

THE THIRD ROOMMATE

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03/06/20

Characters

EMMA, a 39 y.o. painter, Olivia's partner

OLIVIA, a 41 y.o therapist, Emma's partner

DAMIEN, a 24 y.o. programmer, Emma and Olivia's new roommate

JAMA, a 37 y.o. woman, friend of Emma and Olivia

CHARLIE, a 28 y.o. man

APRIL, a 29 y.o. woman, Damien's sister

Setting: EMMA and OLIVIA's apartment in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. All of the play takes place in their apartment. *The living room* has an L sofa, a loveseat, a coffee table, and many paintings. A musty carpet lines the wood floor. *The kitchen* is basic, with a round glass table, 4 chairs, a kitchen island, and plenty of counter space. Some scenes take place in EMMA and OLIVIA's *master bedroom* and some in DAMIEN's *guest bedroom*. *The master bedroom* has Emma's artistic touch, with modern sensibilities and a minimalist vibe. *The guest bedroom* looks like a hotel room, with a lush bed, cabinets, shelves, and plain white walls.

Act I - The Transplant

Act I, Scene 1: DAMIEN, PART I

EMMA walks out of the bathroom in her robes and slippers, drying her hair with a towel. She peeks out the window blinds.

EMMA

Liv, I think he's here.

OLIVIA (v.o. from bathroom)

He's an hour early.

EMMA

If he sets alarms at 6 AM and wakes me up, I swear...

OLIVIA (v.o.)

Oh, please, you'll sleep right through it anyway.

OLIVIA walks out of the bathroom. She is washed up.

Get dressed, Em.

EMMA goes into the bedroom and closes the door. OLIVIA looks out the blinds again and then walks to the front door to open it.

OLIVIA

Damien?

DAMIEN

Hi. Emma?

OLIVIA

No, I'm Olivia. Emma will be right out. We didn't expect to see you here so early.

DAMIEN

Sorry.

OLIVIA

It's no problem, Damien. Do you need help with your bags?

DAMIEN

I'll be fine. Thanks, though.

OLIVIA

Here, let me show you to the room.

OLIVIA leads DAMIEN to the guest bedroom.

DAMIEN

Damn. It looks exactly like the pictures.

DAMIEN sets his bags down.

OLIVIA

That would all be Emma. I don't have a single artistic bone in my body.

DAMIEN

Neither do I.

OLIVIA

And you're a programmer, right?

DAMIEN

Yeah. I work for a startup.

OLIVIA

What company?

DAMIEN

Oh, it's a small company.

EMMA (v.o. from bedroom)

Which one?

EMMA walks out of the bedroom and approaches the guest bedroom.

OLIVIA

Emma used to work at Microsoft. In our previous lives.

EMMA

Yeah, when this one was a production director for NBC.

EMMA throws her arm around OLIVIA's shoulder. OLIVIA kisses EMMA's hand.

OLIVIA

That was all before I met Emma.

DAMIEN

Emma. Nice to meet you.

EMMA

Likewise.

DAMIEN and EMMA shake hands.

So where do you work?

DAMIEN

It's called Lima. We do brand recognition.

EMMA

Ah. Lima.

OLIVIA

You don't know what that is.

EMMA

Of course I don't know what that is. We're old.

OLIVIA

(to DAMIEN) Just because she used to work at Microsoft, she thinks she knows all the new tech companies.

EMMA

That's not true. I'm sorry, Damien. This one thinks because she's a therapist she knows what everyone's thinking.

DAMIEN

It's fine. Really.

EMMA

Anyways... Damien, what do you think that **I** do?

OLIVIA

Em! We just met the poor boy.

EMMA

Just a little fun. Let's see what the big city has taught him.

DAMIEN

Well, (a pause) based on the paint stains on your shirt and the art pieces around the house, I'd say you're a painter.

EMMA

Good eye.

DAMIEN

You're really a painter?

EMMA

I painted all of these.

She gestures around the house to the paintings.

DAMIEN

Wow. Really?

EMMA

Pft, no. You think I painted this?

She points to a Rembrandt.

I wish. But yes, it is true, I do paint. And yes, it doesn't pay well. But we make do.

OLIVIA

Emma makes beautiful artwork. I'm very proud of her.

EMMA

And Liv treats lots of messed up people. I'm also proud of her.

OLIVIA

We should let you unpack, Damien. I didn't mean to keep you this long.

DAMIEN

Thanks for having me. I really appreciate it.

OLIVIA

Of course. We all need the escape sometimes.

EMMA

Some of us for longer than others.

OLIVIA

If you need anything, just knock on our door. Help yourself to anything around the kitchen. We all share here.

DAMIEN

Thanks.

DAMIEN's cell phone rings. He silences it.

I'm going to get settled.

EMMA

We'll leave you to it.

DAMIEN gently but firmly shuts the door.

Act I, Scene 2: THE NEW GUY, PART I

Some time has passed. DAMIEN returns home. EMMA is working in the master bedroom on a painting with some music playing in the background.

DAMIEN

Hey, Emma.

DAMIEN hangs up his coat in the living room.

EMMA

Hey. Wait, hold on. I want to talk to you.

EMMA sets down her paintbrush and turns off the music. She walks out of the bedroom. She's wearing a dirty smock.

Ignore the smock. I usually look worse than this. Do you want a drink? I'll get you something. You're 21, right?

DAMIEN

Yeah.

EMMA

Do you want a cider? Beer? Wine?

DAMIEN

Beer's fine.

EMMA

Beer it is. Come join me in the kitchen.

EMMA goes into the kitchen, followed by DAMIEN. She rummages through the refrigerator and pulls out 2 cans of Bud Light.

Sorry, this is all we have.

DAMIEN

That's fine.

EMMA sets the beers down on the table and takes a seat. DAMIEN sits.

EMMA

So how do you like it here?

DAMIEN

I like it. It's quiet.

EMMA

Crickets. Not like the city.

DAMIEN

Not like the city.

EMMA

How do you feel about Liv and me?

DAMIEN

Excuse me?

EMMA

You know, two women, all that. I know it's 2019, but still.

DAMIEN

Oh, no no, I don't mind at all.

EMMA

I know you're from New York, but still, I ask everyone. We've had visitors from those states and it's different out there, how they feel about this stuff. It's stupid how this is still a thing, but you know how it is. We made our peace.

EMMA opens her beer.

You got a girlfriend? Boyfriend? Asexual? Pansexual?

DAMIEN

No.

EMMA

So you're single?

DAMIEN

Yes.

EMMA

Well, maybe you'll find a nice robot for you. You never know.

EMMA takes a sip of her beer. She makes a face.

I can't believe Liv likes this shit.

DAMIEN

How long have you two been...

EMMA

About 10 years. It was about the same time we left our other jobs. Best decisions we ever made.

EMMA drinks the rest of her beer in one gulp. She lets out a small burp.

Look, Damien, I'll be straight with you. You've been here for what, a week?

DAMIEN

8 days.

EMMA

And we've barely seen you at all. In this house, we like to be open with each other. Liv and I are worried you don't like us. Did we do something wrong?

DAMIEN

It's not you. I'm sorry. I'm just ... I've been going through a lot.

DAMIEN plays with his beer but doesn't open it.

EMMA

Call it motherly instinct. We want you to be happy here.

DAMIEN

You have kids?

EMMA

Yeah, she's in college, but we're talking about you now.

DAMIEN

I know.

EMMA

So you're okay then? You can always talk to us.

DAMIEN

Yeah. I'm okay.

EMMA

All right. Look, I'm not great at this. That's why I keep Olivia around.

DAMIEN

It's fine.

EMMA

Oh, by the way, someone stopped by this morning for you. Charlie?

DAMIEN

Oh. (A pause) Charlie. Okay, thanks.

EMMA

You know him?

DAMIEN

Yeah. I'll call him.

EMMA

Okay.

EMMA points at the beer.

So no beer after all?

DAMIEN

Sorry. I'm kind of tired right now.

EMMA

All right.

EMMA reaches over for the beer and grabs it.

Again, just want to reiterate that we're all friends here.

DAMIEN

I know. Thanks.

EMMA

EMMA taps the table twice with the beer.

