

Jib

book by

Michael McQuilken

lyrics & music by

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contact:

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CAST & BAND

Actor/singer:

1 JIB female/25 through 35/second-hand clothes

Actors:

2 MARRIS female/late 30s/a single parent and columnist/Angie's mom
BETHANY female/30s/a go-go shaman
also plays VIK & DEENA

3 ANGIE female/15 through 19/a teenage guardian angel
JANET female/late 20s/no-nonsense E.M.T. leadership
TELE female/20s/a joyful apparition

4 WYATT male/40s/eternal contentment
DEREK male/40s-50s/Marris's nervous boss
BARBER male/40s/a lecher and a psychiatrist
also plays ORDERLY, GUARD, & DAVE

5 TURNER male/40s-50s/an away soldier/Jib's dad
McKINNON male/40s-50s/a zen police captain
HOARDER male/40s-50s/a man with many, many belongings
also plays PRODUCER, RED CARPET & TV INTERVIEW

Musicians/actors:

6 BEN male/31/an undiscovered composer/wealthily born
SUN male/30s/the bass player in Jib's band

7 GARY male/late 20s through 30s/Jib's guitarist or key player and partner

8 FYE male/30s/Jib's drummer

* additional voices recorded

NOTES

SYMBOLS:

A slash / when the subsequent line or action begins.

Multiple slashes ///// for static, radio interference, electrical malfunction.

[Brackets] for unspoken language.

SIMULTANEITY:

Simultaneous scenes in different locations are shown

(With stage directions in.....)

(three different.....)

(Regions of the page.)

When dialogue jumps between locations, a dashed bar is used:

JIB

I can't do this.

BEN

You can do this.

FOLEY:

Whenever possible, hand props are invisible: mimed with accompanying live foley, generated by the musicians & offstage actors. Suggestions for moments of foley are indicated with an asterisk (*).

overture

*(A small stage in a dive bar.
Stark down-light. A microphone.
JIB steps up to play — she takes in
the crowd, looking a bit fearful.)*

*(A projected title:
JIB | 27 years old.)*

JIB

Hi.

Good to see you all again.

I'm here alone this time.

Song: IF YOU DON'T WANT TO BE ALONE

JIB

IT WAS DARK WHEN I FOUND YOU

I'LL BUILD YOU A HOUSE IN THE OAK TREE OUTSIDE
AND YOU CAN COME BACK
WHENEVER YOU'D LIKE
DON'T BE FRIGHTENED I'LL SET YOU UP RIGHT
CAUSE EVERYONE NEEDS SOMEBODY SOMETIMES

I'LL LEAVE THE LIGHT ON SO YOU KNOW I'M AT HOME
AND YOU CAN COME IN
YOU WON'T BE ALONE
DON'T BE SCARED OF THE NIGHT CAUSE I'LL FIX YOU UP RIGHT
CAUSE EVERYONE NEEDS SOMEBODY SOMETIMES
SOMETIMES

AND IF YOU FORGET HOW TO FIND YOUR WAY HOME
CALL OUT FOR ME, I WILL CARRY YOU
AND IF YOU NEED REST I'LL STAY RIGHT BY YOUR SIDE
YOU WON'T HAVE TO ASK, I WON'T LET YOU DOWN
DON'T BE SCARED OF THE NIGHT CAUSE I WON'T LEAVE YOUR SIDE
CAUSE EVERYONE NEEDS
SOMEBODY SOMETIMES
SOMETIMES

*(Lights bump out in the small
dive bar.)*

polyrhythm

∞ 1.1 ∞

*(BEN's uptown loft. 4 am.
BEN, 31, sleeps on a lavish couch
cluttered with sheet music. Rain
hits windows. A distant street
sweeper brooms asphalt. He tosses
and turns.)*

*(A weekly newspaper office. 3 a.m.
MARRIS, 38, sits at a desk
typing... then deleting... typing...
deleting...)*

*(JIB's apartment. Midnight.
JIB | 25, enters carrying a dusty
cardboard box that fills her arms
completely. She moves to a table
and slams the heavy box down as)*

*(BEN snaps upright. * Sheet
music pages scatter. He breathes
heavily. Looks around.)*

*(MARRIS hears a noise from the
back of the office, stops typing and
looks up from her computer.)*

(JIB stares at the box.)

MARRIS

Hello? ... *(continues her work)*

*(BEN calms himself, * finds a
particular page of music and takes
it over to a piano. He plays a few
chords while singing.)*

BEN

DEE DEE-DEE, DEE-DEE, DEE-DEE—No way.

