

5-2005

## **Never mind the Elephant: A Play in Three Dreams and One Prophecy**

Ann Glaviano

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/honors\\_etd](https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/honors_etd)



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

---

Never mind the Elephant:  
A Play in Three Dreams and One Prophecy

by

Ann Glaviano

Undergraduate honors thesis under the direction of

Dr. Femi Euba

Department of English

Submitted to the LSU Honors College in partial fulfillment  
of  
the Upper Division Honors Program.

May, 2005

Louisiana State University  
& Agricultural and Mechanical College  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

NEVER  
MIND  
THE  
ELEPHANT

a play in three dreams  
and  
one prophecy

by Ann Glaviano

## CHARACTERS

KAY . . . . . early 40s

REESE . . . . . Kay's daughter, age 15

OLLIE . . . . . Kay's son, age 8

PARKER . . . . . age 15

NUN/OLD WOMAN . . . unimaginably old

## SETTING

Kay's house: A sturdy, comfortable suburban home. Living room downstage, with a sofa, end tables, television. Kitchen upstage, with a table, counter, fridge, oven. Downstage right is the front door, which opens onto a porch with a bench, a small table, and some plastic lawn chairs.

Offstage are the three bedrooms: Kay (upstage right), Reese (upstage left), and Ollie (upstage center).

In the dream scenes, the porch transforms into a bus station, with the bench, the plastic chairs, and the table serving as the waiting area. The fridge doubles as a vending machine.

## FIRST DREAM

## SCENE ONE

*(A NUN sits alone in an otherwise empty bus station, suitcase at her feet. Hard-looking plastic chairs, probably orange, and an old vending machine in the corner. There's something weird about the light: brighter and more vivid than it ought to be.)*

*KAY stumbles in, wearing a flannel robe over pajamas. She approaches the Nun.)*

KAY

Excuse me, Sister, but can you spare some change?

NUN

Change? Let me see what I have here.

*(She pulls out a coin purse from within the folds of her habit.)*

KAY

Eighty-five cents? I'm sorry, it's an emergency.

NUN

Certainly. There you are. Seventy-five, eighty, eighty-five. And a penny for good luck.

KAY

Oh, you can keep the penny. Thank you.

*(She crosses to the vending machine, buys an egg salad sandwich, and takes a seat near the Nun. Silent munching for a while.)*

NUN

Trust in the Lord and steer clear of old egg salad, my mother used to say.

*(Kay pauses, mid-bite, and looks at the Nun. She reaches into her mouth and fishes out a rectangular piece of paper.)*

KAY

It's my bus ticket.

NUN

I bought mine at the counter.

KAY

You look like someone. My sixth grade homeroom teacher. Sister Margaret. You look just like her.

*(The Nun smiles.)*

KAY

But she'd be a hundred years old by now. At least a hundred. Maybe two hundred, I don't know. I was eleven. She seemed like a dinosaur. Egg salad?

NUN

Mother knows best.

KAY

Fair enough.

*(Finishing the sandwich.)*

Sister Margaret used to tell us stories about the convent. Waking up at dawn to ring the bells. She made it sound like summer camp. I wanted to be a nun. For about two months. Where are you headed?

NUN

Florida. The Gulf coast. To visit an old flame.

KAY

Really?

NUN

Just a little vacation.

KAY

I didn't think nuns could go on vacation.

NUN

They made me leave my string bikini at the convent.

KAY

So you've kept up with this guy for a long time, then.

NUN

We're more like pen pals. I haven't seen him in years.

KAY

I had a pen pal for a while. She lived in California. I never met her. It was through school. I told her things in my letters that I didn't even tell my best friend.

NUN

I find the letter writing process to be very liberating. It's the one place I can cut loose and say whatever I need to get off my chest.

KAY

True.

NUN

So where are you off to?

KAY

Far away.

NUN

Going to see family?

KAY

No.

NUN

To do what then?

KAY

One-way ticket out of town. I left my suitcase at home. I'm leaving it.

NUN

All of it?

KAY

Everything. I will shed my old life like a skin. Like a snake skin. Or maybe more like a hermit crab. You know how they do. Slip out and start over.

NUN

Have you outgrown your shell?

KAY

No, I just don't like it very much. The hermit crab thing isn't a perfect metaphor.

NUN

I think it's lovely.

KAY

Thanks.

*(Pause.)*

NUN

What about your children?

KAY

I tried. I put them in the suitcase but then it was too heavy. You ever see a hermit crab walking around with a suitcase? No, you don't. And for good reason.

NUN

But you're not really a hermit crab.

KAY

You don't know that. You don't know me at all. Who are you to judge me?

NUN

You said yourself it was a flawed metaphor.

KAY

How could you possibly understand? Your only obligation is to pray a lot and torment unsuspecting school children.

NUN

That's a stereotype.

KAY

I envy you.



NUN

Don't.

KAY

I envy your freedom.

NUN

Envy is one of the seven deadly sins.

KAY

Is there anything in the Bible about bad mothers?

NUN

I don't believe you're really a bad mother.

KAY

That's generous of you. You don't know the half of it.

NUN

You're not going to get on that bus.

KAY

You're right. This is as far as I ever get. Something stops me every time.

NUN

Then what happens?

KAY

I have to get up and pretend everything is fine.

## SCENE TWO

*(Kay's house. A school morning. OLLIE and REESE are in the kitchen, making sandwiches to pack for lunch. Reese is dressed for school, and Ollie's still in his pajamas. Reese starts a pot of coffee.)*

REESE

Where's the ham?

There's no more.

OLLIE

You took the last piece?

REESE

Yup.

OLLIE

But Ollie, I need a ham sandwich for lunch today.

REESE

There's no more ham.

OLLIE

I know that, but what I'm saying is, I have to have ham.

REESE

But we ran out.

OLLIE

I know. So give me the piece you have.

REESE

But it's mine, Reese.

OLLIE

No it's not.

REESE

Yes it is.

OLLIE

Give it here. I need it.

REESE

Why?

OLLIE

Because.

REESE

Because why?

OLLIE

Because I do.

REESE

Ollie  
What for?

Reese  
Ollie, stop being difficult.

Ollie  
I won't give it to you unless you tell me.

Reese  
Fine. There's this guy in my class named Adam. And he only likes ham sandwiches, but his mom always gives him peanut butter. So sometimes we trade. And there's a dance coming up in two weeks, and he hasn't asked anyone yet.

Ollie  
I don't get it.

Reese  
Of course you don't.

Ollie  
But now what am I going to eat?

Reese  
Peanut butter.

Ollie  
But I hate peanut butter.

Reese  
Don't be stupid. Everyone likes peanut butter.

*(Ollie stares at her.)*

Reese  
I'll tell you what. I'll make you a special peanut butter sandwich. And I'll let you have some of my coffee.

Ollie  
Fine.

Reese  
Go get the baggies.

