restaurant that's got everybody's house keys.  
I'm not good on the fly.

*(HENRY enters, now moving about the space with familiarity.)*

HENRY I tried calling—// Thought I'd surprise you—

B I got called into work. Been there since 4.

HENRY Oh no you must be exhausted. Since 4? You can't keep doing this to yourself.

*(The two men kiss. Committed lovers.)*

HENRY *(re: his bag)* Lemon chicken. Surprise. You hungry?  
*(to G, about to introduce self)* Hey, I'm—

...

Is this...?

G            Yeah.

...

...

HENRY      *(look at that)* Huh.

G            What.

HENRY      Uh-huh.

G            What.

HENRY      I'm...intrigued to finally meet // you—

G            Excuse me.

*(She exits.)*

HENRY      Where's she going?

B            Bathroom.

*(They watch her exit until they think she can't hear them.)*

...

HENRY      I thought we weren't doing this anymore.

B            She just showed up at the bar, then she asked to come up, I didn't think she was gonna wanna crash—

HENRY      Wait. She's spending the night?

B            I wasn't planning on it but—

HENRY      What's she doing here.

B            Visiting.

HENRY      But what's She said she didn't wanna do this.

B            She changed her mind.

...

HENRY        (*we're not doing this*) No.

B                It's a lot to ask someone to risk a quarter-mill and 5 years in jail.

HENRY        It's a lot to ask of *you*. To hold out hope for // all this time—

B                What's our other option? What other option do I have? Marry *you*?

HENRY        I wish you could.

B                Well I wish a lotta shit.  
I can't wait for something that might never happen.  
I can't do this anymore, Henry. I can't watch all my days disappear into a stupid under-the-table restaurant job on Ferry Street. I'm tired of panicking every time I jaywalk that I'll get locked up in a fuckin detention center.

HENRY        So don't jaywalk.

B                I want to start my life.  
Henry.  
My life...

                  I'm losing it.

                  ...

HENRY        (*re: her*) I was not ready for this tonight.

B                Neither was I.

HENRY        Does she have to stay?

B                She's goin back in a few days. This might be my only chance. Nobody knows me like she does. We grew up together. She'd be doin a huge thing for me. For us.

HENRY        And when she backs out? I can't watch you go through that again—

B                I'll be fine.

HENRY        You were not fine, baby, I was there. You barely left the bed for a week. This was less than a month ago, you were // sobbin like your life was done—

B                It's not a big deal if she crashes.

HENRY        To who it's not a big deal?

G                    *(returning)* I brought wine.

HENRY  
Oh are we staying up?

B  
Great! *(to Henry)* Yeah if that's okay.

G                    But you can go, Henry.  
If yer tired.

HENRY            No I'm awake.

G                    We were gonna practice a little. I dunno if he told you—

HENRY            He told me, yeah, that you're re-considering.

G                    So you can go home.

...

HENRY            Y'know what:

*(WINE. Henry throws down his bottle of wine.)*

Let's all have a glass. Get to know each other. You and I don't really, y'know, know everything there is to know about each other. We can talk about the honeymoon—

G                    Oh we talked about—

HENRY            Since I'd be coming on the honeymoon.

*(G looks at B.)*

B                    ...I was gonna mention...

HENRY            *(a bad joke)* I mean I gotta get something out of all this!

G                    You'd be getting a lot.

HENRY            So would you. Did you decide on a number?

B                    Let's start over.

G                    I don't want yer money.

HENRY            I think you will once you're outta that school 'n back in this world.

It's not easy out here.

I know. G B  
She knows. Henry.

HENRY You'll be paying off that school a while.

G I'm on scholarship.

HENRY So was I. And then I graduated. You know it's not all scholarship right?

G What.

HENRY When they say you got an award, it's not necessarily a scholarship. Sometimes those awards are loans.

G (*had no idea*) ...yeah I know.

HENRY You might wanna look into that.  
We insist. On paying you. It would be a lotta work. Lotta time.  
Some money would be helpful along the way. Like if you need a hotel.