Welcome to the Berkshires.

Act I, Scene 3: THE NEW GUY, PART II

Later that day, EMMA and OLIVIA are in their bedroom, preparing to go to sleep.

OLIVIA

OLIVIA removes a paint-covered shirt from the bed and places it on the chair.

Busy day?

EMMA

If Sheila wasn't all over me about this exhibition, I actually would have time to sit and paint something nice. But now it's just a rush, all the time.

OLIVIA

I think the piece looks nice.

EMMA

Imagine how much better it would be if I had time.

OLIVIA

OLIVIA gets under the covers.

How's Damien?

EMMA

Fine. I told him about his visitor. They know each other.

OLIVIA

Oh good. I think he's opening up a little bit more. He's a young kid in a new place. He'll adjust.

EMMA

Mhm.

OLIVIA

(A pause) That mhmm never means anything good. What did you do, Em?

EMMA

I didn't do anything... egregious.

OLIVIA

You didn't talk to him about what we talked about last night?

EMMA

Sort of.

OLIVIA

Em, you know confronting the new kid never works.

EMMA

I don't know. **You** know. I like the direct approach.

OLIVIA

Great. Now he's going to be another Rory.

EMMA

He's already better than Rory. He's clean.

OLIVIA

You know what I mean. Em. Come on! He...

OLIVIA takes a deep breath.

Sorry. Long day. A lot of listening today.

EMMA

EMMA changes shirts and then slips into bed.

I can tell when it's one of those days.

OLIVIA

Can't we just have a nice relationship with a roommate for once?

EMMA

I liked Edgar.

OLIVIA

Edgar was a troublemaker.

EMMA

It's why I liked him.

OLIVIA

This one might be a keeper. Don't intrude too much on his personal space.

EMMA

EMMA kisses OLIVIA.

Fine. But remember, we're his roommate too. So we deserve to be happy here as well. I don't want to find out he's a serial killer. I want him to be normal.

OLIVIA

He's normal. Just... reserved.

EMMA

We'll see.

EMMA turns off the light in the master bedroom. DAMIEN turns on the light in the guest bedroom. He is receiving many notifications on his phone. He looks visibly flustered. His phone rings.

DAMIEN

I told you, stop calling me!

MALE VOICE (v.o. phone)

You can't keep running from everything, Damien.

DAMIEN (whispered)

Just stop. And don't come back here again.

DAMIEN hangs up the phone.

Act I, Scene 4: TEA, PART I

EMMA and OLIVIA are sitting in the living room, drinking tea with a friend JAMA. They are mid-conversation.

JAMA

Speaking of which, what's the gossip on the new roommate?

OLIVIA

Yes, Emma, what **is** the gossip on the new roommate?

EMMA

Did Liv tell you what happened? She's being a real drama queen.

JAMA

Fill me in. I want to hear it again.

EMMA

Is Damien here? I don't want him to eavesdrop.

OLIVIA

He's out right now. And look, it's only been a week. He just needs some time to get used to us.

JAMA

So the kid keeps to himself? That's nothing new. My son was the same. He'll grow out of it.

OLIVIA

Exactly! See. Jama understands. But Em just went up to him and said he's weird.

EMMA

Oh, come on. It was more delicate than that. I'm playing bad cop, okay?

JAMA

It's probably fine, Emma. The kid is an adult.

EMMA

Jama, there's weird stuff going on. This man showed up the other day. I opened the door and he was covered in shadows and I got freaked the fuck out. He really wanted to speak with him. Maybe he owes drug money or something?

OLIVIA

Em! Stop projecting your little fantasies onto the real world. Save it for the canvas.

EMMA

This whole thing is just so strange.

JAMA

Maybe it's a sibling.

EMMA

They don't look alike.

JAMA

Friend?

EMMA

I guess it could be.

OLIVIA

Em, why do you automatically assume everyone is bad?

EMMA

Because most people are shitty, Liv. You know that. You probably see them all day.

OLIVIA

Most people are good.

EMMA

You still believe that?

OLIVIA

Yes.

JAMA

(A pause) Okay, well, as long as you two are still texting me, I'll know that he's not a murderer. Could still be a drug dealer, I guess.

The doorbell rings.

EMMA

Liv, are you expecting anyone?

OLIVIA

No.

EMMA

Mhm.

EMMA gets up to check the door and peeks into the eyehole. She's immediately taken back.

Oh shit, it's him again.

JAMA

Who? That guy?

EMMA

Yeah. Charlie.

OLIVIA

Just tell him Damien's not home.

EMMA

Uh, you do it.

EMMA takes a seat. The doorbell rings again.

I'm good.

OLIVIA

What? Why me?

EMMA

No reason. Come on, chop chop.

JAMA

I can get it.

OLIVIA

No, no, he's just going to think you live here.

OLIVIA gets up. She walks to the door and opens it.

Can I help you?

CHARLIE

Hi, is Damien there?

OLIVIA

No, sorry, he's not home right now.

CHARLIE

When you see him, can you tell him Charlie is looking for him?

OLIVIA

Sure. What's this about?

CHARLIE

I'd rather talk with him about it. If you don't mind.

OLIVIA

Of course.

CHARLIE

Just tell him it's urgent. Please. Thank you.

CHARLIE leaves. OLIVIA closes the door gently. She walks back to the other two women.

OLIVIA

So.

JAMA

Drug dealer, then.

EMMA

He looked like he could shake me down with one hand.

OLIVIA

He seemed sad.

JAMA

All joking aside, I don't see any problems here. Are you worried?

OLIVIA

I'm not.

EMMA

Something feels off.

OLIVIA

You always think people are hiding some...

There is the sound of a car pulling up to the driveway. Someone gets out. There are muffled voices.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

Damien. Why are you avoiding me?

DAMIEN (V.O.)

I told you not to come here.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

You left me no choice! I had to pull a lot of strings just to find you.

DAMIEN (V.O.)

I don't want people to find me.

CHARLIE (V.O.)

People care about you.

DAMIEN (V.O.)

You didn't tell April where I am, did you? (A pause) Did you?

CHARLIE (V.O.)

You have to come home. There's paperwork to sign and shit to do. You can't run away from this.

There's a jangling of keys on the front door. EMMA, OLIVIA, and JAMA all quickly run into the master bedroom. They close the door just as the front door opens.

DAMIEN

I'm not going home.

DAMIEN blocks the door with his hand.

I need you to leave.

CHARLIE

I lost my sister too, you know.

A silence hangs over the room.

DAMIEN

I'm sorry.

CHARLIE

What's wrong with you?

DAMIEN

I need you to leave. Please.

DAMIEN closes the door.

Act I, Scene 5: THE WIDOWER

OLIVIA returns home. She turns on the lights in the living room and hangs up her coat. She checks on Emma in the master bedroom and drops her things on the floor before she quietly shuts the door. She walks to the kitchen to pour herself a glass of water. She checks her phone briefly before DAMIEN walks out with some dirty plates.

OLIVIA

Hey, Damien.

DAMIEN

Hi, Olivia.

OLIVIA

Up late?

DAMIEN

I couldn't sleep, so I'm just washing some dishes.

OLIVIA

Good idea.

DAMIEN

Late night?

DAMIEN drops the dishes in the sink and begins washing them.

OLIVIA

Therapists have normal social lives too, you know.

DAMIEN

Sorry, I didn't mean to imply...

OLIVIA

I'm just kidding.

DAMIEN

Oh yeah, right.

OLIVIA

Actually, I wanted to say sorry. About the other day.

DAMIEN

DAMIEN stops washing dishes briefly.

About what?

OLIVIA

About Emma. She overstepped and that was not right.

DAMIEN

I don't understand.

OLIVIA

She didn't have a right to tell you how you should or should not feel.

DAMIEN

It's fine, really.

OLIVIA

Everyone is different. Emma always likes to pick apart people and find their flaws.

DAMIEN

I don't mind.

OLIVIA

Well, I do. So I'm sorry.

DAMIEN

DAMIEN places the last dish in the drying rack.

Thanks.

OLIVIA

We just want you to be happy here.

DAMIEN

I am.

OLIVIA

Good.

OLIVIA finishes her water.

I'll wash this in the morning. Good night.

