Tracing Nora
4/26/11

by
Peter Handy

(Loosely based on A Doll's House)
CHARACTERS:
Kimberly Helmer
Troy Helmer
Janice
Officer O'Connor*
Nora Simon (Stevens)
Ned Stevens
Hal
Dr. Wellman*
*(Note: Officer O’Connor and Dr. Wellman can be double cast.)*

PLACE:
The fractured home of the Helmer’s, which include multiple locations on the East and West Coast of The United States.

SPECIFIC SETTINGS:
The well furnished, but oddly Victorian looking home (Including some elements of their respective bedrooms) of Troy and Kimberly Helmer in a wealthy Connecticut suburb near The Long Island Sound.

A commuter bus-stop/station in suburban Connecticut.

Nora and Ned’s bedroom.

A seat on a bus that goes between Portland, Oregon and the Oregon Coast.

Nora and Ned’s modern and spacious living room with one door (S.R.) that leads outside (the area outside might be partially visible), another door leads to their bedroom (U.S.R.), and another door (U.S.L.) leads to Abigail’s room.

A bench outside of Nora and Ned’s house.

A motel room and playing area in front of it.

A hospital emergency room.

A river.

*(Author’s Note: The numerous locations were achieved with a box set style back wall, lighting, and a few pieces of furniture.)*

TIME
The present.
ACT ONE

PROLOGUE - AN EXCERPT FROM KIMBERLY’S JOURNAL

Kimberly, a sixteen year old girl, enters. She holds a doll in her arms.

KIMBERLY

I have a doll’s house in my room. And I have a doll that looks just like my mother did. She’s scared that I’ll leave her.

(Beat)

Just kidding.

(Pause)

I have a recurrent bad dream. My father turns into a vacuum cleaner and tries to suck me up. My guidance counsellor at school said it might be an unconscious desire to have more of a connection with him.

(Pause)

Sometimes... when I wake up in the middle of the night, I wander through the house and look up at the stars through the windows. Our house is white. It has black shutters on it. But I can’t see that when I’m on the inside.

(Beat)

We live in a rich suburb. In Connecticut. Near the water. Sometimes when I miss my mother I go for walks. The neighbor’s dog always wants to come.

(Beat)

I like to take the bus to New York on the weekend. It’s fun to walk around the East Village and look in the shops. The people are really funny. They think they’re something else. I like to think I’m one of them. That must mean I’m something else too.

SCENE 1

The sound of a nature show on a television being watched fades in, the sound-track of which, has a sombre and thoughtful tone to it. As the lights fade up, it is seconds before midnight, and Kimberly is lying on her bed in her room. A shaft of moonlight shines through her window and lights up her bed and the surrounding area which includes a doll’s house which is on the floor at the foot of her window. There’s a mechanical clock on Kimberly’s bedside table and she intently watches it as it strikes midnight. Troy, her father, is watching television in the next room, his face and the surrounding area are lit up by it.
Kimberly gets out from under the covers (revealing that she has been holding the doll of her mother), stands up, tucking the doll back in, and moves to the window and looks out of it, her face aglow in the moonlight. The music fades out after a couple of beats and Kimberly enters the living room and looks at her father watching the television. The sound is turned low. She stands there looking at him.

(Pause)

KIMBERLY

Dad?

(Pause)

Dad?

He looks at her.

TROY

Oh sorry. Is the television too loud?

KIMBERLY

It’s midnight.

(Beat)

October eighteenth? I’m sixteen!

TROY

Oh, right! Happy birthday Kimber.

(Beat)

Congratulations.

She walks to the couch and picks up the remote control from off of the coffee table and turns the sound all the way down.

KIMBERLY

I’m sixteen today, Daddy.

(Pause)

TROY

Yes, I know. Happy Birthday.

(Pause)

Don’t you remember?

She sits at the far end of the couch.

KIMBERLY

Remember what?
KIMBERLY
What you told me?

TROY
What are you talking about?

KIMBERLY
When Mom left, you promised me... you promised me that we would “find” her when I turned sixteen.

TROY
“Find” her?

KIMBERLY
Yes! You told me I could see her when I turned sixteen.

I did?

KIMBERLY
Do you not remember telling me that I could see her when I turned sixteen?

TROY
No. And I’m really not interested in getting into this tonight.

KIMBERLY
Then when? When exactly are you interested in getting into it?

I don’t know.

KIMBERLY
Wow.

TROY
Just go back to bed. Would you?

KIMBERLY
I’m not going to bed. Ground me. I don’t care anymore.

TROY
That’s a good attitude.

KIMBERLY
I knew you wouldn’t honor our agreement.

TROY
There was never any agreement.

KIMBERLY
The morning after Mom left.
Uh-huh.

We were sitting on the couch.

Right.

And you said.

Excuse me.

Troy gets up and goes towards his bedroom.

Kimberly runs to the doorway in order to block him.

We were sitting on the couch and it was raining outside -

- I want to get by. -

- And you said I could contact her when I turned sixteen.

Oh did I?

And for seven years -

- I don’t know where she is.

What?

I don’t know where she is.

(Beat)

You don’t know where she is?

I don’t.

Why don’t I believe you?
Because you’re a paranoid and precocious teenager?

It’s so ugly that you think of me like that.

There are far worse things I could think of you.

So you’re not going to help me find her.

Nope.

I knew it!

Good for you.

And you don’t care do you?

I don’t think this is a productive conversation.

You lied to me for seven years!

Good night.

You’re a liar!

You shouldn’t be speaking to me like that.

And you set me up to hope that I might see her again. Why? Why did you do that?

I was trying to protect you.

From what?

From her.
Well?  
(Beat)
Tell me!  
(Beat)
Just tell me!

Why?

Because I need to know.

Are you sure - Are you sure you want to know?

Yes!

Okay! Because she didn’t want you. She didn’t want you. That’s why!

She punches him in the chest.

Kimber! Don’t ever - ever do that again!

I don’t believe you!

It’s the truth!

She loved me!

Not enough to stay! Not enough to keep in touch! She’s gone! Gone! Don’t you get it? You’re not nine years old anymore! So please move on because I’m sure she has!

Why didn’t she want me?!

I don’t know.

Was it my fault?!

It wasn’t your fault!
KIMBERLY
Then whose fault was it?

TROY
No one’s!

KIMBERLY
Was it yours?

TROY
No! It was “no one’s” fault!

KIMBERLY
But didn’t she say where she was going?

TROY
All she said was that she had to go “find” herself.

KIMBERLY
And what the hell does that mean?

He shrugs.

KIMBERLY (cont’d)
Jesus.

TROY
I’m all you’ve got.

KIMBERLY
A man who lies to a nine year old girl.

TROY
I did it for you.

KIMBERLY
Oh please!

TROY
Let her go Kimber.

She looks at the television.

KIMBERLY
You watch people fish on television.

(Beat)
That’s not normal.

TROY
She’s never coming back.

KIMBERLY
I miss her.
TROY
Well I’m really sorry about that.
(Beat)
I’ll cook you an omelet in the morning.
(Beat)
You’re very important to me.
(Beat)
I think you should go to bed now.
(Beat)

Kimberly walks towards her room. She stops outside her room with her back faced towards him.

TROY (cont’d)
I hope you sleep well.
(Pause)
What is it now?

KIMBERLY
Nothing.

TROY
Are you okay?

KIMBERLY
Yeah.
(Beat)

TROY
Okay.
(Beat)
Well... Good night.

Troy closes the door. Kimberly walks into her room and quickly takes her backpack and then her doll from the bed and leaves.

BLACK OUT

SOUND CUE: ALARM CLOCK GOES OFF:

FADE TO:

SCENE 2

Troy on his way towards Kimber’s room.

TROY
Kimber? You up?
(Beat)
Kim?!
(Pause)
Troy gets to the door of Kim’s bedroom and opens it. The room is empty. There is a note sticking out from the top of the doll’s house which is on the floor. Troy picks up the note and reads it.

BLACK OUT

SCENE 3
A Connecticut bus station.

Kimberly and Janice sit on a bench. Kimberly’s backpack is leaning on the bench and she has on jeans and is bundled up in clothes that would be good for travelling on a cool day in the fall. Janice is wearing a thick black wool coat and is looking S.L. She is wearing glasses and clearly can’t see very well.

Is that the bus?

KIMBERLY

No.

JANICE

It looks like it.

KIMBERLY

Well it’s not. It’s a school bus. It’s yellow.

JANICE

Oh. Right.

(Kause)

KIMBERLY

Thanks for meeting me here.

JANICE

Don’t mention it.

KIMBERLY

Janice?

JANICE

Yeah.

KIMBERLY

You’re a good friend.

(Kause)
Are you cold?  

JANICE

I’m okay.  

KIMBERLY

(Beat)

Janice

How long are you going to be gone for?  

KIMBERLY

I’m not sure.  

JANICE

Uh-huh.  

(Beat)

Are you scared?  

KIMBERLY

Of what?  

JANICE

I don’t know.  

KIMBERLY

That’s weird.  

JANICE

What’s weird?  

KIMBERLY

Asking a question like that.  

(Beat)

JANICE

Oh.  

(Beat)

Well I’m sorry.  

KIMBERLY

Can you not do that?  

JANICE

Do what?  

KIMBERLY

Apologize for everything.  

(Beat)

JANICE

Do I really do that?  

KIMBERLY

Yes. All the time.
Okay.  

(Beat)  

Sorry.  

KIMBERLY  

You’re doing it again.  

(Pause)  

JANICE  

Why are you so angry?  

KIMBERLY  

I’m not angry!  

JANICE  

Yes you are!  

KIMBERLY  

No I’m not!  

JANICE  

Okay. Fine. You’re not!  

(Awkward Pause)  

Janice reaches into her book bag and takes out a large plastic bag with something inside of it. She reaches inside of the bag and pulls out a wrapped present. She hands it to Kimberly. Kimberly takes it and looks at it. She looks uncomfortable.  

(Pause)  

KIMBERLY  

What’s this?  

JANICE  

What do you think it is? Go on. Open it!  

Kimberly unwraps the present. It is a winter hat with ear flaps. She holds it up in front of her.  