*(Ollie digs around in the cabinets for a box of sandwich bags as Reese fixes a cup of coffee. She pours an ungodly amount of cream and sugar into the mug, and finishes it off with two ice cubes.)*

OLLIE

Will you write a note on the napkin?

REESE

Huh? Here.

*(She hands him the mug.)*

Watch it, it's hot. What about the napkin?

OLLIE

Will you write a note on it?

REESE

For what?

OLLIE

Sarah in my class, her mom always writes a note on her napkin.

*(KAY enters, wearing her flannel robe.*

*Ollie goes to take a sip of coffee and Kay swoops down to snatch it from him.)*

KAY

Mmm, coffee. Thanks.

*(She starts to take a sip.)*

OLLIE

Hey.

KAY

*(Lowers the mug, looks at him.)*

Not till you're older. You'll stunt your growth.

REESE

That's an old wives' tale.

KAY

Yes, well, give the old wives some credit.

*(Starts to take a sip, pauses, lowers the mug and glances at Ollie.)*

Isn't today a school day? Why are you still in your PJs? Go get dressed.

*(Reese puts the sandwiches into two brown paper bags and labels them.)*

OLLIE

*(to Reese)*

Did you put a note?

REESE

*(exasperated)*

What note?

OLLIE

Sarah's mom always writes her a note on her napkin.

KAY

What kind of note?

*(She sets the coffee mug on the counter. Reese picks it up and takes a sip.)*

OLLIE

A nice note.

KAY

Let me see that.

*(Taking the pen from Reese, she scribbles something on a napkin. She puts the pen down with a flourish and points.)*

There.

OLLIE

But it's supposed to be a surprise. For when I open my lunch.

*(Kay turns the napkin over.)*

KAY

There. Now go get dressed. And hurry up.

*(Ollie scampers off.)*

REESE

We're gonna miss the bus.

KAY

You can't miss the bus. I'll be late for work.

REESE

I'll go help him.

*(She follows Ollie.)*

*Kay puts the napkin in Ollie's lunchbag and lines the two bags up on the counter.*

*Crossing to the front door, she grabs the newspaper off the porch and returns to the kitchen. She pulls the Classifieds section out and starts skimming.*

*Absently she picks up the coffee mug, puts it down, grabs the pen and circles an ad. She picks up the mug again and takes a sip.*

*The bus honks.)*

KAY

*(to the coffee, the bus driver, or both)*

Christ.

*(The kids bolt into the kitchen, grab the bag lunches from the counter. They swoop past Kay.)*

REESE

Bye Mom.

I love you.

OLLIE

Have a good day.

KAY

*(The front door slams behind them.)*

*Kay sighs, dumps the coffee into the sink.*

*She crosses to the living room sofa with the Classifieds section and sits, poring over it with pen in hand. After a moment, she folds it up, places it on the floor, and lies down on the sofa, covering her face with a pillow.*

*She does not move.*

*The light changes slowly, from early morning to mid-afternoon.*

*Ollie runs in, carrying his booksack. The front door slams behind him.)*

OLLIE

Mom?

*(He sees her on the sofa and stops.)*

Are you okay?

KAY

*(sitting up)*

I was just resting my eyes.

*(Ollie jumps onto the sofa and sits next to her.)*

OLLIE

Where's Reese?

KAY

She hasn't come home yet. What time is it?

*(She twists around on the sofa to check the kitchen clock.)*

KAY (CONT)

Huh. You're right, she's late.

OLLIE

Mom, can I watch Dumbo?

KAY

C'mon, Ollie.

OLLIE

I'll do my homework first. Please can I?

KAY

You know it gives you nightmares.

OLLIE

No it doesn't.

KAY

Every time you watch it, you come into my room crying about pink elephants.

OLLIE

It's not the pink elephants part.

KAY

Then what part is it?

OLLIE

And anyway you always cry at the part with his mom.

KAY

Well.

OLLIE

You do.

KAY

I don't see how they could think that movie is appropriate for children.

OLLIE

*(bouncing)*

Pink elephants! Pink elephants! Pink elephants on parade!



*(He perches on the back of the sofa.)*

KAY

Get down, Ollie. C'mere.

OLLIE

Huh.

KAY

Come sit by me.

*(He slides down to the sofa cushions.  
Kay puts her arm around him and scoots  
him next to her.)*

Hey.

OLLIE

What?

KAY

You haven't had those dreams in a while, huh?

OLLIE

I guess.

KAY

Tell me again - what are they like?

OLLIE

What do you mean?

KAY

When you have the dreams.

OLLIE

It's like...blackness. I can't breathe.

KAY

In the dream?

OLLIE

No, you're squeezing me too tight.

KAY

Oh. Sorry.

KAY (CONT)

*(letting go)*

The dreams, though. You never tell me what the dreams are about.

*(He hesitates.)*

OLLIE

I don't know.

KAY

You don't know or you can't remember?

OLLIE

*(staring at the floor)*

Both.

KAY

But are you dreaming about something, or is it just black?

*(Ollie slides off the couch and moves to his action figures.)*

OLLIE

I don't know.

KAY

But it scares you.

OLLIE

I don't have those dreams anymore. I'm eight now.

KAY

The man of the house.

OLLIE

Yeah.

*(He picks up two action figures and makes them fight.)*

KAY

Sometimes even grown-ups have nightmares.

OLLIE

*(pointedly changing the subject;  
crashing the action figures into each  
other)*

Krpow! Krpow! Krpow!

*(Kay watches him for a long minute.  
Finally she stands up and crosses to  
the kitchen.)*

KAY

What should we have for dinner?

*(She opens the fridge, stares into it,  
not liking what she's seeing. She opens  
the freezer.)*

How's fishsticks?

OLLIE

Ham sandwich.

*(He picks up the folded-up section of  
newspaper next to the sofa and sets up  
a fort for his toys.)*

KAY

For dinner?

*(checking the fridge)*

We're out.

OLLIE

I know.

KAY

Fishsticks it is.

*(She takes a box of fishsticks out of  
the freezer, arranges the fishsticks on  
a tray.*

*REESE storms in, carrying her backpack.  
The front door slams behind her.)*

Reese? Where have you been?

*(Reese crosses the living room without stopping and exits.)*

KAY

Reese. Come back here.

*(Reese steps back into the living room.)*

REESE

What?

KAY

How was your day?

*(Reese flops down on the sofa.)*

REESE

*(sarcastically)*

Fantastic.

KAY

What kept you late at school?

REESE

I had to walk home.

KAY

You walked all that way?

REESE

Yeah. Why are you in your pajamas?

KAY

*(ignoring her)*

I thought you were getting a ride with Lauren.

REESE

I was. But then I told her I was going to catch a ride with someone else.

KAY

Who?

REESE  
This guy. He's a junior.

OLLIE  
The ham guy?

REESE  
No, Ollie. Shut up.

KAY  
Don't talk to your brother like that.

REESE  
You sound like Dad.

KAY  
Don't start. So what happened?

REESE  
What happened what?