(He crumples the page into a ball.)*

*(JIB pulls a pocketknife from her
boot, opens it, and moves to slice
through the box's tape.)*

BEN

What are you doing?

MARRIS

No idea.

(JIB stops mid-action, moves to a chair and sits.)

BEN

(noticing a clock, jolting)

Four! ... Jesus Christ. Fucking four o'clock in the morning.

(switching on lamps)

Two hours wasted. No more sleeping. Get it done.

(He crosses to a kitchen, yanks a glass from a cupboard and fills it at the sink.)*

(JIB rattles the pocketknife against a ring on her finger.)

*(BEN gulps. * Water from the faucet pounds the basin.)*

MARRIS

Hello?

JIB

I can't do / this.

BEN

You can do this.

MARRIS

Is somebody here?

(BEN cranks the faucet off as)*

(JIB stops rattling the knife and)

(DEREK enters the office.)

DEREK

MARRIS!

MARRIS

What the shit, dude!?! Why are / you sneaking around?

DEREK

So sorry! Headphones! I can't hear anything!
(taking the headphones from his ears) You scared the life outa me I didn't realize anyone was still—Oh please don't shut down your computer—

MARRIS

It's fine. Wasn't getting anything / done.

DEREK

I really don't want to interrupt your work. I was just passing through. Heading home.

(BEN crosses back to the couch and looks through sheet music.)

(JIB stares at the box.)

(DERREK is terrified of this conversation.)

MARRIS

So what's up, Derek? Everything groovy?

DEREK

Sure, sure ... Late one tonight!

MARRIS

/ Totally.

DEREK

Been seeing so much more of you in the wee hours!

MARRIS

Yeah, well, you know: hospital runs and whatnot—Did you need something?

DEREK

Is she ... ?

MARRIS

She's good. The same. All good. Got so many vitamins in her at this point she's gonna be a track star when she wakes up.

DEREK

Right! *(forces a laugh)* Awesome... So I, uh... I suppose you saw that... email? ... That I sent? ... To you?

MARRIS

Saw it there but I haven't gotten to it.

DEREK

Oh that's fine—No Hurry—Read it when you can.

MARRIS

I'll get to it first thing / tomorrow.

DEREK

Perfect perfect. Totally fine. Perfect. See you tomorrow! *(exits)*

(MARRIS resumes her work.)

(BEN tears up a sheet of music, finds a pencil and makes notations on a fresh sheet.)*

(DEREK reenters.)

DEREK

Actually, you know what? Maybe it's better if— since we're here—

MARRIS

So it's a bad email.

DEREK

(forces a laugh)

Ha! I uh...

I'm passing on your feature for this issue.

MARRIS

... Really.

DEREK

I ca—I'm jus—I'm not gonna run it.

(JIB rises from her seat and crosses to her kitchen.)

MARRIS

All good, Bossman. I get it.

(JIB retrieves a glass and fills it with ice from the freezer.)*

DEREK

I still have complete faith in your writing! And I know this is just really bad timing here.

(JIB opens a bottle and pours herself a drink. The ice crackles and shifts.)*

MARRIS

I've been a little distracted. I totally / get it.

DEREK

I don't mean to blame the circumstances. I think you're demonstrating some outstanding resilience considering the fact that Angie is—I mean—obviously things are tumultuous and I've totally got your back. We all do!

(BEN stabs a piece of paper with his pencil repeatedly.)*

BEN

Fuck. You. Fucking. Die. Mother. Fucker.

(JIB chews ice cubes one after the other.)*

MARRIS

Tell you what: you throw me something that isn't, at best, some insipid clone of a three-year-old Times article and I'll give you a feature worth printing in our illustrious weekly. Zat sound good?

DEREK

I'm interested in your ideas too, / Marris.

MARRIS

Yeah? Well, like you say, I'm a little preoccupied.

DEREK

I know! I'm just—I mean—Do you want to take a break for a / little while?

MARRIS

No, Derek.

DEREK

We can cover for / you.

MARRIS

I love work.

DEREK

Would you like something else for a / week or two?

MARRIS

Dude! I'm all good!

(BEN stops stabbing paper.)*

*(*JIB stops chewing ice.)*

MARRIS

... I really don't want to disrupt the whole barn.

DEREK

... Alright. I'll keep an eye out for you.

MARRIS

... Cool.

DEREK

(digging through his bag)

Here, Marris. Take this. It's half a sandwich my wife made. You seem hungry.