KIMBERLY  

What is this?  

JANICE  

A hat.  

KIMBERLY  

Oh right. It’s really... um...
JANICE
Warm. It’s warm. And I think it’s important to be -

- Warm?

KIMBERLY

JANICE
Yes.

KIMBERLY

Okay. (Beat)
Thanks Mom.

KIMBERLY

JANICE
You don’t like it.

KIMBERLY

Sure I do.

JANICE
If you don’t like it...

Janice reaches for the hat.

JANICE (cont’d)

I can take it back.

Kimberly holds it up and away from her.

KIMBERLY

I like it! I like it!

JANICE
No you don’t.

KIMBERLY

Yes I do!

JANICE
Well you don’t seem very excited about it.

KIMBERLY

It’s a hat. How excited am I supposed to be?

JANICE
I don’t know. (Beat)
And by the way I’m not your Mom.

KIMBERLY
Yeah, that’s why we’re sitting here. I’m going to find her.
I know.  
(Awkward Pause)

Kimberly puts the hat on.

Do I look like a loser?

No!

Do I?

(Beat)

Just a little.

Good. I want to.

(Beat)

Really?

Yeah.

Kimberly takes off the hat and places it on the bench next to her.

Happy birthday.

Thanks.

I’m going to miss you.

Thanks.  
(Pause)

Me too.

Are you going to call me?

I don’t know if I’ll be able to. Probably not.

How are you going to find her?
I looked her name up at people-finder.com.

And you found her?

Yeah, there are only fifty-three Nora Simons in the country.

Fifty three?

Uh-huh. But only one of them is forty-one years old.

Okay. And where does she live?

Oregon.

How are you going to get there.

They don’t check identification on the Greyhound. (Beat)

I’d never think of that.

You would if you were desperate. (Beat)

And you think she’s going to want to see you?

Oh yes!

Okay.

Don’t worry about me. I know what I’m doing.

You always do.

Yeah.
And nothing bad would ever happen to you.

I’ll be okay.

You think so?

Yeah. I know so.

Okay.

Janice hugs Kimberly. Kimberly withholds at first, but then hugs her back.

When they withdraw Janice reaches in her pocket and takes out a rabbit’s foot and hands it to Kimberly.

What’s this?

For good luck.

I’ve never had a rabbit’s foot.

It’s my brother’s. He wanted you to have it.

They look at each other awkwardly and then look away embarrassed. Kimberly looks at her watch.

Lunch period will be over soon.

Yeah. I should get back to school.

Yeah. You should.

Janice puts the plastic bag in her bookbag and zips it closed. Kimberly stares at the rabbit’s foot which she is holding in her hands.
Be good.

I will. You too.

When you find her...

Yeah?

Tell your mother she’s a crazy bitch for leaving you. Will you?

I will.

Janice continues to sit there.

(Pause)

And Kimberly...

Yeah?

I want you to know that you’re my best friend in the whole world.

Okay.

(Beat)

Thanks. I appreciate that.

You should.

Well I do. You’re my best friend too.

Good.

(Pause)

And Kimberly?

Yes.

I want you to know how devastated I’d be if... if anything ever happened to you.
Thanks.

(JPause)

And Kimberly?

Yes.

(Beat)

I noticed... that... you had...

What?

Janice lightly takes hold of Kimberly’s lower arm near her wrist.

Kimberly angrily yanks her arm away from Janice and recoils.

(Angry)

What are you talking about?

(Pause)

Janice sinks.

I don’t know.

Jesus! You’re really freaking me out! I don’t know what you’re talking about?

I’m sorry!

You should go now Janice.

Yeah, I should.

Janice grabs her book bag and stands up.

I’m really sorry.

I said go! Please!
JANICE

I’m sorry.

KIMBERLY

Please. Just go!

JANICE

You’re upset.

KIMBERLY

Please! Just leave me alone!

Kimberly points down the platform towards the exit.

Janice hesitates, then turns and walks down the platform. Kimberly stares at the rabbit’s foot in her hands.

BLACK OUT

SCENE 4

Late that evening. Kim’s bedroom.

Officer O’Connor reads off of Kimberly’s note. Troy has a police form in front of him.

OFFICER O’CONNOR

“I’m goin to find Mom.”

(Beat)

“P.S. Go fuck yourself.”

(Beat)

And?

TROY

Her backpack’s not under her bed.

And has ah...

OFFICER O’CONNOR

He looks at his notes.

OFFICER O’CONNOR (cont’d)

...Kimberly ever run away before?

TROY

No.

OFFICER O’CONNOR

What’s her mother’s name?

TROY

Nora.
OFFICER O'CONNOR

N-O-R-A?

TROY

Yeah. She left us seven years ago.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Last name?

TROY

Simon.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

S-I-M-O-N?

TROY

Yeah.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

And do you know where her mother is?

TROY

Yeah.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Where is she?

TROY

Oregon. (Beat)

I called her a few hours ago.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

And?

TROY

I left a voice mail. She hasn’t gotten back to me.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

And you’re divorced?

TROY

I have full custody.

Troy glances at the police form in his hand.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

They’ll be time to fill that out later.

Troy places it back on his lap.

TROY

I’m sorry – what’s your name again?
Officer O'Connor.

TROY

Right. Got it.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

What about family?

TROY

Nora’s?

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Uh-huh.

TROY

Both her parents are dead.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

No brothers or sisters?

TROY

None.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Mutual friends?

TROY

None.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Officer O'Connor looks back at Kim’s note and holds it up to him.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Your daughter seems pretty angry.

TROY

Yeah - do you know any sixteen year old’s that aren’t?

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Is that a joke?

Troy shrugs.

TROY

I guess.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

What’s she so mad about?

TROY

I guess I let her down.
OFFICER O'CONNOR

In what way?

TROY

I told her she could see her mother when she turned sixteen... and then... when she asked - I told her I didn’t know where she was.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Why did you tell her that?

TROY

I wanted to protect her.

So you lied to her?

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Yeah. I lied to her.

(Beat)

Guilty as charged.

TROY

Did you have a fight about it?

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Nothing serious.

TROY

Right. I have some routine questions that I need to ask you. Okay?

TROY

Okay.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Have you ever hit your daughter?

TROY

No.

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Have you ever touched her in an inappropriate way?

TROY

What?

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Have you ever touched her in an inappropriate way?

TROY

No. Of course not.
OFFICER O'CONNOR

Has she ever attempted to - to hurt herself?

TROY

She just ran away. That doesn’t make her suicidal.

So your answer is no?

OFFICER O'CONNOR

That’s right. “No.”

TROY

Is she violent?

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Jesus.

TROY

Is there a problem with that question?

OFFICER O'CONNOR

No. No problem.

TROY

Is she violent?

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Yes. – I mean no!

TROY

Yes or no?

OFFICER O'CONNOR

No. No. Of course not.

TROY

She has a cell phone?

OFFICER O'CONNOR

Yes.

TROY

Please write her number on the form.

Troy writes the number on the form.

Officer O'Connor (cont’d)

Has she had any problems with drugs or alcohol?

TROY

None.
OFFICER O’CONNOR

Does she smoke?

TROY

No.

OFFICER O’CONNOR

Did you check her search history?

TROY

She took her laptop.

OFFICER O’CONNOR

What about money?

TROY

She withdrew her savings. Eight hundred dollars.

(Beat)

She also has a Credit Card.

OFFICER O’CONNOR

If she uses it she’ll be picked up.

Okay.

TROY

Though I doubt she will.

Why.

TROY

Why? Because she’s not stupid.

Officer O’Connor hands him a card.

OFFICER O’CONNOR

Let us know if your ex calls you back - your daughter comes home - you leave town - any significant updates.

Will do.

TROY

Okay, you can fill out the rest of the form now.

Troy begins to fill out the form. He stops and looks up at Officer O’Connor.

TROY

Do you think you’ll be able to find her?
OFFICER O'CONNOR
I don’t know. We’ll do our best.

TROY
So what should I do after you leave?

OFFICER O'CONNOR
Just got to wait it out. See if your ex calls you back – or contacts us directly.

TROY
Uh-huh.

OFFICER O'CONNOR
A lot of runaways come home after a day or two. But from what I’ve seen here... I don’t think so.

TROY
Right.

(Beat)
So what would you do in my situation?

OFFICER O'CONNOR
Why you asking?

TROY
Cause you’re a cop. I’m interested in knowing what you would do.

OFFICER O'CONNOR
Well – I wouldn’t be in your situation. Nothing personal but...

TROY
Please just tell me what to do.

OFFICER O'CONNOR
Listen just cause I’m a cop you think I know what to do?

I guess so.

OFFICER O'CONNOR
Yeah, well I’d be answering your question as a father – not as a cop.

TROY
Oh. Okay.

OFFICER O'CONNOR
Off the record?

TROY
Off the record.
The first thing you gotta do is take a long hard look in the mirror. Telling your kid that she can see her mother again when she’s sixteen - when it just ain’t so? That’s just wrong.

TROY
I was trying to protect her.

OFFICER O’CONNOR
Nuh-uh. That’s not the sort of thing you can ever lie to your kid about.

(Beat)
You owe her an apology.

(Beat)
A major apology.

(Beat)
Anyway that’s my opinion.

TROY
Okay. No - thanks for your thoughts.

OFFICER O’CONNOR
Mmm-hmm. And just so you know there’s nothing stopping you from catching the next plane to Oregon if you want to.

(Beat)

Right.

OFFICER O’CONNOR
Now finish filling out that form - cause I got to get home to my kids.

TROY
Yeah. Sure.

Troy goes back to filling out the form.

BLACK OUT

SCENE 5

The sound of a ringing telephone. Two spotlights come up (stage left and stage right respectively). Nora walks into one (spotlight), placing her keys on a side-table and awkwardly taking off her coat as she answers her phone. In the other spotlight, Kimberly stands with her phone.
NORA
Hello?
(Pause)
Hello?

KIMBERLY
Yes, is this... Nora Simon?

NORA
It is.

KIMBERLY
Did you used to live in Westport, Connecticut?
(Pause)

NORA
Who am I speaking with?