OLIVIA places the glass on the countertop and turns to leave.

DAMIEN

Olivia?

OLIVIA

Yeah?

DAMIEN

I know what you want to ask me.

OLIVIA

What do you mean?

DAMIEN

About last week. About Charlie.

OLIVIA

I don't...

DAMIEN

I knew you were there. Someone was listening, anyway. It's fine. I don't mind.

Really.

OLIVIA

It's your personal affairs.

DAMIEN

I'm sorry about that. It won't happen again.

OLIVIA

Okay. Thank you.

DAMIEN

I lost my wife recently.

OLIVIA

Oh. Wow, I'm so sorry. I didn't know.

DAMIEN

It's fine. (A pause) It's fine. I just needed some time away, but Charlie found me. He's my wife's brother. I'll sort things out with him soon.

OLIVIA

Of course. I'm... I'm very sorry to hear about your wife.

DAMIEN

I don't need more sympathy. I have enough of it. I want peace.

OLIVIA

I ... (A pause) Okay. Of course.

DAMIEN

Good night.

DAMIEN enters the guest room and closes the door. OLIVIA walks to the master bedroom and closes the door. She hops into bed and EMMA mumbles something.

OLIVIA

Sorry.

EMMA

It's fine. I couldn't sleep. How was the party?

OLIVIA

Fine.

EMMA

Any crazy patient stories?

OLIVIA

You know we can't talk about that. And even if we did, I can't tell you.

EMMA

It's the same shit as NBC. It's all so fake.

OLIVIA

It's different.

EMMA

Seems the same to me. You're still hearing everyone's problems and trying to fix them. But now you can't talk shit about it with others.

OLIVIA

Oh Em.

EMMA

You know I'm right.

OLIVIA

Don't project yourself onto me. You know I don't care for gossip.

EMMA

It's not gossip. It's about being authentic.

OLIVIA

We don't always have to reveal everything about ourselves to be authentic. Just because I don't tell you everything and you do doesn't mean you're more "real."

EMMA

What are you not telling me?

OLIVIA

Oh please, just go to sleep.

EMMA

Then come here.

EMMA holds her arms out and embraces OLIVIA.

So what were you and Damien talking about?

OLIVIA

You won't believe this.

EMMA

Don't tell me he's actually a drug dealer.

OLIVIA

No. It's worse.

EMMA

He's a murderer.

OLIVIA

He's a widower.

EMMA

EMMA releases OLIVIA and gently pushes her away.

What? How is that worse?

OLIVIA

Em.

EMMA

Oh jeez. Now I feel like an asshole.

EMMA lies back on the bed. OLIVIA lies back as well.

OLIVIA

It's okay.

EMMA

He's so young. So young.

OLIVIA

I know.

EMMA

When did it happen?

OLIVIA

He said recently.

EMMA

That could mean any time. It does explain some things, I guess.

OLIVIA

Charlie is his brother in law. They need to square away some things.

EMMA

So why didn't he just call?

OLIVIA

He probably did.

EMMA

Ooh boy. This one came with a lot of baggage.

OLIVIA

I'm just going to keep out of his way. You should do the same.

EMMA

All right. Fine.

OLIVIA

Thanks Em.

EMMA

I wonder what happened to his wife.

OLIVIA

Don't ask him. It's his business.

EMMA

I know.

OLIVIA

Don't do it.

EMMA

I won't!

OLIVIA

He'll tell us when he's ready.

EMMA

Or he won't tell us anything. As is normal for him.

OLIVIA

And that's just fine, Em.

Act I, Scene 6: THE TOOL

EMMA is in her bedroom studio painting again, this time with headphones.

DAMIEN walks from his guest bedroom to her bedroom. He knocks twice. EMMA takes off her headphones and sets her brush down.

EMMA

Yeah?

DAMIEN

Hey, do you have an adjustable wrench?

EMMA

Liv organizes all the tools around here, but let me see if I can find it.

EMMA fidgets around her desk drawers. She pulls many tools but not an adjustable wrench.

DAMIEN

I'll take anything. Pliers?

EMMA

I do have those.

EMMA pulls pliers out.

What's this about anyways?

DAMIEN

The shelf screw came loose.

EMMA

Shit. Let me fix it.

DAMIEN

No, no, I can take care of it.

EMMA

We take a certain pride in the quality of our furniture. I insist I fix it.

DAMIEN

Sure.

EMMA takes the pliers and together they walk to the guest bedroom. She walks straight to the shelf.

EMMA

Well, shit. I thought I tightened that.

DAMIEN

That might have been me. I had a lot of things on it.

EMMA

It's fine.

EMMA works on the loose screw.

So how are things here?

DAMIEN

Good, good.

EMMA

How's work?

DAMIEN

Work's work. Keeps me busy.

EMMA

I hope my music doesn't bother you. It helps me focus.

DAMIEN

It's totally fine. I'm usually plugged in.

EMMA

Sorry you're stuck with me during the day. I know Olivia's cooler but she actually has an office job.

DAMIEN

I like you both.

EMMA

EMMA tightens the screw.

That should do it.

DAMIEN

Thanks.

EMMA

Want to hold on to the tool?

DAMIEN

That's fine. I know where you are.

EMMA

Hope so.

EMMA pockets the pliers.

By the way, Liv and I talked yesterday. I know it's none of my business but I'm really sorry about your wife.

DAMIEN

Thank you.

EMMA

Yeah.

A silence. EMMA is holding herself back.

Well, let me know if you need anything.

DAMIEN

I will.

EMMA walks back to the master bedroom and puts the tool back in the drawers. She takes a second before putting her music back on. DAMIEN has already plugged in and continues working.

Act I, Scene 7: APRIL, PART I

DAMIEN is speaking with someone in the guest bedroom on the phone.

DAMIEN

Was it Charlie? Did he give this number to you?

FEMALE V.O.

It doesn't matter. All that matters is that you come back. Come back to us.

We're here. We'll give you a hug.

DAMIEN

I can't.

FEMALE V.O.

You can. You don't have to do this yourself.

DAMIEN

Why can't you just let me be?

FEMALE V.O.

I won't. Damien, we searched everywhere. We ... we thought the worst. Don't shut us out. What about Mom and Dad? Zoe's parents? What about Zoe's parents?

DAMIEN

Don't say her name!

V.O.

It doesn't matter. I'm almost there. I'm coming to you right now.

DAMIEN

What? No. Don't do that. I don't want to see you or Charlie or...

The phone goes silent.

DAMIEN

Crap.

DAMIEN gets up and begins pacing around his room, muttering to himself.

He walks out into the living room and then knocks on the master bedroom door.

DAMIEN

Anyone? Emma? Olivia?

OLIVIA opens the door.

OLIVIA

Yes, Damien?

DAMIEN

My sister is on the way here and I just ... I don't want to talk to her. Can you tell her I'm not home? I mean I guess I can leave, but I don't know if that's going to just delay the inevitable or ...

OLIVIA

I don't understand. Do you not want to see her?

DAMIEN

Can you just tell her I'm at the movies or something?

OLIVIA

Damien, what's going on?

DAMIEN

Please do that for me. Please.

DAMIEN begins pacing again. OLIVIA watches in bewilderment as he walks around the living room mindlessly. He then goes back to his room and gets his coat and keys to leave.

OLIVIA

Damien, I don't understand what's happening.

DAMIEN

I'm at the movies.

There is the sound of a car approaching the driveway. Damien rushes to the window and looks out the blinds.

Oh, no.

DAMIEN quickly disappears into his room and locks the door. EMMA peeks out behind OLIVIA, who is still confused.

EMMA

What the fuck is going on?

OLIVIA

I don't know.

There's a knock on the front door.

I'll get it.

OLIVIA goes back into the room and puts on a robe. She walks to the door and opens it.

Can I help you?

WOMAN

Is Damien here?

OLIVIA

Who are you?

WOMAN

April. I'm his sister.

OLIVIA

Sorry, April. He just left.

APRIL

His car is outside. I know he's here. We've been looking for him for a long time.

OLIVIA

He certainly seems to be in high demand.

APRIL

So can you show me where he is?

OLIVIA

He's not here. Sorry.