MARRIS

What is it?

DEREK

Turkey with this sort of chutney thing she does.

MARRIS

But I'm macrobiotic.

DEREK

Really? Since when?

MARRIS

Joking.

DEREK

...

MARRIS

I appreciate it.

DEREK

... Okay. Goodnight, Marris.

MARRIS

Night.

(DEREK exits quickly.)

(BEN returns to his kitchen as)

(MARRIS closes her laptop and gathers her things to leave and)

(JIB finishes her drink and returns to her chair.)*

(MARRIS exits.)

(Lights out in the office.)

(JIB stares at the box, rattling the pocketknife once again.)

❧ 1.2 ❧

*(The air in BEN's apartment changes. * The wind and rain outside grow more intense, the street sweeper is closer.)*

(At the sink once again, BEN fills his glass, gulps water, pops a few pills from a plastic bottle, gulps again, sets his glass down and heads back toward the couch.)*

(The kitchen sink faucet begins to drip as—)*

(JIB stops rattling her knife.)

(Drip... drip... drip... BEN turns back toward the kitchen. A light above the sink flickers and makes * bizarre electrical noise....)*

*(BEN clomps back to the sink and * cranks the faucet off. The drips stop. He heads back toward the couch.)*

(The faucet begins to drip again. The light above the sink flickers. BEN turns back once more, glowering.)*

(Pause.)

(JIB's cell phone rings.)*

BEN

Whatever.

(BEN heads back to the couch.)

(The rain, the wind, the electrical noise, and the dripping faucet combine into an unfamiliar music. This music underscores the action happening in all locations.)*

(Lights up on a hospital room.)

(ANGIE, 16, sleeps in a bed flanked by IVs. She wears headphones. A heart monitor beeps, adding to the underscore as)

(JIB picks up her cell and)*

(BEN scribbles notations on a fresh page.)*

JIB

Hi, Gary. What's up?

GARY'S VOICE

You back safe?

JIB

Yeah.

GARY'S VOICE

You got it okay?

(MARRIS enters the hospital room.)

GARY'S VOICE

Jib? You get the box?

JIB

Yeah.

(MARRIS removes the headphones from ANGIE's ears and kisses her face.)

GARY'S VOICE

You don't want to talk.

JIB

No, I do.

MARRIS

Good record, huh kid.

GARY'S VOICE

Sounds like you don't want to talk.

JIB

I picked up, didn't I?

MARRIS

It's a real bummer you're sleeping through all the hubbub. You'd love it. Her face is everywhere.

JIB

Sorry.

GARY'S VOICE

The box can wait till tomorrow.

JIB

No—gotta be tonight.

GARY'S VOICE

But if it's making you crazy—

JIB

Been too long already. And fuck off—This has been building up since I was nine. My crazy is justified.

GARY'S VOICE

... I just wanna celebrate with you tonight, baby, that's all.

JIB

It'll be over by tomorrow. We'll do my birthday a day late, no biggie.

*(MARRIS arranges locks of
ANGIE's hair and adjusts the
unmoved bedclothes.)*

JIB

We'll get brunch.

GARY'S VOICE

I'll make you brunch.

JIB

Oh yeah? What's for brunch?

GARY'S VOICE

So many things.

JIB

Yeah? Like a smorgasbord?

GARY'S VOICE

Exactly like that.

JIB

I don't know if I can eat a whole smorgasbord.

GARY'S VOICE

We'll have leftovers.

JIB

You know how I get with leftovers.

GARY'S VOICE

That's why I'm gonna organize them in labeled bags.

JIB

(laughs)

(Beat.)

JIB

Tomorrow then. Brunch time.

GARY'S VOICE

... Okay.

MARRIS

I know love the loud stuff but I gotta say, I'm super into that lullaby track.

JIB

Thanks again for my birthday present. / It's beautiful.

MARRIS

It's beautiful.

GARY'S VOICE

'Course. Tradition.

JIB

What tradition?

MARRIS

Her dad used to sing it to her.

GARY'S VOICE

The 'you turn twenty-five, you get a ukulele' tradition.

JIB

Oh right.

MARRIS

I heard an interview.

GARY'S VOICE

I mean, I appreciate you acting all surprised and everything. You didn't have to do that.

JIB

Hold on a sec. *(she retrieves a ukulele from its case)*
I wrote you a song.

GARY'S VOICE

No way.

JIB

Way way.

MARRIS

Maybe I can sing it to you.

JIB

What was C again?