KIMBERLY
It’s Kimber.
(Beat)

NORA
I’m sorry?

KIMBERLY
It’s me Mom. Kimber.
(Beat)
Kimberly Helmer.
(Pause)
Hello?

NORA
Yes.

KIMBERLY
Is it all right that I called you?
Hello?

NORA
Yes.

KIMBERLY
Seven years.

NORA
What?

KIMBERLY
It’s been seven years!

NORA
Is this some kind of joke?
No. (Beat) KIMBERLY
I ran away. NORA

What? KIMBERLY
I ran away. (Pause) NORA
From Daddy.

Why? KIMBERLY

Why do you think? (Beat) NORA

I don’t know. KIMBERLY

Sure you do. Why did you run away from him? (Beat) NORA
And your father doesn’t know where you are?

He’s a jerk. Fuck him. (Pause) KIMBERLY
I wanted to find you.

NORA
So he doesn’t know where you are?

I just told you I ran away. (Pause) KIMBERLY

You did. (Beat) NORA

Are you happy to hear from me? (Pause) KIMBERLY
Hello? I asked you a question. Are you happy to hear from me?

NORA
Not under these circumstances.
KIMBERLY
Well guess what? That’s just too bad!

NORA
You shouldn’t be talking to me like this.

KIMBERLY
You don’t get to tell me how to talk to you!
(Beat)
Did you hear me?
(Beat)
I asked you if you heard me?

NORA
I did.

KIMBERLY
Good.
(Beat)
Today’s my birthday.
(Beat)
Today’s my sixteenth birthday.

NORA
Happy birthday Kimberly.
(Pause)

KIMBERLY
I’m sorry I called you.
(Pause)
You don’t even care, do you?

NORA
I do.

KIMBERLY
Oh?

NORA
I do.
(Beat)
I think about you all the time.
(Beat)
What are you doing right now?

KIMBERLY
What do you mean?

NORA
Where are you?

KIMBERLY
I can’t tell you where I am.
NORA

Why not?

KIMBERLY

Because if I do I won’t see you.

(Beat)

NORA

How do you know that?

KIMBERLY

Because I know.

(Beat)

Don’t you want to see me?

(Pause)

NORA

Kimberly this is a complicated situation.

KIMBERLY

How so?

NORA


(Pause)

Kim?

KIMBERLY

Yes?

NORA

Why do you want to see me?

KIMBERLY

Because you’re my mother. Isn’t that good enough?

NORA

Do you still live in Connecticut?

KIMBERLY

I can’t tell you where I am. Didn’t you hear me the first time?

NORA

Can you at least call your father... and let him know that you’re okay? Then you can call me back and we can talk some more. Doesn’t that sound like a good idea?

KIMBERLY

I don’t think so.

NORA

Why not.
KIMBERLY
For one you’re going to have my call traced.

NORA
No I’m not.

KIMBERLY
Well I’m not going to do that.

(Pause)
Daddy lied to me. He told me I could talk to you when I turned sixteen.

NORA
Well... I just don’t even know what to say about that.

(Pause)

KIMBERLY
My best friend asked me to tell you that you’re a crazy bitch for leaving me.

NORA
Well that was nice of her.

KIMBERLY
I know where you live.

(Beat)
You live in Oregon.

(Beat)
And I know how to get there without being picked up by the police.

(Beat)
So you should put some fresh sheets on your spare bed.

NORA
Kimberly I understand that you’ve been hurt.

KIMBERLY
No you don’t!

NORA
I think you’re -

KIMBERLY
- I don’t care what you think. You’re my mother and you should start acting like one.

NORA
I think your tone is inappropriate.

KIMBERLY
I am inappropriate!

NORA
Kimber!
KIMBERLY
I’ll see you when I get there!

NORA
Call your father!

KIMBERLY
No!

(Beat)

NORA
Can you give me your father’s number?

KIMBERLY
Look it up yourself.

Kimberly’s spotlight goes out and she quickly walks backstage.

NORA
Wait! Kimber! Don’t!

The loud sound of a dial tone.

NORA (cont’d)

KIMBERLY
Kimber!

(Beat)

Nora looks down and sees her cell phone has a message. She presses a button and it plays.

TROY (V.O.)
Nora. I’m sorry to have to tell you this... but... Kimberly -

She presses a button that stops the message.

BLACK OUT

SCENE 6
Nora and Ned Steven’s bedroom.

Nora comes into the bedroom from the bathroom. She sits down at her mirror and takes off her make-up. Ned is lying in bed looking at the blueprint of a house.

(Pause)

NED
Hey?

(Pause)
Hey. NORA

How are you? NED

Fine. NORA

(Pause) NED

Something’s bothering you.

I got a call today. NORA

From whom? NED

From my daughter. NORA

Oh? NED

She’s run away from home. NORA

Wow, that’s... NED

Yeah. NORA

Where is she? NED

She wouldn’t tell me. NORA

What did you do? NED

I talked to her. NORA

After you talked to her? NED

I called the police. NORA

What did they say? NED
That they’d get back to me.

Oh. Wow.

(Beat)

Did you contact...

My Ex! No, I didn’t.

(Beat)

He left a message.

And you’re upset.

Yes.

Well, I’m sorry. That’s understandable.

(Pause)

She said she’s coming here.

To visit?

That’s what she said.

Oh.

She asked me to put fresh sheets on the spare bed.

On the spare bed? How does she even know that we have one?

(Beat)

I’m kidding.

What do you think about this?

I don’t know what to think.

If she did... make it here? How would you feel?

I don’t know.
NORA
Would it be weird for you?

NED
No. She can stay in the guest room.

NORA
But you wouldn’t like it would you?

NED
I didn’t say that.

NORA
I don’t want to make life uncomfortable for you.

NED
I said “no.”

NORA
Okay.

(Pause)

What about Abigail?

NED
She’d be alright with it. I’m sure she’d love to find out she has a... sister.

NORA
I’m sorry I’ve kept my life a secret from her.

NED
It’s okay.

NORA
I just don’t know what to do.

NED
And I don’t think it’s my business to tell you what to do.

NORA
We’re married. It’s your business.

NED
It’s up to you what you do.

NORA
Surely you have an opinion.

Ned scoffs at her.

NORA (cont’d)
You’re not taking this seriously.
What do you want me to say?

Something real!

And I’m not?

No you’re not!

(Pause)

Are you coming to bed?

You’re afraid. That’s what it is.

Afraid of what?

Of my past.

Of your past?

(Pause)

Okay. Is this... are you trying to tell me something?

You must think I’m a monster.

No!

Who abandons their daughter for seven years?

You told me you had to.

I did!

And I believe you. I believe in you.

Uh-huh.

(Pause)

But do you judge me for it?
I’m just a weekend dad. I don’t live with my kid either.

That’s different.

Not to me it’s not.

(Beat)

I love you Nora.

What does that have to do with anything?

It has everything to do with everything. Now come to bed.

But it does scare you? Doesn’t it? If not for yourself, then for Abigail.

I’m not scared. I know you wouldn’t do anything to jeopardize our marriage.

But you’re human. It would be completely understandable if you were scared?

(Beat)

I think you’re the one who’s scared.

You’d never abandon Abigail. Not in a million years.

(Pause)

Look at yourself.

Why?

Just do it. Look at yourself.

Nora looks back at her reflection in the mirror.

Look at that face in front of you. What do you see?

(Pause)

You really love this girl.
(Beat)

Don’t you?

I do.

Now come here.

Nora heads over to the side of the bed.

Give me your hands.

Nora gives him her hands.

I’ll do everything I can to support you in this.

Thank you.

She puts her arms around him.

You’re wonderful.

They kiss.

BLACK OUT

SCENE 7
Nora and Ned’s foyer and living room.
Morning.

Nora and Ned’s house has the spacious and open feel of a modern architect’s house. There is a picture of Abigail on a couch side table.

Ned is working on a blueprint of a house. We see on the upstage wall a door which goes into Ned and Nora’s bedroom, and, another door which goes into Abigail’s room.

The doorbell rings. Ned gets up and walks over to the front door and opens it. Standing in the doorway is Troy.

Hello?
I’m looking for Nora.

Yes?

Does she live here?

Nora comes out of her bedroom and stands out of sight listening to the conversation.

Yeah. Can I help you?

I’m Troy Helmer.

Nora’s ex?

Yes I know. She’s out right now.

I’m Ned.

(Ned offers his hand. Troy shakes it awkwardly.)

The police notified me that my daughter has been in touch with “Miss Simon.”

Yeah. Kimberly called a couple of days ago.

Right.

Is she here?

No, she’s not.

So do you know where she is?

I don’t. (Pause)
TROY
Okay.

(Beat)
Is somebody going to contact me when Kim shows up here?

I think so.

TROY
You think so?

NED
Yes.

TROY
She’s my daughter. I have one-hundred percent custody. The police are involved. She’s technically a runaway. How could there be any question as to the legality of informing me as to the whereabouts of my daughter.

(Beat)
Maybe I should familiarize you with the illegal activity of “aiding and abetting a minor?”

NED
No need.

TROY
So if you don’t want a lawsuit on your hands, I’d highly recommend contacting me when she shows up. Okay?

NED
Will do.

TROY
Thanks for the help.

NED
Don’t mention it.

Troy turns to go. Ned closes the door.

BLACK OUT

SCENE 8
Night.

Kimberly, who is seated on a bus, suddenly wakes up from a bad dream which startles both her and Hal, the man seated next to her. Kimberly is wearing the hat that Janice gave her. Hal has a slight Western look to his appearance.
Kimberly looks more dishevelled than the last time we saw her.

(Pause)

KIMBERLY

Sorry.

HAL

What?

KIMBERLY

I said "I’m sorry."

HAL

For what?

KIMBERLY

If I startled you.

HAL

Startled?

KIMBERLY

Before.

HAL

Hardly.

(Beat)

You have a bad dream or something?

KIMBERLY

Yeah.

HAL

This bus will do that to ya.

(Beat)

Where you coming from?

KIMBERLY

New England.

HAL

Back East.

KIMBERLY

Yes sir.

HAL

What’s your final destination?