APRIL

Don't do this, please.

OLIVIA

He took the bus.

APRIL

Damien! Damien!

EMMA walks out of the bedroom.

EMMA

He's not home, lady.

APRIL

I'm sorry, who are you?

EMMA

This is our home. Don't yell in our home.

APRIL

This is family sensitive stuff. Can you please just ... (a pause) This is really important.

OLIVIA

I understand. But he's not home.

APRIL

Okay. Fine.

APRIL raises her voice.

Just let him know that running away from things won't bring Zoe back.

EMMA

Will do.

OLIVIA

We'll let him know you stopped by.

APRIL

And also tell him running away won't bring Faith back, either.

The guest bedroom door opens. DAMIEN walks out, a furious expression on his face.

There he is.

DAMIEN

Don't you dare talk about them. You weren't there. You don't know what it was like.

EMMA

I think it's time that you left, lady.

APRIL

Then talk to me, Damien. You can't just leave us.

DAMIEN

I didn't want to leave. I didn't want any of this. I wanted this all to go away. But it didn't go away.

OLIVIA

Em, I think we should let them have their talk.

EMMA

Fine.

EMMA and OLIVIA retreat to the master bedroom slowly as the fight escalates in the foreground.

APRIL

It didn't go away for us either, Damien! The funeral was awful. You weren't there. Charlie was angry, and everyone else was just confused. What happened to Damien? And they kept asking me where you were, how I felt ... I couldn't fucking take it. And I kept trying to find you and it was just... (a breath) I get it. You needed time. But you weren't there when we needed you.

DAMIEN

You don't think I know?

APRIL

You weren't there when they buried your wife and daughter.

DAMIEN

I know!

A deafening silence fills the room. After a pause...

APRIL

It was my niece, Damien. And my sister-in-law. It hurt us all equally.

DAMIEN

You weren't in that cab. You don't know what I dream of. You don't understand that nothing makes it easier. You think, maybe for a split second, if you leave it all behind, you can find some peace in your sleep. You don't realize that it only makes it worse and that each day you feel like you're waking up from a nightmare and that temporarily you're okay and then you're dropped back into reality when you think of your family and it all comes crashing back. You don't understand, and you never will. You, Charlie, Mom, none of you will get it.

DAMIEN stomps towards the door and stares at APRIL, his hands held in a begging manner.

So give me some fucking peace.

APRIL

I want to understand. We can do this together.

DAMIEN

Peace. Please. Just... please.

APRIL

Damien...

DAMIEN collapses to the floor. He begins to hyperventilate. Some tears fall.

APRIL

I'm... I'm sorry.

APRIL looks to the master bedroom, where EMMA and OLIVIA are watching.

No one knows what to do.

DAMIEN

Just go. Please.

APRIL

Will you be okay?

No response. APRIL has no choice. She leaves the house. Once she is gone, OLIVIA goes to DAMIEN's side.

OLIVIA

Are you all right?

DAMIEN

I need space.

OLIVIA

Okay. Emma and I are here.

OLIVIA returns to the master bedroom and shuts the door. The house is silent except for DAMIEN's breathing. After a few minutes, he quickly goes to the guest bedroom, grabs his keys, and leaves the house.

Act II - The River

Act II, Scene 1: APRIL, PART II

EMMA is boiling a pot of tea in the kitchen. Just as the kettle whistles, OLIVIA returns home.

OLIVIA

Is that for me?

EMMA

I guess it's for both of us now.

EMMA takes the kettle off the stove.

OLIVIA

Any news?

EMMA

You mean since you texted me 10 minutes ago? No.

OLIVIA

You know how I am.

EMMA

He's a grown up. He'll take care of himself. As long as he pays rent at the end of the month, he can take as much time off as he wants.

OLIVIA

Em! The poor kid has been through a lot.

EMMA

I know.

EMMA pours water into two cups.

Chamomile?

OLIVIA

That's fine.

EMMA

How was work?

OLIVIA

I kept thinking about Damien.

EMMA

We did what we could. We can't do anything else.

OLIVIA

I still feel responsible, somehow.

EMMA

Not this again. Look, we tried to help but it didn't work. Also, he's not your kid. Did you forget we have one already?

OLIVIA

Don't be heartless, Em.

EMMA

Fine. By the way, Eileen... you know, your actual kid? She needs money for textbooks. Don't forget about her.

EMMA picks up her tea.

OLIVIA

I just sent her money.

EMMA

She said it wasn't enough. Books aren't cheap.

OLIVIA

How much more does she need?

EMMA

I don't know. You call her.

OLIVIA

But didn't you...

EMMA

EMMA slams her tea down, splashing hot water.

Look, Olivia, I got Sheila breathing down my neck because she wants this damn piece for the curator tomorrow. I got my own shit.

OLIVIA

Okay. I know.

EMMA

I am not your damn assistant at NBC. I don't have time to run around and do your errands for you. (a pause) I know you have your hands full with the mysterious missing roommate, but I have things to do. Okay?

EMMA picks up the tea, hands shaking, and leaves, disappearing into the master bedroom. Immediately after, the doorbell rings. OLIVIA walks to the living room and checks the front door. She opens it.

OLIVIA

Hello.

APRIL

Hi.

OLIVIA

He's not here.

APRIL

You have to work with me here. I need to speak with him.

OLIVIA

He's missing.

APRIL

What? For how long?

OLIVIA

A day. Maybe more. We woke up yesterday morning and he wasn't here.

APRIL

Shit. Shit shit. Not again.

OLIVIA

Is this normal?

APRIL

I hadn't spoken to him for days before I saw him last week. Did he leave anything in his room? A clue, maybe?

OLIVIA

We don't look through our roommates' things.

APRIL

Oh, right. Sister habit.

OLIVIA

So should we be worried?

APRIL

It's my responsibility. I don't want to drag you into this.

OLIVIA

We'll help if we can. We want him to be safe, too.

APRIL

I'm going to keep looking. I think I might know where he is. Can I leave my number? Call me if he shows up.

OLIVIA

Sure.

OLIVIA hands her cell phone over to APRIL.

You can add yourself.

APRIL takes the phone and adds her contact information.

APRIL

Thank you.

EMMA walks out of the master bedroom in her pajamas.

Hello.

EMMA

Hi. I'm busy, sorry.

APRIL

I'm actually leaving, so...

EMMA

Okay.

EMMA walks into the bathroom and closes the door.

OLIVIA

Will Damien be okay?

APRIL

I know you heard everything. It's been very difficult for him. But it's been very difficult for all of us.

OLIVIA

I understand.

APRIL

You don't know what it's like until it happens to you.

APRIL takes a seat at the kitchen table. She takes a deep breath.

That loneliness. In an instant, they were both gone. I don't know how Damien walked away from that accident.

OLIVIA

That's awful.

APRIL

This is too much information. I'm sorry. I'm just worried. I was so mad before.

Now I'm just worried.

OLIVIA

You care about him.

APRIL

All my life.

OLIVIA

How long had you been looking for him?

APRIL

Just a week. Thank goodness for Charlie.

OLIVIA

A week?

APRIL

Only a week.

OLIVIA

So this is recent.

APRIL

Yeah.

From the bathroom, EMMA blow dries her hair.

I have to go.

APRIL leaves the house. EMMA emerges from the bathroom.

OLIVIA

Jeez.

EMMA

Poor kid.

EMMA holds OLIVIA's shoulders.

Act II, Scene 2: A KID

It's late at night. The house is quiet. A car pulls into the driveway. Someone steps out of the car and enters the house. It is DAMIEN. EMMA then peeks her head out of the master bedroom. She frowns and then closes the door behind her. She keeps her voice low.

EMMA

We were all worried. Where the hell have you been?

DAMIEN

I'm sorry. I needed some time away. I didn't mean to...

EMMA

Keep your voice down. She's sleeping.

DAMIEN

Sorry.

EMMA

Don't apologize to me. Liv is worried sick. And your sister, too. You can't do that.

DAMIEN

Like I said, I didn't mean to make everyone panic.

EMMA

You sure are good at that. (a pause) It's good to see you.

DAMIEN

Thanks.

EMMA

I know you've been through a lot, Damien, but you can't do stupid shit like this again.