B (*'enough'*) Okay.

HENRY So no one ever loved you?

G // Wow.

HENRY (*cont'd*) You don't believe in love?

G I do.

HENRY You never wanted to get married?

G I *am* getting married.

HENRY I mean really.

G We would be. Really.

I mean, not *really* really. B HENRY  
Not really, no.

G I think actually we'd hafta do it pretty really.

HENRY Cuz of your mom? Is that why you never wanted to get married? Never seen it

go well?

G (to B) What else you tell him?

HENRY Did they love each other?

G Who.

HENRY Your examples. Of folks for whom it didn't go well. In marriage.

G For whom, // wow.

HENRY You go to school in Boston fuck yeah for fuckin whom.

G I think they did, yeah. I think they prob'ly really did, yeah, once. Maybe fire like that can only come from love. Maybe some people shouldn't marry for love. Some people maybe it's better they marry for other things.

HENRY (as if Boston were G's name) Like what, Boston.

G Partnership.

HENRY Partnership is love.

G No, it's respect.

HENRY That's love.

G (cont'd) Mutual respect. Love can maybe blind yer respect.

HENRY It shouldn't.

G No it shouldn't.

HENRY Yeah maybe you shouldn't marry-really. If that's how you define love. Maybe something like this would be the best option for you actually.

G Something like what.

HENRY (re: B's desire) Something that would never catch fire for you.

G ...

HENRY Me, I always wished I could.  
Marry.  
For love.

B Me too.

*(Henry takes his hand. Draws him near.)*

*(They kiss. G watches, feeling outside of all this.)*

G Yeah well it's too bad you can't.

So listen you got me here the rest of the night *(re: B)* yer workin all the time and I'm in class or studyin or work-studyin all the time—

HENRY So busy.

G *(cont'd)* So if you really wanna do this—

HENRY Why the sudden change of mind.

G What.

HENRY Why are you here.

...

G To help someone.

...

B *(to both)* You wanna practice?

...

HENRY *(to B)* Can I talk to you in private?

G Nope.

HENRY My face was not speaking to your face.

G Nothing can be private between us.

HENRY Among us, Boston.

G If we're doing this, then nothing can be private. There's people whose only job it is to smell out deception in exactly what we'd be doing. So nothing can be private—any more—among us.

HENRY        *(to B)* I don't like this.

G                Then what would you like, Henry?  
How would *you* like to help the man you wish you could marry for love?

HENRY        By marrying him.

G                Well that's a solid plan.

HENRY        It passed in Massachusetts.

G                States don't count.

HENRY        I know that—

G                Not for citizenship.

HENRY        I know that obviously I know. But just the fact of Massachusetts—

G                One state—

HENRY        Is a huge deal.

G                One state and nothing since. You need the whole country to agree—all fifty  
states—first to *let //* you marry—legally—

HENRY        —marry yeah on the national level and then for that to count for citizenship, I  
know.

G                Yeah? What do you know about it?

B                Henry goes to law school.

                  ...

G                No he doesn't.

HENRY        Yeah I really do though.

                  ...

G                Where.

*(Henry's pleased she asked.  
He presents his ID. The school is impressive and she hates that.)*

...

G I heard the buildings are ugly.

B Henry's actually been really helpful and knowledgeable about all this—

G Oh yeah that's nice so that's his solution? Just wait it out for Alabama, Arkansas, and the other *forty-seven* to agree?

I can offer you something actual. Something concrete and now, not some hope for Someday Maybe. I'm the only real option you have—to start your life.

That is, if that's something *you* would like, Henry.

If that's something you would like for the man you say you wish you could marry for love.

...

HENRY Okay y'know what. There's some fuckin cheese in the fridge. I'm gonna put it on a fuckin plate 'n we're gonna eat it—

B That brie I brought from work?

HENRY Did you eat it.

...