KIMBERLY

The Pacific Ocean.

(Beat)
HAL
Oh. Well that’s where this bus goes.
(Beat)
Never been here before? Huh?

KIMBERLY
Nope.

HAL
So what brought you out here?

KIMBERLY
My family.
(Beat)
We’re ah... having a reunion.

HAL
Oh?

KIMBERLY
Yeah.

HAL
Well you couldn’t have picked a nicer spot. Hopefully the weather will keep up.

KIMBERLY
I hope so.

HAL
So far it’s been a beautiful fall.

KIMBERLY
It’s been pretty cold back east.

HAL
Yeah, I’m blessed. Blessed to live on the Oregon Coast. The winters are a lot milder out here. Yup! You’re going to love it so much you’ll want to move out here.

KIMBERLY
I have some family that already lives here. In Cannon Beach?

HAL
Oh?
(Beat)
Where do they live?
(Beat)

KIMBERLY
On Ocean View Drive.
Ocean View Drive, huh?
(Beat)

Yeah. Do you know where that is?

Sure do.
(Beat)
I live on Ocean View Drive.

You do?

Yup.

Wow.
(Beat)
What a coincidence.

It’s a small town.
(Pause)
Do you know where you’re going? Do you need a lift?

No, I’m being picked up at the bus station. Thanks.

No problem.
(Pause)
So, did you fly into Portland this afternoon?

No... I took the bus.

The bus?

The Greyhound.

You serious?

Yeah.

Across the entire country?
KIMBERLY
Yes.

HAL
How long that take?

KIMBERLY
Three days and twenty minutes.

He laughs.

HAL
Holy mother of God! You afraid of flying or something?

KIMBERLY
Yes sir.

HAL
Look ya don’t have to call me “sir.”

Okay.

HAL
So did you get to spend any nights in a motel when you were on the “Greyhound”?

KIMBERLY
No.

HAL
Not even a shower?

KIMBERLY
Unfortunately, no.

HAL
Well that takes dedication. Specially for a young woman.

KIMBERLY
I guess.

(Beat)

HAL
So who is it that lives on Ocean View Drive?

KIMBERLY
My mother.

HAL
You must really love her.

KIMBERLY
I do.
That’s more than I can say for a lot of kids today.

I guess that’s true.

He offers her his hand.

I’m Hal.

Nice to meet you.

What’s your name?

Oh, it’s Kim... actually.

“Kim... actually?” Instead of “Kim Not-actually?”

She laughs.

Yeah.

I’m just kiddin with ya.

I know.

It’s nice to meet ya, Kim.

You too.

How old are you? You’re still in high-school, right?

Yeah, I just turned... eighteen four days ago.

Eighteen?

Yeah.

I would have guessed younger.
Oh?

Yeah. (Beat)
Well... happy birthday.

Thanks. (Beat)

So is your mother originally from these parts, or is she a transplant?

A what?

You don’t know what a transplant is?

No.

People who re-locate from the East Coast. We call em transplants.

Oh. (Beat)
She’s a transplant.

So how long has she been here?

A few years.

Oh?

I guess.

What’s her name?

(Beat)

Nora.
Nora?

(Beat)

Yeah.

(Beat)

Nora Simon.

Simon?

That’s her maiden name actually.

“Actually” huh?

Oops, I said it again. So do you know her?

Nora?

Yeah.

I know Nora who lives on Ocean View Drive. But I didn’t know her maiden name was Simon?

Kimberly takes the doll of her mother out and places it in his hands.

See... this is a doll of my mother.

Of your mother?

Yeah. She gave it to me when I was nine. It was a birthday present.

He places his hands over the doll’s face and feels its contours.

Gee wiz - your mother’s completely different now.

She is?
HAL
Oh yeah! This doll’s kind of... scary.

KIMBERLY
(Laughing)
Oh well that’s - that’s from seven years ago.

HAL
Or maybe she’s just... “scared.” (Beat) A nice looking woman though. Good genes.

KIMBERLY
Um... Thank you.

He nods and hands the doll back to her.

(Awkward Pause)

HAL
She sure lives in a nice house.

Oh yeah?

KIMBERLY
You’ve never seen it?

HAL
Not really... just... a couple of blurry pictures.

Huh?

(Kimberly)
So what about the rest of your family?

HAL
I’m not sure who’s... actually going to be there.

Oh? Hmm! -

KIMBERLY
- Actually I’m planning on spending most of my time with my mother.

HAL
“Actually” huh?

KIMBERLY
Yeah.

HAL
Well I guess the rest of your family will have to understand.
Yeah. I guess so.

You’re going to have a great time. You two can hike down to the beach. Drive into town for some ice cream. You name it.

So do you have any other brothers or sisters?

Who are going to be there?

Ah... no.

What about your father?

He’s staying in Connecticut actually.

“Actually!” There it is again!

Nervous habit.

Am I making you nervous?

No.

Are you sure?

Yeah.

He looks at her.

So what’s he do?

My dad?

Yeah?

He’s an investment banker.
HAL
An investment banker?

KIMBERLY
Yeah, he’s really boring.
(Beat)
He actually watches people fish on TV.

HAL
I’m a fisherman and – I watch fishing on TV.

Really?

KIMBERLY
Really.

HAL
Really.
(Beat)
There’s nothing wrong with that.

KIMBERLY
But he’s never gone fishing. Not once.

HAL
Well that’s just too bad. Don’t you think?
(Beat)

KIMBERLY
Yeah, I guess it is.

HAL
Somebody ought to take him fishing sometime.

KIMBERLY
Not me.

HAL
Okay. So what part of Connecticut are you two from?

KIMBERLY
Well we’re actually near the water.

HAL
Well there you go. You could go fishing sometime.

KIMBERLY
Yeah.
(Beat)

HAL
So when was the last time you saw your mother?

KIMBERLY
Seven years. It’s been seven years.
HAL
Uh-huh.

KIMBERLY
We have a really good relationship though.

HAL
Oh yeah?

KIMBERLY
Yeah.

HAL
Huh.

(Pause)

KIMBERLY
So what are you doing on the bus?

HAL
Well... I have a neurological condition... that’s affected my vision.

(Beat)
So, I can’t drive - because of it. And therefore... I take the bus to Portland twice a week. I’m a sculptor. I teach at Lewis & Clark College. You know it?

KIMBERLY
No.

HAL
Yeah well “actually” I feel obliged to tell you that I have a certain sense about you. And I noticed you right away when I got on the bus.

(Beat)

KIMBERLY
What do you mean?

HAL
Are you in some kind of trouble?

KIMBERLY
No. No trouble.

HAL
Cause you can talk to me about it.

KIMBERLY
I’m really okay.

HAL
Oh yeah?

(Beat)
You mean to tell me – your father, an investment banker who lives in Connecticut, put you on a Greyhound Bus to cross the country?! All alone?! Cause I find that a little hard to believe.

    KIMBERLY
Well it’s true. Why would I lie?

    HAL
Why haven’t you seen your mother in seven years?
    (Pause)
Did you run away from home?

    KIMBERLY
No I didn’t!

    HAL
Do you need a ride to your mother’s house?

    KIMBERLY
No.

    HAL
My wife’s picking me up at the bus station. She can drive you there.

    KIMBERLY
It’s okay.

    HAL
Her name’s Martha.

    KIMBERLY
Right.
    (Beat)

    HAL
Is your mother really going to pick you up at the bus station?

    KIMBERLY
Yes.
    (Beat)
She is!

    HAL
Your mother’s house is a ways out of town. Trust me, it’s dark out and you won’t know how to find your way there.
    (Beat)
There aren’t any taxis you know?!

    KIMBERLY
I’ll be fine on my own.
On “your own” huh?

Hal reaches into his pocket and takes out his cell phone.

HAL (cont’d)
I’m going to call your mother.
(Beat)
You don’t mind if I call her, do you?

He presses a couple of buttons and brings the phone up to his face. It is clearly ringing.

KIMBERLY
Wait. Please! Please hang up!

Hal hangs up. He looks at Kimberly.

Let me explain.

Hal nods.

BLACK OUT

SCENE 9
Ned and Nora’s House.
Early morning the next day.

A car drives into the driveway with its headlights on. Nora opens the door and walks outside in her bathrobe. Hal is standing there.

HAL
Hello Nora.

NORA
Oh hey! How are you Hal?

HAL
Good. Sorry if I woke you.

NORA
No, we’re up and at em.
(Beat)
What’s up?

HAL
Well, I met a girl last night.
A girl?

Yeah, a young woman actually.

And where did you meet this... young woman?

On the bus from Portland.

Ned comes out of the bedroom in his pajamas and bathrobe and listens to the conversation out of sight.

She claims to be your daughter.

(Beat)

Name’s Kimberly.

Nora nods.

(Beat)

Where is she?

She’s in the truck with Martha. She stayed with us last night.

(Beat)

I thought it might be a good thing to let her get her head together.

Is she okay?

Yeah.

(Beat)

She is.

I don’t know what to say.

(Beat)

It’s okay.

(Beat)

Thank you.
You’re welcome.

Ned walks into view.

Hey Hal.

Hey Ned. How you doing?

Pretty good. (Beat)

You?

Just fine. Thank you.

Hal met Kim on the bus last night. She’s sitting in Hal’s truck.

I heard. (Beat)

Well, I just wanted to give you some warning. I’ll tell her you’re waiting for her.

Thanks Hal.

Of course.

Hal is about to walk outside and then changes his mind.

Wait a second. (Pause)

What is it Hal?

I know it’s not really my business what’s going on between you and Kimberly, but, consider this advice from an old man. Family is very important. You never know how long you’ll have them for. (Beat)

You’re making a mistake.
A mistake?

HAL
A huge mistake that you’ll come to regret.

NORA
What are you talking about?

HAL
Let your daughter back into your life.

Hal nods to himself and then turns and walks slowly away. Nora stares at the ground.

(Pause)

NED
Jesus.

NORA
(Sotto Voce)
Yeah.

NED
What do we do now?

NORA
I don’t know.

NED
He’s just an old man.

NORA
I’m a terrible person!

NED
I’ll call your ex and let him know she’s here.