KAY  
You couldn't get a ride?

REESE  
It didn't work out like I thought.

KAY  
You should have called me.

OLLIE  
Reese, do you like my fort?

REESE  
Yeah, Ollie.

*(She snatches the newspaper.)*

OLLIE  
Hey!

REESE  
Hey what?

OLLIE  
Give it back.

Why?

REESE

Because it's mine.

OLLIE

It is not.

REESE

Is too.

OLLIE

Enough.

KAY

*(crossing to the sofa)*

*(She takes the newspaper from Reese, hastily folding it and putting it with her bills on the table.)*

Parker never showed up, did he?

REESE

KAY  
*(crosses to kitchen table, starts going through bills)*

No. Why?

He asked if he could come over and do homework. We have an algebra exam on Friday. He might stay for dinner.

REESE

I'm hungry.

OLLIE

What are we having?

REESE

Fishsticks.

OLLIE

For dinner?

REESE

You can order pizza if you want.

KAY

REESE

Why can't we have a normal dinner?

KAY

I'd have to go the store.

REESE

We don't have anything in the fridge, either.

KAY

I have to balance my checkbook before I make another grocery trip.

OLLIE

I want Reese to make the fishsticks.

REESE

What does it matter?

OLLIE

They taste better when you make them.

REESE

Oh god.

OLLIE

Please.

REESE

Fine.

*(She crosses to the kitchen and puts the tray of fishsticks in the oven.)*

Are there any veggies?

KAY

Check the freezer.

*(Reese grabs a bag of frozen veggies from the freezer, dumps them in a saucepan to heat over the stove.)*

*Brief silence.*

*Ollie is engrossed in an action figure battle. He mashes the toys together.)*

OLLIE

Time to die! Krpow! Krpow!

*(An action figure falls.)*

Aaaaaaaaaahhh! Aaaaaaaaaahhh! Krpow!

*(Reese looks up from the veggies.)*

Noooooooooo! I got no leg! Krpow! Aaaaaaaaaahhh!

*(Kay looks up from the bills.)*

REESE

Ollie. Enough with the shooting.

KAY

Ollie, why don't you put on Dumbo?

OLLIE

Can I?

REESE

Oh, that's a great idea. Like his nightmares aren't bad enough.

KAY

He doesn't have them anymore.

REESE

Is that what he told you?

KAY

Ollie, how about you come here and help me do the calculator.

*(Ollie joins her at the table.)*

KAY (CONT)

Okay. What's 141.66 plus 28.50?

OLLIE

*(punching in numbers)*

Two-nine-nine-eight.



KAY

What? Let me see that.

*(She takes the calculator from Ollie.)*

Reese, could you come see for a second? I don't remember making some of these charges.

REESE

Which?

KAY

This one here, for fifty-two dollars.

REESE

That was the skirt I got for the dance. You were with me.

KAY

Did you take the tags off yet?

REESE

What?

KAY

I mean, are you still going to the dance?

*(Reese looks at her, hurt)*

REESE

Do you have to rub it in?

KAY

I didn't mean it like that. You know I didn't. I'm just - looking at these numbers, and it's just - impossible.

REESE

You want me to return the skirt.

KAY

I'm sorry.

REESE

You told me it was okay. You were with me when I bought it.

KAY

I know.

REESE

How is that fair?

KAY

It's not fair. You're right.

REESE

You said not to worry.

KAY

You don't have to worry. Forget it. Keep your skirt. I'll figure something out.

*(Silence.*

*Reese returns to the veggies.*

*Kay returns to the bills.*

*Ollie returns to his toys.)*

OLLIE

When's Dad coming home?

*(Kay looks up, startled.)*

REESE

Ollie, why would you even ask that? He hasn't been home for two months.

OLLIE

It wasn't like this when Dad was here.

KAY

You'll see him this weekend, honey.

REESE

You said that last weekend. And the weekend before. You say it every week but it never happens. Did you call him yet?

*(Pause.)*

You called him. What did he say.

KAY

He didn't answer.

REESE

You mean he wouldn't pick up the phone. I'm not stupid. You don't have to lie about it.

KAY

I'm not lying about anything.

REESE

Dad doesn't want anything to do with us.

KAY

That's not true. Your father loves you.

REESE

What a crock. Then why'd he leave?

KAY

I can't answer for him.

REESE

See.

KAY

Don't look at me like that.

REESE

Like what?

KAY

Like it's my fault.

REESE

I never said that.

KAY

But you think it.

REESE

Ollie's right. It was better when he was here.

KAY

Go off and live with him, then. If you think he's so great.

*(Ollie crosses to the television, puts  
a tape in the VCR.)*

REESE

Maybe I will.

KAY

If you can get him to answer the phone.

*(Pause.)*

REESE

I can't believe you just said that.

KAY

I know. I'm sorry. I didn't mean it.

REESE

Sometimes I think he was right to leave.

KAY

Stop it. Okay. Just stop.

*(Ollie turns the volume up. "Pink Elephants on Parade." As the volume gets louder, Kay and Reese shout over the music.)*

REESE

It would be easier.

KAY

What would?

REESE

I'd leave if I could.

KAY

*(gesturing)*

There's the door.

*(Ollie turns the volume way, way up.*

*The doorbell rings.)*

REESE

*(shouting, to the door)*

What?

*(Kay shuts the movie off.)*

KAY

Come in.

*(PARKER stands in the doorway.)*

REESE

Oh, God. Parker.

PARKER

Hi.

KAY

Hello, Parker.

PARKER

Did I come at a bad time?

REESE

Yes.

KAY

*(simultaneously)*

Not at all.

*(The oven dings.)*

Would you like some fishsticks?

SECOND DREAM

SCENE ONE

*(Bus station, as before. The NUN sits alone.)*

*KAY stumbles in, wearing her flannel robe over pajamas. She approaches the Nun.)*

KAY

Excuse me, Sister, but can you spare some change?

NUN

Change? Let me see what I have here.

*(She pulls out a coin purse from within the folds of her habit.)*

KAY

I'm sorry. It's an emergency. Eighty-five cents?

NUN

*(gives Kay a handful of change)*

There you are.

KAY

Thanks.

*(Kay crosses to the vending machine, puts the change in, waits. Kicks and pounds on the machine. Returns to the Nun empty-handed, takes a seat.)*

It wasn't enough.

NUN

No.

KAY

I'm always at least five cents short. I think it's pathological.

NUN

So now what?

KAY

I don't know. I don't have a ticket.

NUN

*(reaching into the folds of her habit.)*

Here.

*(She pulls out a plum.)*

KAY

*(incredulously)*

Mom?

NUN

Your grandmother always kept fresh plums in the icebox. Plums were Daddy's favorite fruit. Every day he had to have one for lunch. She used to wrap them in a napkin so they didn't bruise. I don't know how he never got sick of them. I've never seen anything like it. The man was crazy about plums.

After he died, she never had plums in the house again.