Here then Here's some lemon fuckin chicken in a tin He loves this fuckin Please excuse me while I plate this shit More wine?

G Please.

HENRY Yer welcome.

B (*I'm sorry*) Henry—

HENRY I want what's best for you.  
I want you happy.

But you need to be sure this is how.

***(Henry exits to retrieve a glass for himself.***

*G and B alone. A strange air between them now, alone.)*

...

...

G *(trying to connect)* When did we meet?

...

B ...

...

G What school.

B ...

...

G Where was it located?

B Hundred Davis.

G In?

B ...

...

G What did the two of you have in common?

B Not much anymore.

...

G What's your favorite aspect of your partner?

B ...

G You remember our old answer?

B Her kindness.

G What did the // two of you—

B *(cont'd)* Was our old answer.

...

HENRY Third grade Franklin Hundred Davis Kearny.

*(Henry enters with provisions.)*

You met in Miss Ramirez' class. ESL. Third grade. You forgot your lunch. She shared hers. You brought extra the next day to pay her back. Your idea. Thoughtful. You were thoughtful, studious, and very alone. You were the only two to move up to English-speaking classes that next year. Both your favorite color's blue. Cobalt. Teal. He still cooks that thing you taught him. And the best dollar slice in town was Joe's.

...

What else should I know? As your witness?

B Thank you.

HENRY When did you decide to get married?

G High school. B Right after high school. Not long.

HENRY Who proposed *to whom*.

B I did.

G He did. My last day in town.

B At the bus stop.

G He waited with me at the bus.

B Her last day in town.

G I didn't wanna go.

B My mom left a ring.  
I carried it around for days cuz I knew she was leavin for school.

G You did?

B In my pocket. I safety-pinned it inside my pocket so it wouldn't fall out.  
I carried it for days.

G He proposed at the bus.

B Her last day in town.

G I didn't wanna go.

B My mom left a ring.

G (*genuine*) I didn't wanna go.

B I carried it around for days cuz I knew she was leaving.

G His mom left a ring.

B She's wearin it now.

G He was always there when I needed him.

B She was—

She was always there.  
When I needed her.

...

G What did you do while she was away?

B I worked. Saved.

G Wasn't much money to visit. But we talked all the time.

B She sent postcards.

G I sent postcards.

B And books.

G From my classes.

B She'd call. Late at night.

G Before I went to bed, I'd call.

B I took the bus up to Boston once. To see her.

G He took the bus up to—

B But she didn't see *me*.

...  
...

I took a bus.

The T.

And I walked to her campus to find her.

I snuck into a class. I smelled the books. I sat on leather. I watched the people. I felt the life. Someone let me in a door. Thought I was a student. Just forgot my ID. They let me in. Didn't think twice, they let me in. I listened to lectures. I raised my hand. I answered a question. About a book I'd read. Coincidence, I'd read that book. I got it right. The question. Very right. Made people wonder who I was, who's this guy, people wondered who I was. I found the dining hall. Someone swiped me in. Forgot my ID, I said, so they let me in. Didn't think twice. I ate the food. I went for seconds. I ate dessert. I touched the wood. I walked the grass. I watched the night. I passed by windows. I heard the laughs. I sat on grass. I watched the night. And I went home.

...  
...

G Did you see her?

B I did.

G But she didn't see you?

B No.

G What if she did.

What would you have done.

...  
...

B I would have walked away.

Let her pretend she didn't see me.

I'd never take that away.  
The leaves. The books.  
As much as I...

I couldn't.

...  
...

HENRY      When did your relationship turn romantic.

...

B            They're not gonna ask that.

HENRY      They do. I read the questions.  
They do.

When did your relationship turn romantic.

...

B            She used to climb up my fire escape at night. And I'd sneak her into my  
bedroom.

...

HENRY      They'll want more details than that.

B            I don't think they will.

G            I think they very likely might if that's how you're gonna answer.

B            *(to Henry)* This didn't actually happen.

G            Yeah well don't tell *them* that.