NORA
Okay.

NED
And stop beating yourself up.

Ned walks off-stage to call Troy.

Nora suddenly notices a pink hoodie that’s hanging on the coat-rack and a number of photos of Abigail around the room.

NORA
Oh my God!
What is it?

Nora quickly grabs the hoodie from off of the coat-rack.

Abigail’s things!

NED

What are you doing?

NORA

We’ll have to hide them in her room and keep the door closed!

Nora hurriedly walks around the room collecting Abigail’s things and wraps them in the hoodie.

Are you kidding?

NED

Help me! Please!

NORA

Ned reluctantly helps her gather any signs of Abigail’s presence in the house and brings them into Abigail’s room.

The door bell rings. Nora hesitates and then opens the door.

Kimberly stands there looking at her. Nora goes in for a hug. Kim recoils. Nora steps back and looks at her.

Just look at you. You’re all grown up.

KIMBERLY

Yup.

(Beat)

I like your bathrobe.

NORA

Thank you.

(Pause)

That must be heavy. Here. Let me take that for you.

Nora goes to Kim and helps her take off her backpack and then leans it against the wall. (Note: It should have the rabbit’s foot attached to the outside.)
NORA (cont’d)
Oh look you have a rabbit’s foot. How sweet.

KIMBERLY

Yeah.
(Pause)

NORA
Do you want to take off your hat and coat?

Nora reaches for it. Kimberly recoils.

KIMBERLY

No thanks.

NORA
That’s okay.
(Pause)

KIMBERLY
Can I have a glass of water?

NORA
Of course.

Nora’s about to walk towards the kitchen when Ned re-enters from Abigail’s room. Kim looks stunned.

NORA (cont’d)
Oh, Kim this is Ned. Ned – Kim.
(Beat)

NED
Hello.
(Pause)

NORA
Kim?
(Pause)

Kim?
(Pause)

NED
(To Nora)
Do you want me to leave you two alone?

NORA
(To Ned)
It’s okay.
(Beat)

Kim?
(Beat)

I’ll get you that glass of water.
Nora walks in the direction of the kitchen. Kim and Ned stand there awkwardly in silence.

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT ONE

***INTERMISSION***
Act 2

SCENE 1
Nora and Ned’s living room.

The door leading outside has been left ajar. Nora and Kimberly sit across from each other. Kimberly drinks a glass of water. Ned sits in an adjoining area working on a blueprint. Kim’s backpack is still leaning against the wall by the front door. The hat that Janice gave her now rests on top of the backpack.

(Pause)

KIMBERLY

Nice house.

NORA

Thank you.

KIMBERLY

Did... Ned, is that his name, Ned?

NORA

Yes.

KIMBERLY

Did Ned design it?

NORA

He did.

KIMBERLY

Oh? How long have you two lived here?

NORA

A few years.

KIMBERLY

Do you like it?

NORA

Yes.

KIMBERLY

Well that’s good. I bet you like the open feel of it.

NORA

I do.

(Pause)
KIMBERLY
Now you look uncomfortable.

NORA
No, I’m fine.

KIMBERLY
Being surrounded by all this... how could you not be? Right?

Right.

KIMBERLY
If things hadn’t worked out for you after leaving us... that would be just awful.

(Pause)

NORA
I understand how hurt and angry you must be.

KIMBERLY
Could I ask you a question?

Yes.

KIMBERLY
When did you meet Ned?

NORA
A few years ago.

KIMBERLY
Exactly how many?

(Pause)

NORA
Five.

KIMBERLY
And was this before or after you “found yourself”?

NORA
Found myself?

KIMBERLY
Daddy said that that’s where you went. To find yourself.

(Pause)

Did you find yourself before, during, or after you met Ned?

(Pause)

Or are you still looking?

Kim glances around the room as if looking for something.
NORA
I think your father misunderstood what I meant.

KIMBERLY
No, he understood exactly what you meant!

Okay.

KIMBERLY
Well I’m just glad you had a couple of years to yourself. (Pause)
Before Ned. (Pause)
What did you do? (Pause)
Before you met Ned? (Pause)

NORA
I went back to school.

KIMBERLY
For what?

NORA
Social work.

KIMBERLY
Graduate school?

NORA
Right.

KIMBERLY
Where was it? (Beat)
Your graduate school.

NORA
In Idaho.

KIMBERLY
Oh, so you met Ned in Idaho? Is that where he’s from?

NORA
Ned’s from Oregon. (Beat)
He designed a building for the university I went to. (Beat)

KIMBERLY
Well I’m glad you were getting some in school. (Beat)
Some action.

(Beat)

With “Ned the Architect”.

(Beat)

Yeah, it’s supposed to be good for you. I’ve heard it can prolong your life.

(Beat)

It’s a shame Daddy doesn’t have more going on in that department.

(Beat)

He plays a lot of golf though. And he likes to watch fishing shows on TV.

NORA

Does he?

KIMBERLY

And money - let’s not forget about money. Popsy makes a decent living. I mean it’s hard to understand what’s going on there. The guy’s a good catch.

(Beat)

It’s a shame. I hope he doesn’t die young.

(Pause)

Are you and Ned married? Because Hal didn’t know your last name is Simon?

NORA

Stevens is Ned’s last name. And yes - we’re legally married. So Hal knows me as Nora Stevens.

KIMBERLY

Ah! How WASPY. You’ve got a great last name Ned.

(Beat)

NED

Thanks.

KIMBERLY

Just so you know - you’re still listed as Nora Simon in the directory.

NORA

I kept my maiden name professionally.

KIMBERLY

Ballsy.

NORA

Thank you.

(Pause)

KIMBERLY

I guess I’m not doing the greatest job of endearing myself to you.
NORA
You don’t need to endear yourself to me.

KIMBERLY
I don’t?

NORA
I’m your mother. Nothing can ever change that.

KIMBERLY
Really?

NORA
Really.

(Kimberly pauses)

KIMBERLY
So, what’s your job?

NORA
I’m a guidance counselor.

KIMBERLY
In a school?

NORA
Yes.

KIMBERLY
And you work with kids?

(Beat)

NORA
I do.

KIMBERLY
How old are they?

NORA
Well, I work in a high school.

KIMBERLY
So they’re my age?

NORA
Yes.

KIMBERLY
So, you work with kids my age... kids you don’t even know that well... and... you can’t even bring yourself to be my mom?

(Beat)

Is that right?
That’s not really –

- Why? Why do you do that?

Ned stops working and looks into the room.

KIMBERLY (cont’d)

Was I not good enough for you?

NORA

No! No! That was never in question.

KIMBERLY

Then why?

(Beat)

Why?

NORA

Well for one I didn’t want to mess up your life.

KIMBERLY

So you’re just messing up all those kid’s lives at that high school instead?

NORA

No.

KIMBERLY

Well that’s just great.

NORA

I’m trying to help them.

KIMBERLY

What about helping me?

NORA

I didn’t think that I would be a help in your life.

KIMBERLY

Why?

NORA

I had problems.

KIMBERLY

Problems? What kind of “problems”?

NORA

Well for one I didn’t know who I was.
KIMBERLY
Take a guess! Take a guess at who you are! That’s what the rest of us do!

NORA
I didn’t want to leave you. I had to.

KIMBERLY
Because...?!

NORA
I wasn’t a whole person.

Kim looks her over.

KIMBERLY
Two legs. Two arms. You look pretty whole to me.

NORA
Well I wasn’t then.

KIMBERLY
Uh-huh. And you couldn’t work on that and be my mother at the same time?

NORA
That’s right. I didn’t have it in me.

KIMBERLY
I see.

(Beat)

NORA
Because I never really got to grow up.

KIMBERLY
And I never really got to be a child. We have a lot in common. Maybe we should hang out some time?

NORA
Kimberly -

KIMBERLY
- It sounds so unnatural when you say my name.

NORA
I couldn’t be a good mother and wife at that time. I just couldn’t.

KIMBERLY
Well that’s just too bad for me I guess, because, I never got to count on the most important person in my life! Yeah.

(Pause)
(Sarcastic)
This is so informative.

NORA
It was the hardest thing I’ve ever done in my life.

Troy appears in the open doorway. He
stands outside of their line of sight.

KIMBERLY
So why didn’t you contact me once you had “found yourself?”

NORA
It’s been an ongoing process and I didn’t want to confuse you.

KIMBERLY
Ah. I see. I’m so glad I’m not confused!

NORA
I thought it would be better for you.

KIMBERLY
Better for me? You didn’t want me in your life!

Kimberly stands up.

NORA
I did want you. You have no idea how much.

KIMBERLY
I’ve got no idea how much?

NORA
You don’t!

KIMBERLY
I think I have a pretty good idea how much you should have wanted me.

NORA
I just needed to be on my own.

KIMBERLY
What about Ned?

NORA
Ned was different.

KIMBERLY
How?

NORA
I was lost. I didn’t know who I was and... Ned helped me.
Nora looks quickly at Ned who is still sitting quietly in the next room and then back at Kimber.

NORA (cont’d)

He did.

KIMBERLY

I think you need a reality check. That’s what I think. -

NORA

I think -

Kimberly holds her hand up to stop her from speaking.

KIMBERLY

I don’t care what you think! If you made the mistake of having a child before you “knew who you were” that’s just too fucking bad. That’s life! You shouldn’t have to hear this from a sixteen year old girl. Especially if you’re some fucking guidance counselor. If you were so unhappy with Daddy, okay, then leave him. But to leave a nine year old girl... forever... in the middle of the night... without an explanation... and to act as though it’s a mature and well informed decision. That’s... not mature! That’s not responsible. You didn’t give me the love... or direction... to find my own way through life... and... I have had to grow up... faster... and more carefully than everyone I know. I have had to guess what my mother would want me to be. I’ve had to guess how to dress. I’ve had to guess how to keep Daddy from going off the deep end... and to wonder what’s going to happen to him when I leave home... when I go to college... when I turn eighteen. I don’t have the luxury of knowing that my mother’s taking care of him. I don’t. So, you’ve robbed me of my childhood... you’ve robbed me of having a “real childhood”... and you’ve robbed me of the sense that I can leave my father in the hands of someone who loves him... and most of all, you’ve robbed me of ever having a mother who I can trust or have one iota of respect for. And being a good mother is a good thing to be! And leaving your husband is different than leaving your daughter. Especially for such a self-obsessed, narcissistic venture as yours seems to be. You could have gone back to school... you could have had a new career... you could have even hooked up with Ned here... and helped other kids my age at some stupid fucking high school... and still had me in your life... it’s called “joint custody!” You stupid... fucking... bitch!