KAY

When Robert asked me to marry him, I thought: I will love this man forever.

NUN

It was supposed to be perfect.

KAY

It didn't work out like I thought.

NUN

I never dreamed any of my children would end up in a broken marriage.

KAY

You know, I feel bad enough already.

NUN

What do you want me to say?

KAY

That you're not ashamed of me. That you'll love me no matter what.

NUN

A mother's love for her children is beyond reproach or understanding.

KAY

Is that supposed to be a consolation or a threat?

NUN

You better shape up is all I'm saying.

KAY

I'm trying.

NUN

Try harder.

KAY

I wrote you a letter.

NUN

Really? I love getting mail. What's the letter say?

KAY

*(pulls out a sheet of paper; reads)*

I lost my job, Mom.

NUN

See, this is what I'm talking about. You're a walking disaster. Pull yourself together.

KAY

*(puts the paper down, exasperated)*

That's what I'm trying to tell you. I can't. I'm falling apart. I need help.

NUN

An out-of-work single mother. This is not how I raised my children. You especially. You were supposed to be my great success.

KAY

What?

NUN

My honor roll student. Always on top of your work. Flawless reports from your teachers. I never had to worry about you.

KAY

I was afraid to disappoint you.

NUN

I had such high hopes. And Robert was such a nice young man. A good father, too. A good provider. How could you let him go?

KAY

He left. He left. He said it wasn't what he wanted. As if it's what I had in mind all along. Like I think it's some picnic.



(Pause.)

KAY (CONT)

I'd leave if I could.

NUN

Don't talk like that. It's unnatural. A mother's place is in her home.

KAY

I can't afford to keep my home.

NUN

I was speaking metaphorically.

KAY

What am I supposed to tell my kids?

NUN

It's not their burden to bear.

KAY

But I can't do it alone. I feel like I'm drowning.

NUN

You need a man.

KAY

I need a miracle.

(Pause.)

What did Grandpa die of?

NUN

Heart disease.

KAY

Funny that you can die of a failed heart.

NUN

Some people have lived for years without one. I myself have a heart made entirely of ashes.

KAY

How do you keep going?

NUN

It's a mother's sacrifice. I had no other option.

SCENE TWO

*(Afternoon, Kay's house.*

*REESE and PARKER on the sofa with  
their textbooks.)*

REESE

Parker, we've been through this stuff three times this week. You know it backwards and forwards. You know it way better than I do. I really don't think we need to study anymore.

PARKER

I'm sorry - I can go if you want.

REESE

No, I mean, I don't care. It's fine. I'm just saying.

PARKER

Okay.

REESE

Okay.

*(Pause.)*

And what's the deal, anyway, with you always coming to talk to me at lunch? I'm trying to get Adam to ask me to the dance.

PARKER

You're trying to get him to ask you to a dance?

REESE

Well, it's not like he's just gonna up and do it himself.

PARKER

Why not?

REESE

Because, Parker. That's not how it works.

PARKER

I'm sorry. I didn't know.

REESE

Stop apologizing all the time. It's weird.

*(He opens his mouth, closes it again.*

*Pause.)*

PARKER

So there's a dance?

REESE

Are you kidding? There's been signs up about it for like two months. I got a new skirt and everything.

PARKER

What kind of dance is it?

REESE

What do you mean? It's a dance. I don't know.

PARKER

But why do you want to go?

REESE

Because. Everyone goes to the dances.

PARKER

I don't.

REESE

Well, the normal people go to the dances.

PARKER

Are you a normal person?

REESE

What's that supposed to mean?

PARKER

I just didn't think you were into that stuff.

REESE

Right, sorry, I forgot it was a crime to be normal. I forgot you were too cool for that sort of thing.

PARKER

I didn't say that.

REESE

But that's what you meant.

PARKER

It just seems like you shouldn't have to try that hard.

REESE

I don't have to try. I'm not trying. You're the one who's trying. You think people can't tell? Trying to be different on purpose when really you're just scared no one will like you.

PARKER

I'm not scared.

REESE

You sit alone at lunch every day.

PARKER

I sit with you.

REESE

I never invited you.

PARKER

Why are you picking a fight?

REESE

You started it.

PARKER

You're acting all defensive.

REESE

I'm not defensive!

*(OLLIE enters from his bedroom.)*

OLLIE

*(to Parker)*

You're here again?

REESE

Yeah, Parker. Why are you here?

PARKER

Because. Fine. I'll leave.

REESE

Fine.

PARKER

Fine.

*(He stands up, gathers his books, heads for the door.)*

*KAY enters carrying grocery bags.)*

KAY

Hey there, Parker.

PARKER

*(standing, caught, awkwardly)*

Hi, Miss Kay.

OLLIE

*(runs to Kay and hugs her)*

I missed you! You were gone forever.

KAY

Oh come on, Ollie.

REESE

Did you have to work late?

KAY

No - I've been...running errands. Getting things straightened out.

*(She holds up the bags.)*

I went to the store.

REESE

Finally.

PARKER

Do you need help carrying anything in?

KAY

No thanks, Parker, I've got it. Are you staying for dinner again? I have actual food this time, not just fishsticks and cereal.

*(Parker glances at Reese.)*

PARKER

I think I should probably go home. But thanks anyway.

*(Kay sets the bags down in the kitchen and begins to put away the groceries.)*

KAY

Your parents must miss you.

PARKER

Yeah.

*(Pause.)*

See you around, Reese.

REESE

*(staring at her textbook)*

Yeah.

*(Parker exits through the front door but lingers on the porch, watching.)*

KAY

Who wants to help with dinner? I'll start the pork chops.

*(She pulls some papers out from her purse and stacks them with the bills on the table.)*

REESE

I'll do rice.

Can I put on Dumbo? OLLIE

(unison)  
No. KAY AND REESE

Fine. OLLIE

*(He grabs an action figure and sits at the table, playing.)*

*Kay pulls out a pan and Reese unwraps a the pork chops. She cringes.)*

Ew. REESE

What? KAY

These don't smell very good. REESE

They're not cooked yet. KAY

No, I mean, they smell bad. REESE

I want to smell. OLLIE

*(He runs over to the counter.)*

It's fine. KAY

REESE  
*(checking the wrapper)*  
They're past the expiration date.

Well, they were on sale. KAY

OLLIE  
Let me smell.

REESE  
Gross, Ollie.

KAY  
It's not "gross."

REESE  
Rotten meat is gross.

OLLIE  
*(grabbing at the pork chops)*  
It's rotten?

KAY  
It's not rotten. Sit down. Just everyone get out of the way  
and let me cook dinner.

REESE  
I don't want that for dinner.

KAY  
Excuse me?

REESE  
*(checking in the grocery bags and the  
freezer)*  
Did you get any frozen pizza?

KAY  
We're not having frozen pizza for dinner.

REESE  
What's the difference? We have pizza for dinner every other  
night.

KAY  
Because you refuse to eat my cooking.