HENRY      When did your relationship turn romantic.

B            She used to climb up my fire escape at night and I'd sneak her into my bedroom  
and one night...

HENRY      Yeah?

B            —it turned romantic.

G            I used to climb up his fire escape at night and he'd sneak me into his bedroom  
and one night, as we're layin there, close cuz his bed's a twin, one night as we're  
layin there, I feel his breath on my neck.  
And it feels like he's peelin back my skin.

Just from his breath on my neck.  
He says my name.

He knows I'm awake but he says my name.  
And then we

B            Yeah.  
              And then we.

G            Yeah.

...  
...

HENRY        You've really created a little...Yeah...world. For yourselves.

*(They both look at Henry.)*

I'm nowhere in the story.

B            ...Well...No.  
              Really?

HENRY        I'm gonna be nowhere in your story.

B            We're not doin this for fun.

HENRY        I know.  
              It's just a thing I'm fully realizing.  
              That's all.

...

G            How long have you known each other.

B            Year and a // half.

G            No. You and me.

B            Thirteen years.

G            First kiss.

B            I don't remember when we said.

G            May 22<sup>nd</sup>

B May 22<sup>nd</sup>

G 2002.  
*(covers her eyes)* Eye color.

B *(says G's eye color)*

G What's your favorite aspect of your partner.

B His kindness.

HENRY ...

B His compassion. His patience.  
His body.  
  
His kindness.  
  
How long have you known each other?

HENRY Year and a half.

B First kiss.

HENRY First day.

B June.

HENRY In the city.

B I missed my train.

HENRY Last one of the night.

B On purpose.  
*(covers his eyes)* Eye color.

HENRY *(says B's eye color)*  
  
*(B uncovers his eyes.)*

HENRY *(covers his eyes)* Eye color.  
  
*(B kisses Henry, his eyes still covered.  
It's a beautiful kiss that takes its time. It apologizes and affirms. And it sparks.)*

*(Then—)*

B *(says Henry's eye color)*

*(Henry uncovers his eyes. And they look at each other.  
B recalls what this has cost them.)*

How many nights did you have to sleep apart?  
How much time did you lose?  
How often did you stop yourself from reaching for him in public? How often  
did he—?

HENRY It's okay.

B *(still, to Henry)* I'm so sorry.

HENRY It's okay.

G What's yer favorite part of her body.

B No we're done.

G What's yer favorite part of // her body.

B They're not gonna ask us this—

G His mouth. They might.

B Her hands.

G I'm not convinced.

B Her hands. Why'd you stay away.

G That's not a question.

B Three and a half years, why'd you stay away // til now.

G Money.

B I'm not convinced.

G Time and // money.

B I'm not convinced.

G Did your parents approve of the match Why or why not Why or why not Did your mother fuckin *wish* we were sleepin together?

...

HENRY (*to B*) We don't have to do this.

B (*wounded*) That's not why she left.

G I'm not convinced.

HENRY Baby—

B She left cuz it was harder here for her—

G I'm not convinced.

HENRY —do you want three more years of this?

B —and cuz of September—

G I'm not // convinced.

HENRY Do you want three more years and a marriage of this?

B I never wanted any of this!

I never wanted to have to do any of this. To do it this way. For this to be my only option—

HENRY // I know.

B (*cont'd*) I never wanted to lie about myself. To have to lie about my life. About you. I never wanted to do this to you—

G Tell me about his body, Henry. // In case they ask.

B No.

G (*cont'd*) Anything distinct I should know? Any scars, // bruises—

B No, we're done for the night.

G (*cont'd*) Anything like that? Scars? Bruises? You know he called me that night?

HENRY        (*I see*) Okay.

G                (*cont'd*) He called me and told me you took his shoes. Middle of the night, cold as hell he said, right around Thanksgiving.

HENRY        We had a fight.

G                (*cont'd*) He called me from a payphone and said someone had kicked him out without his shoes. He was walkin around Newark at night in the cold without his shoes—

HENRY        We had a fight.