NORA

You don’t know what happened to me.

Kimberly notices her father standing in the doorway.
KIMBERLY
Oh, Daddy, so nice of you to come. I thought you didn’t know where Mommy was.

TROY
I’m sorry Kim.

KIMBERLY
What else have you lied to me about?

Nothing.

KIMBERLY
Really?

TROY
Really.

KIMBERLY
Did you have a nice flight? Cause I took the Grey Hound Bus and I gotta tell you it really sucks ass.

(Beat)

What? Why are you looking at me like that?

TROY
I’m just... relieved. I’m glad you’re safe.

(Beat)

NORA
As am I.

KIMBERLY
(To Nora)
Oh please! You haven’t earned the right to say that to me yet.

(Pause)

NORA
Kim.

KIMBERLY
What?

NORA
There are some things I want to... to say to you.

KIMBERLY
Like what?

NORA
Things you have a right to know.
Things you need to get off of your chest?
(Beat)

Things your father might not have told you because he was protecting you.
(Beat)

Okay. So are you going to tell me?
Nora looks at Troy.

Do you want me to come back later?

Kim do you want your father here or not?

I really don’t care.

You want to sit back down?

Sure.

Troy enters the living room and sits down. He looks rattled.

You okay?

I’m fine.

Nora turns to Kim.

I want you to understand that when I was with your father I didn’t know who I was. I’m sure that means very little to you now. But try to imagine someone who’s so unconscious that they’re just going through the motions of life. Try to imagine a person who is faking their identity and terrified about who they really are. And life feels dead to that person on the inside, and, they forget things, basic things about how to live with dignity... in the presence of others... because they never learned it.

(Pause)
My parents were so... absent in my life...
exhibited such bad examples of human beings... that my entire identity became a counterfeit... approximation.

KIMBERLY

Gee that sounds familiar.

TROY

(Gently to Kimber)

Listen to her.

(Beat)

NORA

When I met your father I just thought that was the next thing to do. Get married. Be a wife. Maybe a mother. And then you came along. And though you were beautiful, and I knew that on some level, I just couldn’t appreciate it in the way that a mother should. I didn’t know that then, but, later, I started to... see things... for what they were. To really see myself for what I was. And the first thing I realized was how bored I was. I was bored by it all... and I knew that was terrible. Just terrible. Who would be bored with a beautiful child and a husband who, in his own flawed way, loved her unconditionally. Because that’s how he loved me at the time and I know that now. But, you see, I didn’t know what I wanted. I only knew how to please others by being ingratiating. And I’d watch myself doing that with people who I thought were my friends... people who loved to dominate me. Your father was just one of many.

Troy nods.

NORA (cont’d)

And I lied to myself and believed that they respected and liked me, but, they didn’t. Because, you see, I didn’t like nor respect myself.

(Pause)

And then, one day, I was home, and polishing the silverware... literally, when I accidently pricked myself and I started to bleed... and I realized that it felt... pleasurable. And I started to find ways of cutting myself intentionally. And then... I realized that I wanted to cut you... too... Kim. Because it felt so good to me. I was losing my mind. I wanted to hurt you, and, I wanted to hurt your father. And I knew that I just had to leave. For good. That no one would ever be able to help me enough to make me stay. I mean I really wanted to... leave... more than anything. And you know, I haven’t cut myself once since I left.

(Pause)

Do you understand?

KIMBERLY

You were a cutter?
NORA

I was.

(Beat)

I’m sorry.

KIMBERLY

Yeah. Me too.

(To Troy)

This just keeps getting better and better.

(Beat)

You guys want to go to a movie or something?

(Beat)

NORA

I don’t know what to say to you. It’s the truth.

KIMBERLY

Yeah. I believe you.

Kimberly looks around the room.

KIMBERLY (cont’d)

No I’m really glad you left when you did. Thank God you didn’t have any more chances to fuck me up even more.

TROY

(Gently)

Kim!

Kimberly stands up.

NORA

No it’s okay.

Kimberly walks upstage to the door that leads to the master bedroom. They all watch her. She pushes the door open and looks inside.

KIMBERLY

Is this your bedroom?

Yes.

KIMBERLY

Very nice.

(Beat)

I like the cast iron bed. It’s very Phantom Of The Opera meets Pottery Barn.

Kimberly closes the door. She looks at the other door on the upstage wall which is closed.
She walks across the stage to the door and is about to touch the doorknob.

NORA

Kimberly?

KIMBERLY

Who’s room is this?
(Pause)

NORA

It’s Abigail’s.

KIMBERLY’s pulls her hand away from the door knob.

KIMBERLY

Who’s Abigail?

NORA

She’s Ned’s daughter.
(Pause)

KIMBERLY

Where is she?

NED
(From his drafting-table)

She’s with my ex.

Kimberly reaches and grasps the doorknob. She opens it slowly and looks inside. She turns and looks back at Nora.

KIMBERLY

How old is she?

NORA

She’s fifteen.

KIMBERLY

You have a girl... living here... who’s my age?

NORA

She’s only here –

KIMBERLY
(To Ned)
- When is she coming back?

NED

On Friday. We only have her some weekends.
(Beat)
Kimberly looks at Troy.

KIMBERLY
Can you believe this?
(Pause)
I said, “can you believe this?”

TROY
Yes.
(Beat)
I can.

KIMBERLY
Is that all you have to say?

TROY
It is.

KIMBERLY
Yeah, why would I expect anything different from you?

Kimberly walks over to her back pack. She opens up one of the compartments and takes out the doll of her mother. She walks over to Nora and places it on her lap.

KIMBERLY (cont’d)
This is for your “new” daughter. Please give this to – to Abigail.

NORA
What?

KIMBERLY
This belongs to her now.

Kimberly walks out through the front door. Nora looks down at the doll. Troy watches Kimberly leave. Ned gets up and walks over to Nora and places his hands on her shoulders.

TROY
Wow! This is just... wonderful.

NED
(To Nora)
Do you want me to go after -

TROY
(Interrupting)
- No, I think that responsibility falls on another set of shoulders.
(To Nora)

Yours!

Ned walks toward the front door.

NORA

(To Troy)
I think you should go after her.

TROY

No! You should!

Troy glances at Kim’s things.

TROY (cont’d)
She left her stuff. She won’t go far.

Ned looks out the front door.

NED

(To Nora)
She’s sitting on the bench in the front yard.  
(Beat)
She’s crying.

TROY

Let’s give her a few minutes to herself.  
(Beat)
So how are you?

NORA

Fine.

TROY

Good. I’m happy for you.  
(Beat)
Really.

NORA

Thank you.  
(Beat)
I think you should go out to her.

TROY

I was thinking you should.

NORA

(To Ned)
What’s she doing?

NED

She’s still crying.

Nora holds up the doll.
NORA
What is this? Why did she give me this?

TROY
Don’t you remember?

NORA
No.

TROY
That’s the doll you gave her on her ninth birthday. 
(Beat)
The last “birthday” you spent with us. 
(Beat)
It’s a strange doll isn’t it? It even sort of looks like you. 
(Beat)
She still sleeps with it.

NORA
Are you trying to make me feel even worse?

TROY
Am I?

NORA
Yes.

TROY
Gee that’s too bad - I just wanted you to understand where she’s coming from.


(Pause)

FADE TO BLACK.

SCENE 2

Kimberly continues to sit on the bench a good distance from the front door of Ned and Nora’s house.

Troy, who has Kim’s backpack slung over one shoulder, wanders up to Kim on the bench.

TROY
Kimber? 
(Pause)
Yeah.

(Pause)

You mind if I sit with you?

Why not.

You left this inside so...

I know.

Troy leans her backpack against the side of the bench. He refers to the rabbit’s foot hanging off of it.

Where did you get the rabbit’s foot?

Janice’s brother gave it to me.

That was nice of him.

Yeah.

Troy sits down a couple of feet from her on the bench.

How are you doing?

How do you think I’m doing?

She’s messed up.

Gee you think so?

I do.

Okay.
TROY
I’m sorry I gave you false hope.

KIMBERLY
Yeah whatever.
(Beat)
I hate that bitch!

TROY
She was crying after you left.

KIMBERLY
Good!

TROY
Listen, I’m going to be okay.
(Beat)
You don’t have to worry about me. If you’re going to worry about someone, worry about yourself.

KIMBERLY
Okay.
(Beat)
That Ned guy’s a... cold fish. I wonder why she didn’t cut herself when she was with him.

TROY
He seems alright.

KIMBERLY
I bet you want to kick his ass!

No.

TROY
Yes you do!

KIMBERLY
I don’t.

TROY
Yeah right!

KIMBERLY
Nora appears in the doorway behind them and crosses to the bench.

NORA
Hello.

TROY
Hello.
NORA
Nice view from here. Isn’t it?

TROY
It is.

KIMBERLY
I like the view from our house in Connecticut more actually.
(Pause)

NORA
Listen I know when I left. I know it was unforgivable.
(Pause)
But would you consider giving me a chance to... to be a
mother to you again... for a little while... and we can see
how it goes?
(Pause)
Do you think you could handle that?

TROY
We’re flying home first thing in the morning.

NORA
Don’t you want to see if there’s a way for the two of us to
do something?

TROY
Like what?

NORA
We could hang out... for the rest of the day together. I
could take you to the beach. Take you shopping. We could go
out to dinner. Whatever you’d like to do.
(Pause)
I owe you seven birthday presents.

TROY
You owe her a lot more than that.
(Pause)

KIMBERLY
Daddy? What do you think?

TROY
It’s up to you.

KIMBERLY
Would you be mad?

TROY
No.

KIMBERLY
Would you be sad?
TROY
I’ll be fine.