DAMIEN

I won't. Actually, I'm going to go back in the morning.

EMMA

Wait. Your sister told us that we should call her if you came back.

DAMIEN

It's fine. I'm home and...

The master bedroom door opens. OLIVIA stumbles out, clears her eyes, and looks at DAMIEN. She walks over and gives him a hug.

OLIVIA

I'm glad you're home. Thank goodness. Everyone was worried.

EMMA

Everyone.

DAMIEN

I'm sorry. I was just telling Emma that I'm leaving in the morning.

OLIVIA

OLIVIA releases DAMIEN from the hug.

Of course. Do what you need to do.

EMMA

Shouldn't we call April and Charlie?

OLIVIA

It's so late. We can call in the morning. He's safe and that's what matters.

EMMA

First thing in the morning.

OLIVIA

Can you call? I have an early session.

EMMA

Fine.

OLIVIA

What's the matter, Em?

EMMA

Nothing. I just don't want those two all over us again. This whole thing is making me feel uncomfortable.

OLIVIA

Em!

EMMA

What?

OLIVIA

You'll have to excuse Emma. Both of us, really. We're tired. I couldn't sleep at all.

DAMIEN

I really didn't mean to make you worry. I just needed time.

OLIVIA

Of course. Go get some rest.

DAMIEN

Good night.

DAMIEN walks into the guest bedroom and closes the door. OLIVIA and EMMA return to the master bedroom, where they both climb into bed.

OLIVIA

What was that?

EMMA

What was what?

OLIVIA

He's fine. Why were you making a big deal?

EMMA

Because I just know his sister is going to yell at us for not calling her immediately.

OLIVIA

Oh, I see. You care about him now.

EMMA

I care that we maintain some sort of peace in this house and not have visitors every freaking day.

OLIVIA

Funny, it seemed like you didn't care where he was a few days ago.

EMMA

Just stop, okay? He's back. You should be happy.

EMMA lies down and faces away.

Did you call Eileen about the money?

OLIVIA

Shit.

EMMA

Still caring more about the kid than our own daughter. You know he's just a fucking kid.

OLIVIA

So is Eileen.

OLIVIA turns off the light in the master bedroom while DAMIEN's light in the guest bedroom grows brighter. He searches through his bag and ponders.

Act II, Scene 3: THE SELFISH ACT

The house is quiet. OLIVIA has left for work. EMMA exits the master bedroom, still in pajamas.

EMMA

Damien?

No response. EMMA slowly trots over to the kitchen.

You awake?

EMMA approaches the door slowly, which is ajar. She knocks lightly.

Do you want coffee?

No response again.

Okay. I'll put a pot on.

EMMA prepares the coffee. When the pot is boiling, she takes out some bread to toast and sits at the table. She browses her phone, glancing at DAMIEN's door. Eventually, she gets up and knocks on the door again.

EMMA

Damien?

The toast pops up as the door swings open. DAMIEN's room is dark. The lights from the window illuminate the shadow of a man hanging on a noose. EMMA scream and props the body up. The man emits some gagging sounds. It's DAMIEN.

EMMA

What the fuck?!

EMMA holds DAMIEN and scrambles around the room to find a sharp object. DAMIEN is making guttural sounds. EMMA finds a pair of scissors on his desk. EMMA places the chair beneath DAMIEN's legs while she climbs onto his desk. DAMIEN kicks the chair away angrily while EMMA cuts the rope.

EMMA

Do you want to fucking live or not?

The rope snaps and DAMIEN collapses onto the floor, breaking the chair in the process. EMMA steps off the table and checks DAMIEN. He is breathing.

EMMA

What were you thinking?

No response. DAMIEN coughs.

You scared the shit out of me!

DAMIEN

I'm sorry.

EMMA

Stop saying you're sorry!

EMMA drops to the floor and hugs her knees.

Fuck. Fuck fuck.

DAMIEN sits up. He continues coughing.

EMMA

What are you doing, Damien?

DAMIEN

I don't know.

EMMA

Did you want to die?

DAMIEN

I don't know. I don't know anymore.

EMMA

Damien...

EMMA stands up and walks to DAMIEN. She pulls off the noose and picks up the rest of the rope.

Olivia cares about you so much. It's annoying. You can't do this to her. It's just... (a breath) This is all too much.

DAMIEN

Yeah.

EMMA

Are you okay?

DAMIEN

I don't know.

EMMA

Do you want to talk or something? I know you've been through a lot.

DAMIEN

You really don't know what it's like to lose someone until it happens.

EMMA

Yes. But look, you can't just fucking hang yourself to escape it. Did you even think about your family? Your sister?

DAMIEN

I know. I know, I know. It was...

EMMA

(a pause) Shit, I'm sorry, I'm not good at this.

DAMIEN

... it was selfish. It's my fault.

DAMIEN puts his head down. He sniffles.

EMMA

Shit.

DAMIEN

I want them back. I just want them back.

DAMIEN begins shaking. Tears flow. EMMA sits next to DAMIEN and throws an arm around his shoulder.

Act II, Scene 4: EVERYONE DESERVES

The guest bedroom door is closed. CHARLIE is sitting at the table, hunched forward, quiet. APRIL and DAMIEN are having a discussion behind the door. The front door opens and OLIVIA walks in.

OLIVIA

Where's Emma?

CHARLIE

She's in her room.

OLIVIA

Thanks.

OLIVIA enters the master bedroom. EMMA is painting.

EMMA

Don't judge. It puts my mind at ease.

OLIVIA

No judgment.

OLIVIA drops her stuff onto the bed.

He's okay?

EMMA

I guess. His sister was yelling at him before. They were doing the whole cry talk thing. I don't know if it's working.

OLIVIA

Thank you. Thank you for saving his life.

EMMA

I think I made him worse. But... yeah. Sure.

OLIVIA

You saved him.

OLIVIA pulls up a seat next to EMMA, who continues to paint.

You can't do that thing where you put in your headphones and code. Be here with me now.

EMMA

Uh huh.

OLIVIA

Are you okay, Em?

EMMA

Do I look okay?

OLIVIA

You kinda look like crap.

EMMA

Thanks.

OLIVIA

But seriously, are you okay?

EMMA

(a long pause) It's just so much. I've never been that close to death. Even with my mom, I felt this separation. But this was too close.

EMMA sets the brush down.

I knew this kid was going to be a problem.

OLIVIA

You can't say that. He's a boy.

EMMA

He just waltzed in and interrupted our lives. And now...

EMMA picks up the brush and throws it across the room.

I can't even get this painting done in time for Sheila.

OLIVIA

You keep painting. I'll talk with them.

EMMA

Go work your therapy.

OLIVIA

It'll be okay, Em.

OLIVIA plants a kiss on EMMA's forehead.

Love you.

OLIVIA stands up and exits the room, closing the door gently. She walks to the kitchen and takes a seat next to CHARLIE. The voices in the bedroom have softened.

CHARLIE

Sibling bonding. They need time.

OLIVIA

Understood.

CHARLIE

He's a good person.

OLIVIA

I know.

CHARLIE

It wasn't his fault. But when I see him I'm mad. I'm just so mad. I see my sister. And then I see Faith. She was so young. And then I get even madder.

OLIVIA

We all process grief differently.

CHARLIE

What are you, a therapist?

OLIVIA

Yes.

CHARLIE

Oh. (a pause) You should know that I'm trying to be more empathetic but I just don't think I'm helping.

OLIVIA

You've done well. You found him.

CHARLIE

But then look what happened.

OLIVIA

We don't know what's in his head. He's been through a lot.

CHARLIE

I know. Hopefully he'll pull through.

OLIVIA

Hopefully.

The guest bedroom door opens. APRIL walks out.

Hi.

APRIL

Hi.

OLIVIA

Everything okay in there?

APRIL

For now.

OLIVIA

Can I talk to him?

APRIL

I don't know if he'll have anything else to say.

CHARLIE

He'll be happy to see her.

APRIL

Just take it easy. He's ... saying a lot of things right now.

OLIVIA

Okay.

OLIVIA gets up and opens the door. The room has been cleared of the broken chair and DAMIEN is sitting on the floor, against the bed, eyes glazed, no expression.