G                And you kick him out without his shoes? It's his apartment.

HENRY        We had a // fight—

B                We had a fight and now we're fine. People fight.

G                You called me! He // called me!

B                I called you Yeah I called but you weren't here. You were in Boston.

G                I told you to go to my mom's.

B                I wasn't gonna go to yer mom's in the middle of the night.

G                You coulda come to Boston.

B                I had no shoes!

G                What did you do that night?

B                I went to a diner and waited til the Kmart opened. Bought some shoes. And went to work. We had a // fight—

HENRY        We had a fight and now we're fine people fight. But do you know what he did when you backed out? I couldn't get him to eat. Shower. He wouldn't leave the bed for a fucking week.

G                I got nervous.

HENRY        No you became aware of what this really is. This isn't some game, some fuckin fantasy. This shit is for real.

G                Then why the fuck did I not even know about you til a fuckin month ago—?

HENRY        Prob'ly cuz he knew it'd go THIS well.

G                (*cont'd*) First time I even heard your damn name was over sobbing on a payphone! I got nervous cuz who the fuck was fuckin Henry—

HENRY        I am.

G                (*cont'd*) —And would *he* risk a quarter-mill and 5 years in jail?

HENRY        I *am*.

G                Not like I am. You could deny. You could say you didn't know. You could step away. *You* don't have to risk a quarter-mill // and 5 years in jail—

HENRY        I would if I could.

G                (*cont'd*)—just to help somebody.

HENRY        You'd be getting paid.

G                Would you risk all that just to help someone?

HENRY        Yes.

G                Okay so you go marry someone.

HENRY        I don't—What—

G                (*cont'd*) If it's so easy then *you* go marry // someone and help her—

HENRY        (*cont'd*) What are you even—This isn't a *trade*.

G                Then you can't know how scary this is. You can't tell me shit about this.

B                He's not marrying anybody.

HENRY        Unless it's you.

G                WHICH YOU NEVER WILL. YOU WILL NEVER DO THAT. YOU WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO EVER LEGALLY DO THAT IN THIS COUNTRY. IT'S 2000 FUCKIN 6 ALMOST 7 IN A FEW FUCKIN DAYS SO IF IT HASN'T HAPPENED NOW IT NEVER FUCKIN WILL. YOU WON'T EVER, EVER MARRY HIM.

...

...  
...

HENRY Well.  
Neither will you.

G I'm helping.

HENRY You seem to want love so fuckin bad, you'd settle for it fake.

G ...

HENRY The only reason someone takes someone's fuckin shoes is so they stay.  
I didn't want him goin out in the middle of the night in fuckin November. You think I wanted that? We had a fight and now we're fine. But I went out to look for him. All night. *You* stayed in Boston. And then you backed out. I wish you coulda seen what that did to him, your backing out, cuz then you'd never put him through that again. You wanna help? You're here to help? Yeah? Up to what point?

G ...

HENRY (*to B*) Do we have to do this? Is all this worth it?

B Yes.

I've gotta rely on other people. I've had to rely on other people and hiding and secrets for the past 13 years of my life. For every For just basic human And illegally, all of it, All of it's been illegal. I went to school illegal. I *learned* illegal. I walked the streets illegally I literally am When I am When I'm walking I am illegally walking Walking is illegal because I didn't get some Some paper means I cannot be a full person here. I have had to hide who I am at every fuckin turn of my life.

HENRY I know that.

B I've been lying so long I'm not even sure what's real.

HENRY Then maybe you should question a couple things in your life.

G Yeah maybe you should question a really major thing in yer life.  
If you don't know what's real.

I got nervous and I'm sorry but I'm here. I'm ready to hand over my safety, my security, the truth of my life. For three years at least and every day after that, I would put myself in danger. For you. So you can be a full person here.

HENRY        And what's that gonna cost him.

G             You.

              ...

G             (*to B*) I don't trust him.

B             You don't know him.

G             That's not my fault.