KIMBERLY
Why do we have to go home so soon?

TROY
You have school. I have work.
(Beat)
And your mother has a life of her own.

NORA
Why don’t you two go back to your father’s motel and I’ll come by around two o’clock to pick you up?
(Pause)

KIMBERLY
Where are we going?
(Beat)
What should I wear?

NORA
I’m going to take you shopping for some new clothes.

KIMBERLY
Shopping?

NORA
Yeah.

KIMBERLY
That’s -

NORA (cont’d)
- Great. I’ll see you then.

Nora bends down and kisses her on top of her head.

NORA (cont’d)
I’ll have her home by eleven.

TROY
Right.

Nora smiles at him and then walks back to the house.

(Tong pause)

Troy and Kimberly look at each other.

FADE TO BLACK.
SCENE 3
Troy’s motel room.

Troy lies on his bed. It is past eleven at night. There is the sound of an approaching car. Headlights shine through the window and illuminate the room. A car door is opened and closed and we hear Nora and Kimberly’s voices. Troy shifts in his bed, and, then sits up. We can now see his face from the illumination of the headlights. Nora and Kim walk on to the stage. They are laughing and giggling and standing a few feet from the door to Troy’s room.

NORA (O.S.)
Wasn’t that funny?

KIMBERLY (O.S.)
He was soooo... rude.

NORA (O.S.)
And he’s one of the friendlier waiters at that restaurant.

KIMBERLY
You still had your fork in your hand.

NORA
I know! I know!

KIMBERLY
And you were like “Yeah, I’m still eating that Gizmo.”

NORA
I called him Gizmo, didn’t I?

KIMBERLY
You did! You should have seen his face.

NORA
I did! I did!

KIMBERLY
God it was the worst service I’ve ever seen.

NORA
Yeah, well they just don’t give a hoot until tourist season.

KIMBERLY
In the summer?

NORA
Yes, the summer.
KIMBERLY

Right.

(Beat)

Do you think I could come out here again this... summer? Or maybe even Christmas?

(Beat)

NORA

Well you would have to talk to your father.

KIMBERLY

I know. But if he says yes?

(Beat)

NORA

Well I had such a wonderful time!

KIMBERLY

Me too!

(Beat)

NORA

Well lets do it again!

KIMBERLY

Yeah!

Kim runs to her mother and hugs her. Nora looks surprised.

KIMBERLY (cont’d)

I love you Mommy.

(Pause)

KIMBERLY (cont’d)

I love you too Kim.

Kimberly continues to hang on to her.

(Long Pause)

NORA (cont’d)

Kimberly?

KIMBERLY

Yes?

NORA

Your father’s waiting... and I have to get home.

KIMBERLY

Okay.

Kimberly reluctantly lets go of her mother and looks into her face.
NORA
I’ll wait here until you go in.
(Beat)
Before I drive away.

KIMBERLY
Okay.

NORA
Good night Kimberly.

KIMBERLY
Good night.

Nora gestures for Kimberly to enter the motel and she reluctantly walks to the door and slides the card into the door which opens the handle. She looks back at Nora and then takes a deep breath and enters the room closing the door behind her. Nora watches the door close and the cheerful expression on her face changes to an expression of regret. She stands there for a second and then heads back to her car as the lights fade out on her. Kimberly is in the room leaning with her back against the door. Troy, sitting up in bed, is watching her. He reaches over to the side of his bed and turns on a light. He looks at the expression on her face.

(Pause)

KIMBERLY (cont’d)

What!

TROY
How are you?

KIMBERLY
Fine.

TROY
You had fun?

KIMBERLY
Yes.

TROY
Good.

(Pause)

KIMBERLY
Why are you looking at me like that?
Like what?

Like you’re worried about me.

(Pause)

Because I am.

Why?

(Pause)

Are you jealous?

That’s not the reason I’m worried.

Oh? Why else?

Troy looks down at the floor and shakes his head.

Come on Kimber.

She said I could visit her again. Maybe even for Christmas.

I heard that.

Were you listening to us?

In fact I was.

Well I think that’s kinda weird.

(Affectionately)

That’s cause you’re a little shit.

She smiles at him.

Daddy, are you going to give me permission to visit her again?

I need to think about it.
Why?

Because I’m concerned. The whole thing is –

- Wait! Are you concerned that you’re going to lose me?

No.

Cause that would be lame.

Lame?

Yeah. You should trust me.

I do trust you.

Do you?

Yeah, I know you love me.

You do?

Yeah. And I love you.

You do?

Yeah.

Really? Like for real?

Yes.

(Beat)

Then what’s the matter?

I don’t trust her.
KIMBERLY
Well you should.
(Beat)
She gave me all these clothes.

TROY
Wow. Yeah. They’re really nice.

KIMBERLY
I know.
(Beat)
And you’re jealous.

TROY
Very.

KIMBERLY
I was afraid of that and I got you something to make you feel better.

She reaches into one of her shopping bags and takes out a shirt wrapped loosely in paper. Troy pulls a pullover out and holds it up. It’s an image of a man fishing with the caption “Piscor ergo sum” printed on the front of it.

TROY
“Piscor ergo sum”. What does that mean?

KIMBERLY
It’s Latin. Translation’s on the back.

Troy flips the jacket around. It says “I fish therefore I am.”

TROY
“I fish therefore I am.”
(Beat)
Very nice. Thank you.

KIMBERLY
You’re welcome.

TROY
That was sweet of you.

KIMBERLY
I know. I’m irresistibly sweet.

He places it aside.

TROY
I never gave you your birthday present.
KIMBERLY

What is it?

TROY

An airplane ticket back to New York.

(Beat)

I’m kidding. I got you this.

He takes a small wrapped box off of the side table and hands/tosses it to her. She unwraps it and finds a box.

KIMBERLY

A box.

TROY

Open it up!

She takes off the box lid and pulls out a car key.

KIMBERLY

Ha. Ha. A car key. You got me a car!

TROY

You’re sixteen. You need to start learning how to drive, and, you might as well learn on the car you’re going to be driving.

KIMBERLY

Thank you. Thank you Daddy.

She runs to him and hugs him.

TROY

You’re welcome.

(Beat)

So listen. We got to get up pretty early to catch our plane.

KIMBERLY

Yeah, I’ll get ready for bed.

TROY

Good.

She starts to get ready for bed.

KIMBERLY

Daddy?

TROY

Yes.
KIMBERLY
I’m sorry I ran away.
(Pause)

TROY
It’s okay.
(Beat)
Don’t ever do it again.

KIMBERLY
I won’t.
(Beat)
I promise.

TROY
Good. I’m going to hold you to that. Now go to bed.

BLACK OUT

SCENE 4
A Connecticut bus station.

Kimberly and Janice sit on the same bench that they were on earlier. They are both drinking bottled water. Kimberly is very excited and in the middle of her story.

KIMBERLY
And then we went to all these shops and... she bought me all of these incredible clothes.

JANICE
Uh-huh.

KIMBERLY
And we went out to eat... and she told me how she really missed me, and... What’s the matter?

JANICE
What do you mean?

KIMBERLY
You seem weird.

JANICE
Weird?

KIMBERLY
Yeah.

JANICE
In what way?
I don’t know.  
   (Beat)

I’m fine.  

Really?  

I think so.  

Are you nervous about going into the city or something?  

No.  

Well something’s bothering you.  
   (Pause)

You seem different.  

How am I different?  
   (Beat)

Well... you seem... happy.  

I am happy! I am!  
   (Beat)

Good.  
   (Beat)

I’m happy for you.  

(Skeptically)

Are you?  

Of course.  
   (Pause)

I’m so excited! My Mom is awesome. She’s independent. Strong. Beautiful. And she loves me.  
   (Beat)
That’s great Kim.

(Beat)

Kimberly makes the gesture to clink their water bottles, and they awkwardly do this.

CHEERS.

KIMBERLY

Cheers.

JANICE

Cheers.

KIMBERLY

Yeah.

(Beat)

To a bright future.

FADE TO BLACK.

SCENE 5
Troy and Kimberly’s House
Afternoon

Kimberly in spotlight. She has her phone up to her face.

KIMBERLY

Mom. It’s Kimber. I just wanted to say how great it was to see you.

(Pause)

About my coming to visit you this Christmas.

(Beat)

Dad says it’s okay.

(Beat)

I hope your job is going well. School is going okay for me.

(Beat)

And um... Daddy’s teaching me to drive. He got me my first car. Yeah, it’s just an old Corolla, but, it’s reliable and I don’t have to worry about it getting stolen or anything.

(Beat)

Maybe when I get my license I’ll be able to drive it out to Oregon and visit you.

(Beat)

I’d love to go hiking down to the ocean... and bring a picnic. We didn’t get to do that together.

(Beat)

I think that would be a lot of fun. Okay. Well, I guess I should get going. I don’t want to clog up your voice mail. Good Bye. Look forward to talking to you soon.
SCENE 6
Troy and Kimberly’s House.
Evening

Troy enters Kim’s room wearing an apron. Troy looks up and takes her in.

TROY
You didn’t eat your dinner.
(Beat)
Was your food okay?

KIMBERLY
Yeah.

TROY
Aren’t you hungry?

KIMBERLY
Not really.

TROY
Okay. How’s school?

KIMBERLY
Good.

TROY
Do you want a driving lesson?

KIMBERLY
Not tonight.

TROY
Okay.
(Pause)
Are you all right?

KIMBERLY
Yeah.

TROY
What’s the matter?

KIMBERLY
Mom hasn’t called me.

TROY
Did you call her?

BLACK OUT
A few hours ago.

KIMBERLY

They’re three hours behind us.

TROY

So?

KIMBERLY

Maybe she’s still at work, and, she’ll call you when she gets home.

TROY

It’s been two weeks. She hasn’t called... Nothing!

(Pause)

You were probably right. I shouldn’t trust her.

TROY

Maybe. I still think you should give it some time.

KIMBERLY

Okay.

He looks at his watch.

TROY

Well, I’m going to finish cleaning up.

KIMBERLY

Okay.

Troy turns to go. Suddenly Kimber’s cell phone starts to ring. She rushes for the phone answering it.