GARY'S VOICE

Third fret, bottom string.

(JIB strums a C chord.)

MARRIS

(sings in tune with the uke)

GOOD NIGHT, MY GIRL...

JIB

Awesome. And then G is like...

(JIB strums a G chord.)

MARRIS

Now I'm forgetting the lyrics.

JIB

No. Not that.

GARY'S VOICE

Half step down.

JIB

Huh?

GARY'S VOICE

One fret down.

JIB

... Oh, there it is. Can you hear this? (*sings*) G G
G G G G G G... C C C C C C C...

(BEN stops notating and puts
his pencil down.)*

*(MARRIS takes up a nearby CD
case and looks through the liner
notes.)*

GARY'S VOICE

Good lyrics, baby.

JIB

Shut up. You ready?

GARY'S VOICE

Yes.

JIB

Okay. Shut up. I'm gonna play it now.

(The dripping faucet, wind, and
rain have fallen into a clearly
defined rhythm.)*

*(JIB strums the ukulele in time
with this rhythm.)*

Song: WHAT'S INSIDE THE SONG/GOODNIGHT

JIB

THANK YOU GARY, FOR THE UKULELE —
WRAPPED UP ALL PRETTY AND BROUGHT
OVER UNEXPECTEDLY YESTERDAY

I'VE ONLY PICKED IT UP A COUPLE TIMES
BUT YOU CAN SEE ALREADY HOW EXPERTLY I
PLAY
IY

I'VE ONLY FIGURED OUT
THESE TWO CHORDS
AND AS FAR AS I CAN TELL THEY DON'T WORK
WITH ANY OTHER SONGS
(EXCEPT FOR THIS ONE, THAT I'M JUST
MAKING UP, BUT HEY, I THINK IT'S PRETTY
GOOD CONSIDERING IT DIDN'T EXIST 30
SECONDS AGO, AND REALISTICALLY, I CAN'T
REALLY PLAY IT WRONG)

*(BEN crosses to his piano and
sits.)*

MAKING UP A SONG ISN'T TOTALLY UNLIKE
UNWRAPPING A PRESENT
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'LL FIND
YOU'VE JUST GOT TO CUT A FEW STRINGS
RIP THROUGH THE PAPER
OPEN IT UP AND TAKE A LOOK INSIDE

(OF THE SONG, I MEAN. NOT THE PRESENT.
OR WELL, TECHNICALLY I GUESS IT'S BOTH.
IT'S A METAPHOR.)

NOW WE ROCK THE CHORUS.

*(BEN unknowingly accompanies
JIB and GARY on the piano. He
too falls perfectly in time with the
rhythm, though his line is more
ornamented and irregular...)*

WHAT'S INSIDE THE SONG?
INSIDE THE SONG?
INSIDE THERE?
WHAT'S INSIDE THIS SONG? (repeat)

It's kinda like Schroedinger's cat.

GARY'S VOICE

What's who?

*(JIB speaks while continuing to play
the ukulele in time.)*

JIB

You don't know about this? It's a cat in a box,
and it's this paradoxical brain game.

GARY'S VOICE

Never heard of it.

JIB

Ok, so like the cat is like, theoretically, both
dead and alive until you open the box and look
at it to find out. Something about quantum
physics and radioactivity. But actually I feel like
it can apply to a bunch of things. Like, there
are a lot of situations where you just don't
know what's going on from the outside. And
it's dangerous to jump to conclusions, when a
cat's life is at stake.

Probably there are boxes we just shouldn't
open. Where you're pretty sure that the thing
in there is dead, but you're not quite ready to
actually see that. Not to mention, like what if
the act of looking totally changes the thing?
I mean, like, what if the cat was fine, but then it
got scared when it heard you opening the box,
and it died of a heart attack?

GARY'S VOICE

That's messed up.

JIB

Right? I mean, that's fucking scary. And maybe
a song can be like that. Like, maybe someone
could hear this song and then just decide to kill
somebody. I think that could totally happen. It
must have happened.

But, Baby, you're not going to kill somebody
now because of this song, are you?

GARY'S VOICE

I'm not sure yet.

JIB

It's a lot of responsibility—making up songs—
it's dangerous... Now chorus.

MARRIS

Here it is.

JIB

WHAT'S INSIDE THE SONG?
INSIDE THE SONG?
WHAT'S IN THERE?
WHAT'S INSIDE THE SONG?

Now you harmonize.