B             If you'da come down anytime in the last year you would've met him.

G             Not even his name. That he existed. I didn't even know a Henry existed.

B             (*re: sexuality*) But you always knew—

G             Not that a Henry was currently existing. Currently stealing your shoes and kickin you outta yer apartment, doin who-knows-what-else // to you—

B             We had a fight—once—

G             Didn't seem like just a fight when you called. I *never* heard those kinda sounds outta you—

B             And you didn't come.

G             I'm here now.

B             You never heard those sounds and still you didn't // come.

G             You wanted me to take a bus in the middle of the night from Boston?

B             YES.

              How can I trust *you*?

G             Take off yer shirt.

B             What. // No.

G             Take yer clothes off. Lemme see what "once" looks like. Lemme take a look at Henry's "once." My mother denied it too til she got naturalized—

B We're not like your house.

G (*cont'd*) Kept thinkin he'd follow her, blackmail her, fuckin, *disappear* her, who'd know? Who'd care about her fuckin—unregistered body somewhere?

B Henry was here when you weren't.

G I was always here.

B No, for a year and a half, Henry was *here*. You weren't.

G I'm here now.

B We coulda done this after yer first semester. Winter break. December. Summer. Yer sophomore year, yer junior // year—

G We can do it now.

B Henry and I had a fight—our first—and I called you. We had a fight about *you*. And I called.

I told myself Don't take anything else. Don't take anything else away from her. She'd be doin this huge thing for you—for you and for the rest of your *life*—so don't ask a *thing* more of hers. Not a thing. Don't ask to come up. Don't ask her to come back. Let her have this. Don't ask her. Let her have this.

But three and a half years...  
I thought you'd at least have *wanted* to.

G ...

B Henry knew.  
But I said no. She's my person. Always has been. Always been there. No.  
And we had a fight. We had a fight about you. And I called.  
And you didn't come.  
And you proved him right.

It's a beautiful world up there. Boston. If I were you, I might not have come back either. But it hasn't fixed it. Has it? And it's ending. It's ending soon.  
Where you gonna crash when life breaks for you next?  
Or has it already?

...

G I hope Henry's worth 10-hour shifts on yer feet. Not seein yer mother for years. I hope he's worth the crushing fuckin panic every time you see a cop.

I hope he's worth me walkin out. I hope Henry's worth every second of Fish Kill fuckin Road.

So what's it gonna be.

...  
...  
...

*(B becomes nervous.)*

...  
...

B Why won't you say anything.

HENRY I can't choose for you.

B ...

HENRY You'll resent me.

B No.

HENRY If all your days disappear into an under-the-table restaurant job on Ferry Street, you'll resent me.

B No—

HENRY As much as I'd like to, I can't be the one to choose this.

B Why do *I* have to?

HENRY I didn't make the terms.

...

*(B looks at G.)*

...

B You would go ahead with a wedding? With all the tests, questions? With livin with me, livin in Newark? With all the risks? The hidin? Lying? For three more years? For three more years at least and who knows how much longer after that, you'd do that?

G            Yeah.

B            You'd do all that?  
              If I throw Henry out of my life?

G            Yeah.

B            Then no.

G            ...

B            No.

...

*(B and HENRY move close to each other.  
G understands this means an end.)*

G            Third grade  
  
              Franklin  
  
              Hundred Davis  
  
              Kearny  
  
              He waited with me at the bus  
  
              Carried it around for days  
              in his pocket  
  
              My last day in town  
  
              His kindness

*(She removes the ring.  
Sets it atop the sheets on the couch  
and gathers her things to go.)*

Good luck.

...

HENRY      *(to B)* I'm sorry.

...

B It's...

*(He can't say "okay.")*

HENRY We could maybe ask one of my friends—

B No.

I don't want to do this again.

Maybe we can just ...live our life somewhere else.  
If it's this or Fish Kill Road.  
Maybe I can finally see my mom.