Hey.

No response.

I'm glad to see you're okay.

OLIVIA takes a seat next to DAMIEN.

You have friends that love you. And they won't let you go without a fight.

Still no response.

Hey. You hear me?

DAMIEN

Why do you care so much about me?

OLIVIA

Why shouldn't we? You're our roommate. We care about you. We want you to be happy.

DAMIEN

Well, maybe I don't want to be happy. Maybe I don't want someone telling me all the fucking time that I should be happy. Maybe I just want peace and quiet. (a long pause) I don't deserve to be happy. I couldn't save my own wife and daughter. I don't deserve to live.

OLIVIA

You deserve to live.

DAMIEN

I don't.

OLIVIA

Everyone deserves to live, to be happy...

DAMIEN

Don't tell me what I deserve!

DAMIEN inhales and exhales slowly.

I told you before. I just want peace. I want people to listen and not ask questions and tell me how to feel. I want them to listen.

DAMIEN's hands are shaking.

It's all just a cruel joke anyway. Here's your daughter, a literal angel from heaven, but you can only have her for a few days. She was my little angel. Zoe loved her so much. (a long pause) We were eager to get out of the hospital after being there for so long. The taxi arrived. We barely made it out of the parking lot when it hit us. A truck. I was the only survivor. How? How is that possible? How did I survive 5 flips and walk away with just a bruise? How did the driver not see the truck?

OLIVIA says nothing. She only listens.

I haven't been a good person. I deserve to die alone, so I left. I left it behind. And here (a scoff) it turns out I can't even fucking kill myself.

OLIVIA

April and Charlie need you. They are hurting too.

DAMIEN

They can't stand the sight of me.

OLIVIA

We're all here for you, Damien, you know that.

DAMIEN

Then leave me alone. It's what I want from you now.

OLIVIA

Damien...

DAMIEN

I don't need your therapy, Olivia. I told you that I need space.

OLIVIA

Okay.

OLIVIA stands up. She walks to the door.

Fine. If you want things this way, then we'll leave you alone.

DAMIEN

Thank you.

Act II, Scene 5: INTERLUDE, PART I

Morning has risen. OLIVIA is sprawled on the bed, restless. EMMA is drying her hair.

OLIVIA

Em?

EMMA (V.O.)

What?

OLIVIA

You still mad?

EMMA (V.O.)

About what?

OLIVIA

Before all this happened. Remember?

The dryer turns off. EMMA walks out of the bathroom.

EMMA

Sheila understands. But look, it doesn't matter. We should care for Damien.

OLIVIA

It does matter, though. You're right, I shouldn't have put everything on you during that time.

EMMA

Yeah, and Eileen is yours and Raul's kid, not mine.

OLIVIA

But she likes you more than me and Raul. She actually calls you.

EMMA

Eh, sure.

OLIVIA

Though I did finally call her instead. We got everything settled.

EMMA

Good. Did you tell her about any of this?

OLIVIA

No.

EMMA

Probably for the best.

OLIVIA

Listen, I'm sorry. It's been a rough few days, I know. But I'm going to take it easy now, since April and Charlie are here. And that way, I can work on us.

EMMA

So you won't boss anyone anymore?

OLIVIA

That's my goal.

EMMA

I guess I'll try to be more compassionate or something.

EMMA takes a seat next to OLIVIA and lies down.

Life really was easier when you were staring at code.

OLIVIA

Or ordering interns around. But, in the meantime, remember that everything happening here is a private matter. He'll need some time.

EMMA

It's not shameful, Liv. We have to get him back on his feet. You know, be there for him and all that shit.

OLIVIA

Right, but it's still private, okay? Let's just take it easy for now.

OLIVIA sits up.

I'll make some tea.

EMMA

Coffee, please. I'm just going to close my eyes for a bit.

OLIVIA

Yeah, sure.

OLIVIA stands up and stretches. She leaves the room and enters the living room, where blankets are strewn about. CHARLIE is on his phone, browsing quietly.

OLIVIA

Morning.

CHARLIE

Morning.

OLIVIA

How did you sleep?

CHARLIE

Not great.

CHARLIE puts down his phone.

Honestly, I haven't slept well since then.

OLIVIA

Sorry.

CHARLIE

How about you?

OLIVIA

I slept okay. How's the couch?

CHARLIE

Better than what Zoe and I slept on growing up.

OLIVIA

That's good.

CHARLIE

Thanks for letting us stay.

OLIVIA

Of course.

CHARLIE

April stayed in his room. He probably needed the company.

OLIVIA

Have you and Damien spoken any more?

CHARLIE

I tried but I couldn't. It makes me feel sick.

OLIVIA

It'll get easier.

CHARLIE

I hope so.

OLIVIA

I'm making tea and coffee. Want anything?

CHARLIE

Coffee sounds great.

OLIVIA

Coming right up.

OLIVIA walks into the kitchen. APRIL is there, preparing breakfast.

There is a pot of coffee brewing and hot water already boiled.

Good morning.

APRIL

I hope you don't mind. I just figured everyone needed a pick me up.

OLIVIA

That's nice of you. How's Damien?

APRIL

He's doing okay.

OLIVIA

How is he feeling?

APRIL

I don't know. I suppose how you would feel after trying to hang yourself.

OLIVIA

Yeah.

APRIL

Come on, Olivia. That's like asking someone how they feel after they've been knocked out by a punch. Sort of shitty, right?

OLIVIA

Right.

APRIL

Well, shit. (a pause) I almost lost a sibling, all right?

OLIVIA

I know.

APRIL

I'm trying my best to protect him. He's already been through so much loss and I just ... I have him here, finally, after looking for so long and worrying everyday. But I have to carry some of that burden. My parents don't care. It's just me.

OLIVIA

He's lucky to have you.

APRIL

You tell him that.

EMMA appears from the living room.

Good morning.

EMMA

Hi. Did you do all this?

APRIL

Yeah.

EMMA

We picked the wrong sibling. We could've used you around the house.

OLIVIA

Em!

EMMA

You know I'm right. Can I grab some coffee?

APRIL

Go ahead.

EMMA

Thanks.

EMMA pours herself a cup.

How's Damien?

APRIL

He's fine.

EMMA

Can I see him?

APRIL

No. (a pause) Uh, no, I think he wants to be by himself for now.

OLIVIA

We can talk later, Em.

EMMA

All right, fine. I get it.

APRIL

He's sleeping, anyway.

EMMA

Yeah.

EMMA slurps her coffee loudly.

I'll be in the living room. Olivia?

OLIVIA

I'll be there. (to April) You sure you don't need any help or anything?

APRIL

APRIL picks up a plate of food.

We'll be fine.

Act II, Scene 6: SORRY

The guest bedroom lights go up. The other parts of the stage go dark.

APRIL walks in and sits down next to DAMIEN, who's sitting on the floor, on his laptop. She offers the plate of food.

APRIL

You have to eat something.

DAMIEN

Later.

APRIL

I don't understand how you can just go right back to work.

APRIL places the food next to him.

DAMIEN

Distraction.

APRIL

You know... Mom really misses you. She wants you home.

DAMIEN

I thought she would be mad that I left.

APRIL

Why would she be mad?

DAMIEN

She's always mad.

APRIL

I don't think you understand how much people love you. She was heartbroken for you. Everyone was.

DAMIEN

Except Charlie.

APRIL

He cares about you. He found you, remember?

DAMIEN

Just so he could yell at me.

APRIL

Damien, you left when he was grieving his sister and that wasn't a good look, all right? Now will you just freaking eat something?

DAMIEN closes the lid on his laptop and sets it aside. He picks up the plate and eats some eggs.

DAMIEN

It's good.

APRIL

You know, when you didn't pick up the phone after the accident, we assumed the worst.

DAMIEN

Not this again. You sound like Mom now.

APRIL

And when you didn't show up at the funeral...

DAMIEN slams the plate down onto the floor, spilling food everywhere.

There's a silence. APRIL is crying now, ugly tears. She starts to pick up the scraps slowly and places them onto the plate while DAMIEN is shaking.

I'm sorry.