REESE  
Because I don't want to eat disgusting spoiled meat.



*(She pulls out a frozen pizza and slams the freezer door.)*

*Suddenly: a garbled, almost unintelligible PA announcement over loudspeakers: Last call departure number 504.*

*The stage is dark. Reese, Ollie, and the room fall away.)*

KAY

What?

*(Again the garbled announcement.)*

*Kay cranes her neck, looking for the source.*

*Lights up on THE NUN, upstage, holding a microphone. She stands beside an enormous plastic chair. It looks like one of the chairs from the bus station.)*

NUN

*(speaking into the microphone)*

Last call, Kay. That means you.

*(Kay stares at her.)*

*The Nun puts down the mic.)*

I saved you a seat.

*(Kay doesn't move. The Nun points to the plastic chair.)*

Sit down.

KAY

*(climbing into the chair)*

It's very big.

NUN

It's the time-out chair. You need a time-out.

KAY

*(hesitates, then steps away from the chair)*

I don't have time for time-out. I'm cooking dinner.

NUN

Not exactly.

KAY

I'm trying to.

NUN

Such a simple task. I don't understand how you manage to screw it up. When I was growing up, we didn't eat frozen dinner. My mother cooked our meals from scratch in an old cast-iron skillet. It had been my grandmother's before that.

*(She pulls an enormous cast-iron skillet out from the folds of her habit.)*

I keep it with me at all times as a reminder.

KAY

A reminder of what?

NUN

Look at you, with your Teflon trays and TV dinners. Such an easy life. You have no sense of responsibility.

KAY

What's that smell?

NUN

The frozen pizza. It's burning.

KAY

Let me see that skillet.

*(The Nun hands it over.)*

Nice. Heavy.

*(Kay hefts it. She looks up at the Nun, down at the skillet, then takes hold of the handle like a baseball bat and swings at the Nun's head.)*

*It hits like a gong.*

*The Nun goes down and the lights come up. Kay stands in her kitchen, holding a skillet, staring at the Nun on the floor.*

*Ollie and Reese gape at Kay. They don't see the Nun.*

*Black smoke pours from the oven.)*

REESE

What are you doing?

KAY

Dinner's ready.

*(Reese pulls the oven open and removes the charred pizza.)*

REESE

Crap.

*(Kay walks slowly to her bedroom.)*

Mom?

KAY

I'm going to bed.

### SCENE THREE

*(That night. Kay's house.)*

*OLLIE and PARKER on the porch. Ollie bounces a basketball; Parker smokes a cigarette and watches.)*

PARKER

Ollie, your mom is sleeping.

OLLIE

*(bouncing the ball)*

Yeah, she has to get up real early for work.

PARKER

I know. What I'm saying is, maybe you should quit bouncing that ball.

OLLIE

*(bouncing the ball)*

Why?

PARKER

Because you're making a ton of noise and you're gonna get me in trouble.

*(He swats at the ball and steals it away from Ollie.)*

I bet you can't catch this ball five times in a row without dropping it.

OLLIE

Can too.

PARKER

Alright then.

*(He flicks his cigarette and they start a game of Pitch-and-Catch.)*

OLLIE

Why are you here all the time?

PARKER

Because.

OLLIE

Because why?

PARKER

Because I like being at your house.

OLLIE

Then why didn't you stay and eat with us?

PARKER

Your sister was mad at me.

OLLIE

Then why did you come back?

PARKER

Because she's not that mad.

*(Pause.)*

Hey Ollie, do you know what your name means?

OLLIE

It means Oliver.

PARKER

Right. It's short for Oliver. But do you know what an ollie is?

OLLIE

It's a kind of dog.

PARKER

Uh, no, that's a collie. An ollie is a skateboarding trick.

OLLIE

Sometimes the kids at school call me Olivia.

PARKER

Well, that's because they're dumb. Ollie is a really cool name because it's a really cool trick.

OLLIE

Like how?

PARKER

It's how you get your board to jump.

OLLIE

Show me.

PARKER

I can't right now, I don't have my board. I can show you later, if you want.

OLLIE

I'd probably be scared.

PARKER

*(lighting up another cigarette)*

Nah.

OLLIE

I would be. I get scared of everything.

PARKER

Well, so do I. So do a lot of people. But that doesn't mean you can't try.

OLLIE

It doesn't hurt to fall?

PARKER

Sure. But you just get up and do it again.

OLLIE

That's stupid. If it hurts why would you want to keep doing it?

PARKER

What else is there to do?

*(REESE sticks her head out.)*

REESE

Hey.

PARKER

Hey.

REESE

Ollie, it's almost bedtime. You should come in.

OLLIE

'kay.

*(He goes inside.)*

PARKER

Going to sleep?

REESE

In a little bit.

PARKER

Cool.

REESE

Goodnight.

*(Reese shuts the door.)*

*Parker flicks his cigarette and walks off.*

*Inside, Ollie has discovered Reese's collection of nailpolish on the coffee table.)*

OLLIE

What are all these for?

REESE

I'm trying to pick a color.

*(She sits on the sofa.)*

I can't decide between Big Apple Red or Tickle Me Pink.

OLLIE

I wanna help.

REESE

Okay. Come see.

*(She scoots over and he sits down.)*

*She paints one fingernail with the red polish.)*

This is Big Apple Red.

*(And another fingernail with the pink.)*

And this is Tickle Me Pink.

OLLIE

*(watching closely, enthralled)*

Wow. That stuff smells bad.

REESE

Yeah.

OLLIE

How do you get it off?

REESE

With remover. It's over there. You do it with cotton balls.

OLLIE

Do it. I wanna see.

REESE

Not yet, I have to wait till it dries.

*(He picks up a different color.)*

OLLIE

I like this one.

REESE

*(reading the label)*

Bold Berry. That's not too bad, actually.

OLLIE

Can I put it on?

REESE

On me or on you?

OLLIE

On you.

REESE

Seriously?

OLLIE

I'm really good at coloring in the lines.

REESE

If you want.



*(He bends over her hand with the  
nailpolish brush, concentrating hard.)*

REESE (CONT)

This is like a manicure.

OLLIE

It's like art class.

REESE

Hey, guess what.

OLLIE

What?

REESE

Adam called me.

OLLIE

Who's that?

REESE

The ham guy.

OLLIE

Oh. What did he say?

REESE

Nothing, he was just calling to talk.

OLLIE

I don't get it.

REESE

You don't have to.

*(She looks down at her hand and bursts  
out laughing.)*

Ollie, oh my god. You're making a mess.

OLLIE

Am not.

REESE

You're getting it everywhere!

OLLIE

Well, it smells really bad!

REESE

What does that have to do with it?

OLLIE

I can't concentrate!

REESE

Oh god, Ollie. Go to bed.

OLLIE

Fine.

*(He gets up and heads to his bedroom.*

*Shaking her head, Reese grabs some  
cotton balls and the nailpolish  
remover.)*

REESE

Hey, Ollie.