JIB & GARY

WHAT'S INSIDE THE SONG?
INSIDE THE SONG?
WHAT'S IN THERE?
WHAT'S INSIDE THE SONG?

WHAT IF I'M AFRAID TO OPEN IT
IT MIGHT TURN OUT WRONG.

WHAT'S INSIDE THE SONG?
INSIDE THE SONG?
INSIDE THE SONG?
INSIDE THE SONG?

*(BEN stops playing, slams his fists
upon the keys, and glares at the
dripping faucet.)*

BEN

No! Wrong!

*(GARY'S VOICE cuts out.
JIB stops.)*

*(BEN stomps back toward the
kitchen.)*

MARRIS

(continues to sing)

I LOVE YOU SO...

JIB

Gary? Hello?

(BEN jerks the faucet on; water
pounds the basin.)*

BEN

NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO.

JIB

Gary?

(BEN slams the faucet off. The Dripping stops.)*

(JIB hangs up and redials.)*

MARRIS

I LOVE YOU SO.

WHAT'S INSIDE THE SONG/GOODNIGHT ends

PHONE VOICE

We're sorry. The person you are trying to reach is unavailable. Please try your—

(JIB hangs up.)*

(BEN heads back towards the couch.)

*(The kitchen light flickers. * The drips return louder and faster.)*

BEN

Son of a bitch.

(JIB dials again.)*

*(BEN darts back to the kitchen, * jerks a cupboard open at his knees, and clambers inside. Pots, pans and plastic fall to the floor.)*

PHONE VOICE

We're sorry. The person you are trying to reach is unav—

(JIB hangs up, dials again.)*

(BEN emerges with an armful of cookware. He stands and slams the mess into the sink forming a dish-pile that buries the faucet with a CRASH.)*

BEN

SHUUUT! UUUUP!

(Wind and rain; no drips.)*

PHONE VOICE

We're sorry. The person you are try—

(Hangs up.)*

(A plastic dish falls from the sink
and bounces across the floor.)*

BEN

(to the dish)

Fuck you.

*(BEN heads back toward the couch
as * the dish-pile collapses with a
sudden loud CLATTER.)*

BEN

AH! AH! AH! Jesus Christ!

(BEN crosses back to his work as)

*(JIB pockets her phone, returns the
ukulele to its case, sits, and stares at
the box and)*

*(MARRIS retrieves a blanket and
a pillow and prepares to sleep in a
chair near ANGIE.)*

(The faucet begins to drip yet
again. The droplets falling upon the
newly made dish-pile create an even
faster music: cheerful and laughter-
like.)*

*(BEN is momentarily paralyzed
with fury.)*

*(Then he crosses to a shelf, retrieves
a battery-operated keyboard toy,
and flips a switch: a peppy 'Yankee
Doodle' demo plays.)*

BEN

(mashing buttons)

No. No. No. No. No. No. No.

*(The demo stops. He plays a few
frail notes.)*

BEN

Awesome.

MARRIS

Sweet dreams, Anj.

(BEN takes up a pair of large headphones, plugs them into the keyboard toy, and places them over his ears triumphantly.)

(All lights and sound drop out in BEN's apartment; this scene ends.)

(MARRIS clicks off the lights in the hospital room. ANGIE's heart monitor continues to beep...)

(JIB turns on a lamp directly over the box.)

∞ 1.3 ∞

JIB

(speaking to the box)

Hey... So... This is my place... It's a little nicer than storage, yeah?

(Beat.)

(JIB takes up the pocketknife and frees an envelope that's been taped to the side of the box.)

(She opens the envelope and pulls out a DVD in a blank case.)

(Lights up on TURNER, 40s, a soldier. He sits at a table with a microphone and a video camera.)

TURNER

(to an unheard offstage voice)

Yes... Yes... Gotcha...

(JIB takes the DVD from its case and puts it into a laptop.)

TURNER

I understand... Sure. Ready as I'm gonna be.

(TURNER pulls the lens cap from the camera before him. His image appears on a live-feed monitor as)

(TURNER's image appears on JIB's computer screen.)

TURNER

(amplified)

Do I need to be closer to the mic? Or—Not so close? ... Good? ... Okay.

Hiya, Giblet. It's Daddy.

So if you got this recording here then, uh... I guess som'm went wrong.

(Pause.)

I brought you to Grandma's today... I told you this was more training. I'm sorry I lied to you, Jib, it's just that I ... I don't want you to worry I guess.

You're so good about letting me leave now, kid, No Joke. You're the best ... You're ... I don't have big enough words for how amazing you are.