DAMIEN

Do you know why I left? Because I was so sick and tired of hearing I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Well, you know what? I'm sorry too. I'm sorry that my loss caused so much pain to you. And to everyone else. I'm sorry that I lived and no one else did in that car. And most of all, I'm sorry... (a long pause) I'm sorry that I wasn't at my family's funeral because I am a selfish human being and that's why I tried to kill myself.

APRIL

You're not...

DAMIEN

And you know what? I thought about it. I thought about it when I walked out of that wreckage and I barely had a bruise. But I thought I just needed time. Time heals all, right? I wanted peace. I needed to be away.

APRIL says nothing. There's a tense silence.

It was fine until you showed up and it was like a bad memory washing back. But this time it was different. I saw the sadness and disappointment in your face. It was palpable. I couldn't live with myself.

APRIL

I wasn't sad. I missed you.

DAMIEN

When you left, I jumped into the river. It was cold. But ... I lived. I washed up onto the rocks, wet and freezing. And I slept in the woods. I wanted to die but I couldn't. I dreamt of Zoe and Faith. They were sleeping right next to me. But then I woke up and I was shivering. I decided that I needed to come back here and finish it.

APRIL

Why?

DAMIEN

I needed someone to see it. Someone I knew. Maybe I wanted to be saved.

APRIL

Damien, why didn't you talk to me?

DAMIEN

I don't know.

APRIL

I shouldn't have blamed you. None of this was your fault.

DAMIEN

DAMIEN closes his eyes. After a pause:

Let me help you with this mess.

APRIL

Don't worry about it. Hey. We all love you. You know that?

DAMIEN

I know.

APRIL

I'm serious. Don't forget that.

DAMIEN

I know, April.

APRIL

Just don't scare me like that again.

Act II, Scene 7: TEA, PART II

EMMA and OLIVIA are sitting in the living room, drinking tea with JAMA.

JAMA

So how's the mysterious roommate doing?

OLIVIA

Damien?

JAMA

You only have one roommate, Liv.

OLIVIA

He's fine.

JAMA

Did you find out who that Charlie guy was?

EMMA

He was family.

JAMA

Well, that wasn't so exciting at all. Not a drug dealer after all.

OLIVIA

Quite boring, really.

JAMA

Is he home?

OLIVIA

He's at the doctor.

JAMA

Ah.

An awkward silence.

So how's the clinic?

OLIVIA

The usual.

EMMA

Tell her about that one patient.

OLIVIA

Who are you talking about?

EMMA

The one that tried to kill himself.

JAMA

Are you sure you can tell me?

OLIVIA

I think she's mistaken, right Emma? I never talked about that and I wouldn't be allowed to.

EMMA

Then why do I remember you telling me?

OLIVIA

OLIVIA sets down her tea with a loud clank.

Can I talk to you in the room?

EMMA

Why?

OLIVIA

You know why.

JAMA

Maybe we should all move on. Let's talk about...

EMMA

What's the point of not telling her, Liv?

OLIVIA

It's private.

EMMA

To JAMA:

Damien tried to kill himself last week and he's at a therapist right now.

OLIVIA

Em!

JAMA

Shit. Is he okay?

OLIVIA

That's between us and him.

EMMA

I don't care. (a pause) I saw his eyes. He needs help and what's the point of dancing around the subject?

OLIVIA

And he's getting help. But wrong time, wrong place. You know that.

EMMA

Excuse me.

EMMA stands up and sets her tea down. She leaves the living room and disappears into the master bedroom.

OLIVIA

She's so callous sometimes.

JAMA

Is he okay? Damien.

OLIVIA

I hope so.

JAMA

She seems pretty shook up about it, huh?

OLIVIA

She cut him down. From the rope.

JAMA

Oh jeez.

OLIVIA

His sister came and calmed him down. Last week was a lot.

JAMA

How is she feeling?

OLIVIA

There are good and bad days.

JAMA

That must be tough. First her mom, now this.

OLIVIA

Yeah.

JAMA

How about you? How are you doing?

OLIVIA

Trying to keep it together.

JAMA

You can't smother them. I know you have a big heart, Olivia, but everyone needs space now.

OLIVIA

Emma is the one trying to help. She set up the appointment today.

JAMA

But still. I know you, Olivia.

OLIVIA

I'm trying. Shit, I didn't want to tell you about this.

JAMA

Emma needed to get it off her chest. It's fine, dear.

OLIVIA

It was wrong. Very unprofessional.

JAMA

It's fine, Olivia. Really. So, what happens next? With Damien.

OLIVIA

April, his sister, and Charlie, they want to take him back to New York.

Paperwork, documents, all that stuff he didn't do. But he won't go. I keep telling him he has to go, but...

JAMA

Liv.

OLIVIA

Shit. You're right. I have to step back.

JAMA

Isn't Eileen enough for you?

OLIVIA

You sound like Emma now.

JAMA

But she has a point. You can't let Raul do all the work.

OLIVIA

Excuse me, I take care of my daughter just fine, thank you JAMA.

JAMA

All right, all right.

OLIVIA

Sorry. I've just been overwhelmed.

JAMA

Your family. Emma. Eileen. They come first. This situation with this roommate is bad but you know what I see? I see that NBC boss, that old life, sticking out of you again. You have to slow down, dear. You'll drive yourself nuts.

OLIVIA

Yeah. I suppose you're right.

JAMA

Of course I'm right.

OLIVIA

Now what?

JAMA

Don't do anything. Just breathe.

Act II, Scene 8: THE SHELF

DAMIEN is organizing his things in the guest bedroom. EMMA knocks on the door.

EMMA

Hey. You all right?

DAMIEN

Yeah. What's up?

EMMA

Just checking in on our roommate.

DAMIEN

Okay. I'm organizing some things right now.

EMMA

Need any help?

DAMIEN

No thanks.

EMMA

All right.

DAMIEN continues to sort things aimlessly.

So, haven't seen your sister or Charlie in a while.

DAMIEN

My sister calls me every day.

EMMA

Oh, good, good.

DAMIEN

She won't leave me alone.

EMMA

She cares.

DAMIEN

It's been 2 fucking weeks.

DAMIEN closes his eyes and grasps the book he's holding tightly.

I'm sorry. I know you care, too. But they're driving me crazy. It's like April doesn't remember why I left in the first place. I don't need people offering help everywhere all the time.

EMMA

Yeah, yeah, I understand.

DAMIEN

It's fine. You don't have to pretend.

EMMA

I'm not pretending. The same thing happened to my mom. People wouldn't stop trying to help her after the first attempt. She got sick of it, so she tried again and succeeded. (a pause) Sorry to be a bummer.

DAMIEN

It's fine. I'm sorry.

EMMA

Thing is, I don't think we tried hard enough to reach her. And I'm not going to let it happen again. You got it?

DAMIEN

Thank you.

EMMA

Okay. I'll be painting in my room.

EMMA walks back to the master bedroom. Some time passes as DAMIEN organizes and EMMA paints. DAMIEN begins to rearrange some things on the

shelf, the same one with the loose screw from earlier, but it starts to become wobbly. DAMIEN grabs the bottom of the shelf just as it is about to collapse onto the floor. It's heavy.

DAMIEN

Shit. Hey Emma, I need your help!

EMMA

EMMA gets up from her seat. She yells:

What's up?

DAMIEN

Can you bring that tool over? The shelf is coming loose.

EMMA

I told you that you should've kept it. Hold on.

DAMIEN

Can you just hurry please? I'm holding on and I don't want all this stuff to drop.

EMMA pulls the pliers from her desk drawers. She briskly walks over to the guest bedroom with the tool.

EMMA

I can't believe that it's still ...

DAMIEN

Shit!

The shelf drops and swings to one side while everything on top falls to the floor, along with the hinge and its loose screw.

EMMA

Should've kept the tool.

DAMIEN sits down on the floor, picking up his things.

Let me help.

DAMIEN stops moving.

Damien?

DAMIEN

Shit. Shit shit shit shit.

DAMIEN tosses his things everywhere.

EMMA

What is it?

DAMIEN

I can't find my picture of Zoe.

EMMA

Let me help.

DAMIEN

No.

EMMA

Come on, let's look together.

DAMIEN

No!

A silence.

It was right here. Right here.