OLLIE

What?

REESE

What are you going to dream about tonight?

OLLIE

Skateboards.

REESE

Skateboards and what else?

*(He thinks.)*

OLLIE

Ice cream.

REESE

Okay, Ollie. Goodnight. I love you.

OLLIE

Love you too.

*(He goes to his room.*

*Reese picks up the bottles of nailpolish and puts them back into her makeup case.*

*She glances towards the bedrooms, then opens a powder compact and checks her reflection. Smooths her hair.*

*Quietly she walks over to the front door. She opens it, looks outside. No one there.*

*She closes the door and locks it. Hesitates - then unlocks it.*

*She picks up her makeup case and goes to her bedroom.)*

#### SCENE FOUR

*(Afternoon, Kay's house.*

*OLLIE does homework in the living room.*

*REESE waltzes in, holding her new skirt, with the tags still on it, up against her.)*

REESE

Whatcha doin?

OLLIE

Homework.

REESE

Why?

OLLIE

Mom said she had a very important business meeting and to do our homework as soon as we got home from school.

REESE

Well, I'm not in the mood.

OLLIE

I'm hungry.

REESE

You want a snack?

OLLIE

I want a sandwich.

REESE

There's popcorn.

OLLIE

If you're not gonna do your homework, can we put on Dumbo?

REESE

I'll tell you what. We can walk to the video store and rent a movie. Any movie you want. Besides Dumbo.

OLLIE

Really?

REESE

Sure. And then we can make popcorn. It'll be a party.

OLLIE

Mom will be mad.

REESE

She won't care. And even if she does, it won't matter. Because I am very extremely super happy. So we are renting a movie and having ourselves a little party.

OLLIE

What if she comes home while we're gone?

REESE

I'll leave a note. Quit worrying.

*(She crosses to the kitchen table and grabs a piece of scrap paper from the bill pile. She scribbles the beginning of a note — then turns back to the pile. Another paper has caught her eye.*

*Frowning, she picks it up and skims it.*

KAY enters.

*Hastily Reese puts down the paper.)*

REESE

Oh, hi, Mom. I was just writing you a note.

OLLIE

Does this mean we can't go to the video store?

KAY

Ollie, go to your room.

OLLIE

It was her idea!

KAY

You're not in trouble. I need to talk to Reese.

*(Ollie goes to his bedroom.)*

REESE

What's going on?

KAY

You know, I'm usually so proud of you. You're a good big sister to Ollie, you help around the house, you don't give me any reason to worry. You set a good example.

KAY (CONT)

So imagine my disappointment when I found cigarette butts on my front porch this morning.

*(Reese is silent.)*

You know Ollie looks up to you. What is he supposed to think if he sees his sister smoking? Illegally, too. I don't know how you got them. I hope to God you don't have them in my house right now.

This will not happen again.

*(Reese is silent.)*

Do you understand?

REESE

Yes ma'am.

KAY

Did you leave the house last night after I went to bed?

REESE

No ma'am.

KAY

Are you sure?

REESE

Yes.

KAY

Don't get sassy.

REESE

I'm not. I'm being emphatic. There's a difference.

KAY

I thought I heard the door.

REESE

It's not my problem if you're hearing things. I didn't leave the house.

KAY

Don't you use that tone of voice with me.

REESE

What "tone of voice"?

KAY

The ugly one.

REESE

I'm not being "ugly." I'm telling the truth.

KAY

I can't handle this. I have enough to worry about. Don't start the teen rebellion thing with me. I have to be able to trust you.

Okay?

REESE

Fine.

*(Pause.)*

Is that it?

KAY

Yes.

*(Reese turns to go.)*

One more thing.

*(She holds out her hand.)*

REESE

What?

KAY

The skirt.

*(Stricken, Reese hands it over.)*

REESE

What about the dance?

*(Kay shakes her head.*

*Reese looks like she's been punched in the stomach. Slowly she turns on her heel and walks to her bedroom.*

*Kay watches her go.*

*We hear Reese's bedroom door slam.*

*Kay covers her face with her hands.*

*She crosses to the kitchen table, grabs a sheet of paper, begins to write.*

*Ollie peeks out from around the corner.)*

OLLIE

Mom?

*(Kay stares at him.)*

I'm hungry. What's for dinner?

KAY

I can make popcorn.

OLLIE

For dinner?

*(Pause.)*

*Kay crumples the paper, silently turns and exits to her bedroom.)*

#### SCENE FIVE

*(Late Saturday night, Kay's house.  
Sound of light rain.)*

*PARKER, REESE, and OLLIE sit on the sofa, facing the TV. Reese is in the middle. They pass a giant bowl of popcorn back and forth.*

*They're watching Dumbo, eyes glued to the screen. Ollie mouths along.)*

REESE

Ollie, quit hogging all the popcorn.

OLLIE

*(handing her the bowl without looking)*

I'm not.

*(Reese crams a huge handful of popcorn in her mouth, then offers the bowl to Parker.)*

PARKER

No thanks.



*(Reese munches loudly.)*

OLLIE

Shhhh.

*(Pause. They stare at the screen.)*

PARKER

So the dance is tonight, huh.

REESE

Uh-huh.

PARKER

Is it going on right now?

REESE

Yeah.

*(Parker looks at her.)*

OLLIE

Stop talking, this is the best part.

REESE

You say that about every part.

*(Parker turns back to the TV.*

*Slowly he reaches down to take Reese's hand.*

*Ollie notices. He reaches down and takes Reese's other hand.*

*Reese rolls her eyes. The popcorn bowl balances on her lap.*

*Long, awkward pause.*

*Reese stands up.)*

REESE

Parker, come see for a minute.

*(She walks out to the front porch and he follows her.)*

*Ollie stretches out on the sofa.)*

PARKER

What's up?

*(He tries to put his arm around her.)*

*She shrugs him off.)*

REESE

My mom works at the bank downtown. She's worked there for my entire life.

PARKER

Okay.

REESE

So what's she doing with unemployment papers?

PARKER

What do you mean?

REESE

I mean she's got these papers about claims, or something, and it had the word "unemployment" all over it. But my mom isn't unemployed.

PARKER

She isn't?

REESE

I mean, she's got a job.

PARKER

How do you know?

REESE

Because. I'd know if she didn't.

PARKER

You think she'd tell you?

REESE

Of course she would. Why wouldn't she?

PARKER

Maybe she's embarrassed.

*(Reese is silent.)*

Maybe she's scared.

REESE

Oh God.

PARKER

What?

REESE

I feel sick.

OLLIE

*(from the sofa, half-asleep and  
dreaming)*

Wait!

PARKER

It's not that big a deal. She'll find a job. At least she's looking.

REESE

She is?

PARKER

Sure, you haven't seen all the classified ads lying around the house?

REESE

I never noticed -

OLLIE

Mommy, no!

*(Reese opens the front door)*

REESE

Ollie? Are you alright?