Hello?  

(Beat)

Oh. Hi Janice.  

(Bet)

No. I’m in my room.  

(Beat)

Um... it’s the first chapter I think.  

(Beat)

Yeah.  

(Beat)

Okay, see you tomorrow.

(Beat)

She hangs up the phone and helps her father to clear the rest of the table.

BLACK OUT
SCENE 7
Kimberly’s bedroom.
Christmas Day.

Kimberly sits on the side of her bed. She has her phone up to her face. The door to her room has been left ajar.

KIMBERLY

Hey Mom. It’s Kimber.
(Beat)
I just wanted to wish you a Merry Christmas.
(Beat)
I haven’t heard from you so...
(Pause)
I guess if I come to visit you it will have to be this spring or... maybe in the summer.
(Pause)
Actually, I’m sorry I came to visit you. I know I was probably putting too much pressure on you to have a relationship with me.
(Pause)
I’m really sorry.
(Beat)
I’ll be okay if you don’t want to have me in your life.
(Beat)

Troy appears in a pool of light in the area just outside of her room. He has a wrapped package in his hands.

KIMBERLY (cont’d)
I understand. It’s probably just too much for you.
(Beat)
Daddy and I have each other and that’s all that we need.
(Beat)
I hope you have a great Christmas with Ned and... Abigail. That is if Ned’s ex lets you guys spend the day with her.
(Pause)
I’ll always love you. Please remember that - no matter what.
(Pause)
Bye.

Kimberly hangs up the phone. She looks down at her arm.
(Beat)

She rolls up her sleeve and starts to rub her forearm. Troy clears his throat. Kimberly looks up and sees him standing there.

TROY

What are you doing?
I was just... scratching my arm.

(Pause)

A package came for you.

(Beat)

It’s from your mother.

Why didn’t you give it to me before?

Kimberly jumps up and runs over to the package and brings it back into her room. She quickly tears open the wrapping paper and finds a box with a lid on it. She pulls the lid off the box and looks inside.

(Beat)

She pulls out the same doll that she gave back to her mother in Oregon.

What the...

(Beat)

Jesus.

Kimberly looks at Troy.

BLACK OUT

SCENE 8
Both Troy’s and Kimberly’s bedrooms late at night.
New Years Eve.

The lights dimly fade up to reveal Troy and Kimberly lying in their beds.

Kimberly is lying on her bed in the fetal position staring at her phone. We hear firecrackers and Auld Lang Syne being sung faintly in the distance.

Kimberly checks her phone again to make sure it is on. It is. She closes it, and sighs.

Troy suddenly starts convulsing uncontrollably in his sleep like he’s having a bad nightmare. He suddenly jolts awake.
Kimberly, hearing him in the next room, suddenly gets up and out of bed. She looks exasperated.

She looks at the doll’s house on the floor by her bed.

She walks over to it (and the window), opens the window, and steps away from it. She looks at the doll house and carefully picks it up. She is about to throw it out the window when she suddenly changes her mind and places it on her bed instead.

She goes back to the window and looks down at the ground below. She moves away from the window and looks like she’s going to make a running jump out of it.

FADE TO BLACK CONTINUOUS ACTION:

There is a crashing sound outside.

LIGHTS FADE UP AND KIM’S ROOM IS EMPTY AS:

Troy, still in the next room, jumps out of bed runs through the living room and opens the door to Kimber’s room.

TROY

Kim! Kim?

The wind is billowing the curtains in the room from outside. He rushes to the window and looks out of it.

He falls on to his knees and screams.

TROY (cont’d)

BLACK OUT

SCENE 9
Emergency Room

Troy waits in a chair in the waiting area of a hospital. We can hear an intercom system in the background.
Dr. Wellman comes out from behind a partition. He sees Troy and walks over to him.

DR. WELLMAN

Mr. Helmer?

TROY

Yes.

(Pause)

How bad is it?

DR. WELLMAN

She didn’t make it.

TROY

What do you mean?

DR. WELLMAN

She lost a lot of blood. She severed a major artery when she fell.

(Beat)

TROY

Right. It must have been the glass. Her window is over the greenhouse.

DR. WELLMAN

Right.

(Beat)

I’m really sorry. Would you like to talk to someone?

TROY

Talk to someone?

DR. WELLMAN

A minister or...

TROY

No.

DR. WELLMAN

There’s a social worker on duty.

TROY

No.

DR. WELLMAN

I would recommend it.

TROY

Thank you but... no.

(Pause)
Okay.

(Beat)

Can I see her?

TROY

Are you sure you want to do that?

TROY

Yes.

She’s in a holding area. She’ll be taken to the morgue in the morning.

TROY

Right.

You’re going to have to pick out a funeral home.

TROY

Okay.

(Beat)

Are you sure you want to do this?

TROY

I’m sure.

Okay. It’s um... down this way.

Dr. Wellman leads Troy to another part of the stage where Kim’s body is laid out on a gurney. She’s covered by a white sheet. Troy slowly walks upstage of it and carefully lifts the sheet and looks at her.

(Pause)

He looks up.

(Pause)

He drops to his knees taking her hand in his and looks into her face.

FADE TO BLACK.

SCENE 10
Troy’s living room
Troy is reclining on his couch. He has been drinking. There is a bottle of scotch on the table in front of him. The television is on and Troy is watching the same fishing show as in Act One, Scene 1. Troy has a phone in his hand. He turns down the volume of the television with one hand and makes a call on his phone with the other.

**TROY**
Nora? It’s me... Troy. I want to talk to you about our daughter. Pick up the fucking phone.

(Beat)
I hate you. I hate everything about you. You... You fucked up my life. Do you hear me? You fucked... up... my fucking life you fucking bitch.

(Beat)
I hope you die. I hope you fucking... croak. You fucking bitch!

(Pause)
He breaks down crying.

**TROY (cont’d)**
Why? Why did you do this to her?

Nora picks up the phone.

**NORA**
Troy.  
I’m here.

(Beat)
You killed her.

**TROY**
What?

(Laughing)
We could start again Nora... couldn’t we?

(Pause)
Nora?

**NORA**
What are you talking about?

**TROY**
Could you make me another little girl that looks just like Kim? Could you?

(Beat)
NORA
What happened?

TROY
(Screams)
Nothing happened!

NORA
Did something happen to Kim?

TROY
All the kings horses and all the kings men...

NORA
What?
(Beat)
What are you talking about?

TROY
She’s gone.

NORA
Troy! What do you mean she’s gone?

TROY
She’s dead!

He hangs up the phone.

Troy places the phone to his side. He gets up and is about to pour himself another scotch when he changes his mind. He looks at Kim’s room and decides to go inside it. He wanders in and it is obvious this is the first time he has been in her room since the night she jumped out of the window. The window is still open and he makes his way over to close it when he stops and looks at the doll house on Kim’s bed. He scrutinizes it for a moment, picks it up and walks to the window with it tossing it out. We hear it crash on the ground outside. He walks over to the doll that Kimberly got back from her mother (which is lying with it’s back against the wall) and brings it to Kim’s bed and tucks it in under the covers. He looks sadly at this for a moment and then turns out the light and closes the door to the room.

MUSIC CUE AND SLOW FADE TO BLACK
SCENE 11

We see Troy in a number of different poses that indicate the passage of time:

In one he’s lying on his floor spread-eagle looking at the ceiling. His phone starts ringing but he doesn’t move to answer it.

In another he makes coffee in the kitchen area.

In another Janice rings the doorbell and he gets up and he gives her back the rabbit’s foot and the hat.

In the last he’s watching the same fishing show from Scene One, only this time he’s standing and imitating a man making a dramatic cast. The phone rings. He looks at the phone and lets it ring a couple of times. He then decides to answer it. He picks up the phone, looks to see whose number it is, and thinking it’s Nora answers it angrily.

TROY
She killed herself. She jumped out the fucking window.

(Pause)

I’m sorry?

(Beat)

Oh, hello. Yes, this is Troy Helmer.

(Beat)

Who is this?

(Beat)

Hal? Hal who?

(Beat)

Hal from Oregon?

(Beat)

Right. No, now I remember you. I’m sorry, there’s been a lot going on. Kim told me all about you on the plane ride home.

(Beat)

Oh yeah, Kimberly um... she... isn’t with us anymore.

(Beat)

Yeah, it is tragic.

(Beat)

Um... the funeral was about a week ago.

(Beat)

No, there’s nothing you can do. But thank you.

(Beat)

Watching a little TV. Just got to get through it, you know.
(Beat)
Oh? Well I hadn’t thought of going anywhere, but um, where’s this taking place?
(Beat)
And I could rent the equipment there?
(Beat)
Huh.

FADE TO BLACK.

EPILOGUE
On the side of a river

Troy stands a few feet from Hal. They both have fishing rods in hand. We hear the sounds of birds and insects in the background. Troy smiles at Hal and Hal nods at him. They speak to each other loud enough to be heard, but, not too loud as to disturb the fish.

TROY
Thanks for the invite. This is...

HAL
Yeah.

(Pause)
They both look down at the water.

HAL (cont’d)
I used to go fishing with my son, Aaron.

TROY
Oh yeah?

Hal nods.

(Beat)

HAL
I don’t think he liked it much though. Fishing.

TROY
It was nice of him to indulge you then.

HAL
That’s true.

(Pause)
Did you ever go fishing with your father?

TROY
My father didn’t like to fish.

(Beat)
And no one I know likes to.
HAL

Huh.

(Pause)

(Sotto Voce)

We’re probably making too much noise. We’ll scare them all away.

TROY

Yeah. Shh!

(Pause)

HAL

I want to tell you something.

(Beat)

TROY

What?

(Beat)

HAL

My son.

Yeah?

TROY

He died about fifteen years ago.

(Beat)

He was killed in... motorcycle accident.

(Beat)

TROY

Oh.

(Beat)

I’m sorry.

HAL

Thanks.

(Beat)

He’d be about your age now... if he’d lived.

(Pause)

TROY

Oh.

(Pause)

HAL

Yup.

(Pause)

MUSIC CUE AND SLOW FADE TO BLACK

END OF PLAY