*(B notices Henry's complicated silent response.)*

...Would you come with me? If I had to move back?

*(G stops at the door. Watches.)*

Henry.

Would you come—

HENRY Why don't we go to bed—

B Henry.

...

...

HENRY We never talked about this.

...

B We're talking about it now.

HENRY Let's just go to bed—

B No—

HENRY What would we do there?

B We'd live our lives, a version of our lives, like we've been living here.

HENRY        There is no version of my—I'm going to school *here*—What would I even do there? I'd never, I mean I don't even speak—

B              I didn't speak English when I first came. You'd learn.

HENRY        Everything I know is here.  
My family's all here—

B              You can visit your family. They can visit you.

HENRY        We never talked about this.

B              Why would you wanna stay in a country that doesn't want me in it.

...

*(Henry realizes something.  
And it breaks his heart.)*

...

HENRY        This isn't gonna stop.

...

No matter what you choose, this isn't gonna stop—

B              No wait. Okay listen. Never mind—

HENRY        You never talked about going back before. You never wanted to. And if you did now, you'd blame me—

B              No—

HENRY        You would. And if you don't go through with this—with—then every night you came home and nothing's changed, it'd be my fault.

B              No—

HENRY        It'd be my fault we stayed.  
And if we left. It'd be my fault.

B              Just please—forget I brought it—// please.

HENRY        We wouldn't make it. Here or—We wouldn't make it.

And you might not even be able to come back.

B ...

HENRY I'm sorry—

B No—Listen—Just—We'll keep living how we've been living—

HENRY I'm nowhere in your story.

B Henry—

HENRY She should stay.

B —please.

HENRY This was never for me. For you and me. So you could stay with me.  
You were never doin this for me.

B Wait—

HENRY It was never for me.

*(B clings to HENRY, trying to hold him here in some way.)*

*HENRY moves to exit.*

*Before he goes, he turns to G—)*

HENRY But it was definitely never for *you*.

*(HENRY'S gone.)*

...

*(B and G stand in silence a moment.  
Not looking at each other.)*

...

...

...

B ...You gonna need another blanket?

Or is that enough,  
what I set out?

G I can still catch the bus.

B Yer not gonna stay?

G I don't think I should be doin this.

...

B "This"?

...

G ...stayin over.

B Is that what you meant when you said "this" the first time? Stayin over? You shouldn't be stayin over?

G ...

B Please.

G Maybe we should think about things a little // more—

B No. Please.

G Why don't we just talk in mid-April // when—

B No.

G During break. When I'm back.  
Maybe we could...talk again then.

...

...

...

...What are you doin for New Year's?

B Workin. Just stay the night—

G It'll be light out soon. I could also just walk.

B            You could stay here.

G            I know.  
              I know.  
              *(re: end up here)* I could.

              ...

              I'll call you in April?

B            Only if you—

              ...

G            Okay.

B            Only if yer not gonna disappoint me.

              ...

G            *(an end)* Okay.

***(She moves to exit.  
              Turns back.)***

              I really liked practicing.

B            I know.

G            I really liked...our time.

B            Please don't call.

G            Okay.

B            Unless.

              ...

              ...

G            ...Happy—

              ...

B            You can say it.

G Happy New Year.  
B Thank you.  
G (*genuine*) Happy New Year.

B Thank you.  
You too.

G And  
Good luck.

*(G exits.)*

*(B is alone.)*

*(The sounds of an empty apartment and a small city, beyond the windows.)*

*(B approaches the ring. Picks it up. Holds it.)*

*(B goes to the window. He opens it.)*

*(The sounds of the small city fill the apartment.  
The light of approaching day.)*

*(The sounds and lights of another day,*

*another night,*

*another week,*

*another year,*

*years.*

*Years passing by a young man in a small city.)*

B when did you  
decide  
what do you have in  
when did your

relationship

did your parents approve of the

why or

have you ever had

have you ever

...

what are you gonna do

what are you gonna

...

...

*(Lights.)*

**. end of play .**