OLLIE

*(twisting around on the sofa, panicky)*

Come back!

REESE

Oh, geez.

*(Swiftly she crosses to the TV and turns off the movie. Parker follows her inside.)*

*Reese sits on the sofa and nudges Ollie to wake him up.)*

Buddy. Hey.

OLLIE

*(sitting up, disoriented)*

Mom turned into an elephant.

REESE

That doesn't sound so bad.

OLLIE

And they put her in jail. And she looked really sad. She made that sound elephants make when they cry. And she got smaller and smaller and smaller. I saw the whole thing but I couldn't move or talk or anything. I couldn't even tell her goodbye. She got smaller and smaller and then she disappeared.

PARKER

Bad dream?

REESE

That stupid movie. I should have known better.

OLLIE

It's not a stupid movie.

PARKER

Hey, Ollie.

*(He ruffles Ollie's hair.)*

Hey. Don't worry. Your mom isn't an elephant. And she isn't going anywhere.

## THIRD DREAM

## SCENE ONE

*(Bus station, as before. The NUN sits alone.)*

*KAY stumbles in, wearing a flannel robe over pajamas. She approaches the Nun.)*

KAY

Excuse me, Sister, but can you spare some change?

NUN

Change? What for?

KAY

I'm sorry - do I know you?

NUN

Pardon?

KAY

This looks very familiar.

NUN

I've never seen you before in my life.

KAY

Are you really a nun?

NUN

That's none of your business.

KAY

So are you going to give me some change or what?

NUN

Why don't you get a job instead of panhandling like a bum?

KAY

It's not that simple.

NUN

Sure it is.

NUN (CONT)

*(Pulling out a newspaper from within  
the folds of her habit.)*

The Classifieds.

*(She points.)*

That one looks like it might suit you.

*(Kay sits down next to the Nun and  
takes the paper.)*

KAY

"Wicker furniture sale"?

NUN

No, the one next to it.

KAY

"Seeking experienced clerical staff"?

NUN

That's it.

KAY

At a law firm in mid-city.

NUN

Sounds perfect.

KAY

I told them my kids needed me home by four. They didn't go for it.

NUN

Beggars can't be choosers.

KAY

I did get a call back from the deli store down the street. Very friendly people. Flexible hours.

NUN

And?

KAY

I can't run a household on a part-time salary at the deli store.

NUN

Boo hoo. It's better than nothing. You want me to feel sorry for you?

KAY

My mother always told me to look to the Church for help.

NUN

What do I look like, an advice columnist?

*(She takes the paper from Kay and flips it over, hands it back to her and points.)*

Try Ann Landers.

KAY

You're a really mean nun.

NUN

I am not.

KAY

Why won't you help me?

NUN

God helps those who help themselves.

KAY

If I could figure out what to do, I would have done it a long time ago.

NUN

Well, if you're too stupid to figure it out, you probably deserve what's coming to you.

KAY

This is why I left the Church.

NUN

Fat lot of good it did you.

KAY

What's that supposed to mean?

NUN

Well, here I am.

KAY

I suppose so.

NUN

There's always that residual guilt. It lingers in the pit of your stomach.

KAY

My sixth grade teacher said it was the Holy Spirit living inside us. I found out later it was actually a stomach ulcer.

NUN

Pray to your stomach ulcer for the virtue of humility.

KAY

I'm sorry, but I can't afford to indulge my ulcer.

*(Pause.)*

I wanted all the usual things. A husband, a home, a family. Now I just want a nap. A long vacation.

NUN

An escape?

KAY

I'm tired of fighting to make everything fit the way it was supposed to.

*(Pause.)*

Let me go.

NUN

You expect my approval?

KAY

Not your approval. Your understanding.

NUN

Remember, Kay: despair is the only unforgivable sin.



## SCENE TWO

*(Late night. Kay's house. Sound of heavy rain. The house is quiet, the lights are off, except for one lamp.)*

KAY, pajama-clad, sits on the sofa, writing a letter by lamplight.

*She pauses, puts the letter down, gets up and walks to her bedroom.*

*Slowly the front door opens. PARKER glances around the room, then shuts the door softly behind him. He is soaking wet.*

*He walks to the fridge, opens it.*

*Kay emerges from her bedroom carrying her checkbook. She can't see Parker from where she's standing.*

*Parker hears her coming and freezes.*

KAY

Reese?

*(Parker remains frozen.)*

*Kay approaches, more cautiously.)*

Who's there?

*(Parker is silent.)*

*Kay looks scared.)*

Who's - Parker? Is that you? What the hell are you doing?

PARKER  
(shutting the fridge)

Hi, Miss Kay.

KAY  
Parker. You scared the living daylights out of me. What are you doing in my house?

PARKER  
I - um. I don't know.

KAY  
You don't know? Is Reese expecting you?

PARKER  
No. I mean, she knows I'm here. But - it's not how you think.

KAY  
Give me a break, Parker. Let's try this again. What are you doing here?

(Pause.)

PARKER  
I was hungry.

KAY  
There isn't food in the fridge at your house?

PARKER  
I don't know.

KAY  
Maybe you should check.

PARKER  
I can't.

KAY  
Why not?

PARKER  
Because. I can't.

(Pause.)

KAY

You're soaked.

PARKER

It's raining.

KAY

Do your parents know where you are?

*(Parker is silent.*

*Kay sighs.)*

Go into my bathroom and change. There's a robe on the back of the door. I'll put your clothes in the dryer.

*(Parker heads to Kay's bedroom.*

*Shaking her head, Kay retrieves her pen and paper from the sofa and sets them on the kitchen table.*

*She starts making a sandwich.*

*Parker returns, wearing Kay's flannel robe, wet clothes in hand.)*

PARKER

You want me to turn on the light?

KAY

No, I don't want to wake up the kids. Sit down.

*(He sits at the table. She hands him a plate with a sandwich on it and picks up his clothes.)*

I hope ham is okay.

*(Parker nods and tears into the sandwich.*

*Kay exits.*

*As Parker slows down on his sandwich, he notices Kay's letter on the table and steals a peek.*

*Kay returns, hesitating at the door.  
She holds a crumpled pack of  
cigarettes. She watches Parker.*

*Finally she crosses to the kitchen and  
tosses the cigarettes on the table.)*

KAY

Wouldn't want to put these through the dryer.

*(Pause.)*

PARKER

No ma'am.

KAY

You've been sleeping here.

PARKER

I'm sorry.

KAY

I don't know what to do with this. Do I need to call your parents?

PARKER

It doesn't matter.

KAY

To them it does.

PARKER

He told me to get out.

*(Pause.)*

KAY

Why?

PARKER

I'm a burden.

KAY

He didn't mean it.

PARKER

Maybe you're right. He was drunk when he said it.

KAY

You're a kid, Parker. Not a burden.

PARKER

What's the difference?

*(Kay is silent.)*

I'm a burden either way. His or someone else's. There's no getting around it. Like this. Me sitting here. It's like, no matter what I do I make trouble.