DAMIEN sifts through the things.

Or did I not bring it? Have you seen it? It was a picture of her in this yellow dress.

EMMA doesn't reply.

Shit. I brought it. Right?

EMMA

I don't know.

DAMIEN

Oh no.

DAMIEN freezes again. This time some tears begin to fall.

EMMA

Are you all right?

DAMIEN says nothing.

I'm sure it's here somewhere.

DAMIEN

I went home after the accident and I packed my bags. I only took that photo.

And now it's gone. It's gone. I can't hold on to even that. (a pause) Why me?

Why was it me that survived? Why not Faith or Zoe?

EMMA

You can't think like that. You'll go crazy. It's not fair to you.

DAMIEN

It isn't fair to them. They were angels. But they're dead and here I am running away from people who care about me and dodging my responsibility and not attending their fucking funerals because I'm a coward and have no shame and they definitely chose the wrong person to live and ...

DAMIEN begins to hyperventilate.

I didn't want any of this.

EMMA

Hey, hey.

EMMA massages DAMIEN's shoulders.

You're all right, man.

DAMIEN

DAMIEN's breathing slows.

I didn't want this.

EMMA

The accident wasn't your fault. None of this was your fault. Okay?

DAMIEN

I know.

EMMA

No, I really don't think you do. That's why you ran away. That's why you think you should've died. But the accident was not your fault. It's that shit up there, man. It's not up to you. But you know what is up to you?

DAMIEN

My family.

EMMA

Your friends, all of them. You had an obligation. A responsibility.

DAMIEN

I can't keep leaving people behind.

EMMA

They missed you.

DAMIEN

But it's too late now.

EMMA

It's not too late. You can go back to New York. Try again. And remember that the accident wasn't your fault. You lived. And you can move on.

DAMIEN

I ... Emma, where is this all coming from?

EMMA

When my mom died, something happened. I felt like you, as though it was somehow my fault. No one told me it wasn't. I had to realize that myself. And I had to take those next steps forward alone.

EMMA closes her eyes. She takes a breath.

Now look, can we find this photo so you can move on?

DAMIEN

Yeah.

EMMA and DAMIEN search the floor. Within a minute, Emma finds the photo.

EMMA

Wow. Your wife was very pretty.

DAMIEN

Did you find it?

DAMIEN grabs the photo quickly.

EMMA

You're welcome.

DAMIEN

Oh, thank you, thank you.

DAMIEN hugs EMMA. They hold an embrace for a few seconds.

EMMA

You're welcome. Let me help you with this shelf now.

The front door opens. OLIVIA walks in.

OLIVIA

Hey all.

EMMA

In here, Liv.

OLIVIA walks to the guest bedroom.

OLIVIA

What happened here?

DAMIEN

The shelf fell.

OLIVIA

I can help with that. (a pause) Actually, can you two handle it?

EMMA

We're fixing it. Right, Damien?

DAMIEN

Working on it.

Act II, Scene 9: INTERLUDE, PART II

In the kitchen, CHARLIE is sitting by himself. The guest bedroom door opens. APRIL walks out.

CHARLIE

Well?

APRIL

He's ready to go back.

CHARLIE

Is this for real?

APRIL

I hope so.

CHARLIE

Is he just going to disappear again? We can't keep doing this.

APRIL

He seems different.

CHARLIE

I don't know. Are you sure?

The door opens. DAMIEN walks out.

DAMIEN

I'm sure.

CHARLIE

You better be serious.

DAMIEN

I am.

CHARLIE

Don't go running off and doing any stupid shit again.

APRIL

Cool it, Charlie, okay? He's been through a lot.

CHARLIE

We've all been through a lot.

DAMIEN

I'll be there. For everyone. I promise.

APRIL

See? That means something.

CHARLIE

I hope so. We'll come pick you up tomorrow then.

DAMIEN

I'm already packed. We can leave now.

CHARLIE

Slow down, kid. Tomorrow morning.

APRIL

Double check everything, all right?

DAMIEN

Okay.

APRIL

You'll be fine?

CHARLIE

April. He can take care of himself.

DAMIEN

I'll be fine, sis.

CHARLIE

Let's go. 9AM sharp tomorrow.

APRIL

Don't oversleep.

APRIL hugs DAMIEN. CHARLIE waits impatiently. APRIL and CHARLIE then head for the door. EMMA and OLIVIA walk out of the master bedroom.

OLIVIA

How did it go?

CHARLIE

We'll come back tomorrow to pick him up. We're going back to the city.

EMMA

Good. Is he doing okay?

APRIL

He's fine. He's ... different now.

EMMA

More peaceful?

APRIL

Yeah. Maybe.

EMMA

That's good.

APRIL

But keep an eye on him still. Please.

OLIVIA

Don't worry. We'll be here.

CHARLIE

Good night.

Everyone exchanges good nights and APRIL and CHARLIE leave. DAMIEN has gone back into the guest bedroom and shut the door halfway. EMMA and OLIVIA enter the master bedroom and get back into bed.

OLIVIA

You know, I think Damien has been our shortest guest.

EMMA

Really?

OLIVIA

It's been only 6 weeks. I think Edgar was here for 2 months.

EMMA

Damien's tenure has definitely not been uneventful.

OLIVIA

You think he'll be fine?

EMMA

I think he'll be fine. It'll take time.

EMMA cozies up next to OLIVIA.

It always does.

The guest bedroom door opens. DAMIEN walks out. He strolls around the kitchen in the darkness. He wanders into the living room and paces around the chairs. He takes a seat. A deep breath. He stares up at the ceiling.

Act II, Scene 10: DAMIEN, PART II

EMMA walks out of the bathroom in her robes and slippers, drying her hair with a towel. She peeks out the window blinds.

EMMA

Liv, they're here.

OLIVIA walks out of the bathroom immediately,

OLIVIA

Come on, get dressed. I'll check on Damien.

EMMA goes to the master bedroom to get dressed. OLIVIA walks to the guest bedroom and knocks on the door.

OLIVIA

Damien?

No response.

Damien? Are you ready to go?

No response again.

Come on, this isn't...

DAMIEN (V.O.)

Hold on.

OLIVIA

Eileen used to do the same thing. Play tricks on me to make me worry.

The door opens. DAMIEN is dressed and is carrying his bags.

DAMIEN

I wasn't playing any tricks. Sorry. I didn't mean to make you worry.

OLIVIA

Oh, it's fine. It's just me.

DAMIEN

Eileen is your daughter?

OLIVIA

Yes. From another part of my life.

DAMIEN

Emma mentioned her once.

OLIVIA

Yeah, she's a handful. Eileen, I mean.

DAMIEN

You must love her very much.

OLIVIA

Yes. Yes, I do. I'm not a good mother though. But Emma helps.

DAMIEN

You two are good together.

OLIVIA

Thanks, Damien.

DAMIEN

So are we ready to go?

OLIVIA

I think so.

EMMA walks out of the master bedroom.

Em? Can you get the door?

EMMA

Got it.

EMMA opens the door and APRIL and CHARLIE walk in. They look ready to go.

APRIL

Are you ready, Damien?

DAMIEN

I think so.

APRIL walks over to get his bags but DAMIEN refuses.

I'll get them.

APRIL and CHARLIE walk back out the door while DAMIEN approaches the front door, bags in hand. EMMA and OLIVIA stand next to the door. EMMA looks cool and calm while OLIVIA looks ready to burst into tears.

OLIVIA

Good luck, Damien. We'll miss you.

OLIVIA hugs DAMIEN.

DAMIEN

Thanks. I'll miss you too.

EMMA

You'll be fine, kid. Keep your head up.

DAMIEN hugs EMMA, who seems surprised.

DAMIEN

Bye.

DAMIEN walks out the door. The car turns over and leaves the driveway.

EMMA and OLIVIA stand in the hallway for a second before EMMA returns to the master bedroom, picking up her brush. OLIVIA gets her coat and kisses EMMA goodbye.

EMMA

I'll miss that kid. I don't know why.

OLIVIA

I know he'll be fine.

OLIVIA walks out the door. The lights dim until it's just EMMA painting. This time we see what she is painting. It's a woman. It looks just like her. It's her mother.

THE END