KAY

You're not trouble.

PARKER

You have enough problems.

*(Pause.)*

What's the letter for?

*(Pause.)*

KAY

I'm asking my mother to watch Reese and Ollie for a while. I have to go take care of some business.

*(Kay flips the pack of cigarettes over.)*

KAY

Bad habit.

PARKER

I know.

*(Pause.)*

You want one?

KAY

Yes. No.

*(Parker stands up and starts toward the porch.)*

*Kay hesitates.)*

I shouldn't.

PARKER

It's no big deal.

*(Kay glances in the direction of the bedrooms.)*

I won't tell.

*(She follows him outside.)*

*He pulls out two cigarettes, hands one to her. He lights hers first.)*

KAY

Thanks.

*(She exhales.)*

This is ridiculous.

*(She stamps it out.)*

PARKER

So how long is Reese gonna be at her grandma's?

KAY

I don't know. I don't really know what to expect.

PARKER

I never do. That's why I've pretty much given up.

KAY

Given up on what?

PARKER

Expectations.

KAY

You always end up disappointed.

PARKER

Yeah, and then I get pissed at myself. I thought for a while that if I expected the worst of everything it would be better. Sort of untouchable.

KAY

Sounds lonely.

PARKER

Yeah.

KAY

So now what?

PARKER

What?

KAY

You said that's what you used to think. But what do you think now?

PARKER

I don't know. Like, in school everyone's always worried about being normal. No one wants to be the freak. And I always felt like the freak. I don't have money, or a car, or a mom and dad and three goldfish.

KAY

Three goldfish?

PARKER

You know, or a dog or whatever. My point is, there's all kinds of ways it can go, whether or not it fits someone's else's idea of how it should go.

Like maybe instead of a dog, or goldfish, you have a ferret and you live with your uncle. And people will give you a hard time, because a ferret is sort of a weird pet, and not many people live with their uncle. But what's it matter, so long as there's somebody looking out for you?

KAY

Who's looking out for you?

PARKER

Reese.

KAY

Reese? Really?

PARKER

Yeah. She looks out for me. And I look out for her.

*(Pause.)*

KAY

What do you dream about?

PARKER

My mom.

## SCENE THREE

*(Bus station - but this time the light is dull and harsh - flickery industrial gray-green.)**An OLD WOMAN sits alone. Her clothes are in bad shape. She looks like she's been sitting there for days.**KAY enters, carrying a suitcase and a bus ticket. She stops short when she sees the Old Woman.)*

OLD WOMAN

Excuse me, Miss, but can you spare some change?

*(Kay gapes at her.)*

OLD WOMAN

God bless you, Miss, help out an old lady.

KAY

I'm sorry.

*(She sidesteps to the vending machine, puts in some change, buys a sandwich.)**She takes a seat down the row from the Old Woman.)*



OLD WOMAN

I'm so hungry.

*(Uncomfortable, Kay unwraps her sandwich and goes to take a bite.*

*The Old Woman eyes the sandwich.)*

What's that?

KAY

*(guilty)*

Egg salad. Would you like some?

OLD WOMAN

I don't trust it.

KAY

It tastes alright. Here.

*(She walks over to the Old Woman and hands her half the sandwich.)*

OLD WOMAN

Huh.

*(She nibbles at it.*

*Hiss and rumble of a bus pulling up.*

*Garbled announcement over the PA:  
Departure number 504.*

*The Old Woman stands.)*

The bus is here.

KAY

Yes.

*(The Old Woman walks toward the gate.  
She stops and looks back at Kay.)*

OLD WOMAN

*(waving her sandwich)*

Thanks.

*(The Old Woman exits.)*

*Kay sits for a long time.*

Announcements: Departure number 504.

Last call for bus departure 504.

Last call.

*The bus leaves.*

*Kay is still sitting.)*

#### SCENE FOUR

*(Afternoon. Kay's house.*

*The living room floor is littered with boxes. Kay is in the kitchen, pulling dishes down from the cabinets.*

*REESE and OLLIE enter, carrying bookbags.)*

REESE

Mom?

*(She runs to the kitchen.)*

What's going on?

OLLIE

*(peering into one of the boxes)*

What are these for?

REESE

What are you doing?

OLLIE

*(taking one of his action figures from a box)*

Are we moving in with Dad?

KAY  
No. We are moving in with Grandma.

REESE  
What?

OLLIE  
Are you coming with us?

KAY  
Yes. We're all going together.

OLLIE  
I don't like this.

REESE  
What the hell? Why didn't you say something earlier?

KAY  
I just decided. This morning.

REESE  
This morning at work? At the bank?

*(Kay looks at her.)*

You should have told me. You lied to me.

KAY  
I was scared.  
*(stacking plates)*

I'm still scared. I didn't know what to do. I couldn't stop it or fix it. Not by myself.

OLLIE  
What about us?

KAY  
What?

OLLIE  
We can't help?

KAY  
Okay, Ollie. Come here.

KAY (CONT)

*(Handing Ollie a plate)*

Put it in the empty box on the table.

*(He carries the plate to the table.)*

*PARKER enters through the front door,  
which is still open.)*

PARKER

Hello?

*(He crosses to the kitchen.)*

Miss Kay?

KAY

Hello, Parker.

PARKER

What's going on?

KAY

Do me a favor and come reach something for me.

*(She points to the top cabinet.)*

See those plates? Hand them to me, would you?

*(Parker hands her the first plate.)*

We never did use these.

REESE

They're pretty.

KAY

Yes.

*(She gives it to Ollie.)*

Extra careful with this one.

*(He walks slowly to the table.)*

*Parker hands Kay the next plate. It slips and shatters.*

*Everyone looks at Kay.)*

PARKER

I'm sorry.

KAY

It was my fault.

PARKER

No.

KAY

Yes it was. Here. Hand me another.

*(He does.*

*Kay cracks the plate against the counter.)*

REESE

Whoa.

OLLIE

Mommy?

KAY

It's okay, sweetheart. Parker, give me another one.

*(He obliges. She smashes it.)*

OLLIE

Mommy, stop it.

KAY

Just give me a minute. Let me finish this.

*(Parker hands off a fourth plate. Kay throws it to the floor. Another. And another.*

*She stops and looks at the broken dishes on the floor.)*

KAY

Well.

*(The kids are huddled in the corner.  
Kay looks at them.)*

It's just dishes. Go on and pack for Grandma's house.

*(She turns to Parker.)*

You too.

*(No one moves.)*

KAY

Why are you looking at me like that? Everything's fine. I feel much better. Really. I'm fine.

*(Slowly the three kids walk to their bedrooms.)*

*Grabbing a broom, Kay sweeps the broken plates into a pile. She pushes about two-thirds of the shards into a dustpan and empties it into the trash.*

*She leaves the rest.*

*She grabs two empty boxes from the living room floor and walks to the bedrooms.*

*She is humming.*

*Lights fade to black.)*