And Mommy is proud of you too, Gabby, never forget it. She's always there... And, uh... [And me too...]

(Pause. TURNER sings.)

TELL ME, RAPUNZEL,
ARE YOU HAVING FUNZEL
UP THERE IN YOUR TOWER MADE OF BRICKS?
SO MANY BRICKS!

LET ME AVENGE YOU,
DESTROYING WHAT OFFENDS YOU
WITH MY PRINCELY COLLECTION OF KICKS.
KARATE KICKS!

JIB & TURNER

OOOO, YOU MY PRINCESS!
OOOO, YOU MY GIRL!
MOSTEST PRETTIEST GIBLET
IN THE WHOLE DANG WORLD!

TURNER

RAPUNZEL!

JIB

WHAT?

TURNER

RAPUNZEL!

JIB

YEAH?

TURNER

LET DOWN YOUR LONG HAIR!

JIB

OKAY.

JIB & TURNER

I'VE KILLED THAT AWFUL WITCH,
NOW WE CAN GO TO THE FAIR!

TURNER

Wooahoo! The fair! *(laughs)* That swinging pirate ship thing! Six times in a row ... Mommy and I had to take turns.

They're sending me to///

*(Edited, the recording goes black.
The words 'Content Redacted'
appear on the screen. A counter
ticks down from 6 seconds...)*

(The recording snaps back.)

TURNER

///kay, we don't have so much, so there's not so much to talk about. I put together a very important box that someone's going to give you. The first thing you'll find in there, on top, is a brand new copy of Grimm's; the pages are falling out of Grandma's so I got you a good one that's gonna last.

Now, underneath the book you'll find some of my best music. They're called records. You're not gonna know what they are cuz I sold the player when you were six months, but these records are very important. These are the only things I have to give you that are worth anything.

TURNER (con't)

They're ... inspiration. For you. For later.

You sing like a bird, Jib, and I can tell you're gonna love music your whole life. Just like your daddy.

How many songs have we made now? Eleven? That's pretty dang good for a nine-year-old. Mozart only had three when he was nine.

Find a player and listen to these records. Later, when you're older... You're getting only my very favorites: best of the best of the best of the best of the BEST.

A good musician is the real deal. No sleight-of-hand tricks.

So they got me goin' ta—

(The recording goes black.

'Content Redacted.' *A counter ticks down from 9 seconds...)*

(The image snaps back.)

TURNER (con't)

I tell you this all the time but GO TO SCHOOL. Don't make the mistake I did—READ YOUR BOOKS. ALL OF THEM.

You'll be taken care of for college. And whatever else you need.

So, somethin' super cool about this new Grimm's — it has this unfinished story. Last one in the very back—The Golden Key. A super rare one.

Like you.

This kid goes out to get firewood and finds a key in the snow. Sparkling gold, all shiny. And then the kid finds this box right there and realizes the key fits. So she turns the key... and there inside... is... and then the story ends. And maybe that sounds like a terrible story but I think it's great, 'cause, now *you* get to decide what's in the box. You get to decide what's next.

You always get to decide what comes next, angel. And even if everything has fallen to complete and

total shit—or garbage, don't use that word...
Even in the most terrible darkness, *you* decide
what's next. And sometimes you're not gonna
know right away and that's ok ... You can leave it
unfinished until you're ready to decide what's
next. No shame in not knowing. Only shame in
pretending you know before you *actually* know.

So I uh... I suppose that's it.

I hope you never see this!

I'm sorry I...

I thought that if I could just...

I don't know what I'm sayin' here.

(Pause. Then he sings...)

Song: GOODNIGHT (reprise, brief)

GOOD NIGHT, MY GIRL
LET YOUR DREAMS TAKE YOU ALL OVER THE WORLD
FLY ANYWHERE YOU WANT TO GO
I LOVE YOU SO...

I love you, Gabrielle.

You make me brave.

Stay out of trouble.

Alrigh/// *(The recording goes black.)*

∞ 1.4 ∞

*(JIB closes her laptop, takes up the
pocketknife, and returns to the box.
She slices through heavy tape.)*

*(ANGIE gasps and jolts in her
sleep, waking MARRIS. The
hospital room is still dark.)*

MARRIS

Anj? ... Baby?

*(JIB pulls a hardback copy of
Grimm's Fairytales from the box as)*

*(The tempo of the heart monitor
increases.)*

*(MARRIS clammers to find a light
switch.)*

MARRIS

Angela. Can you hear me?

*(JIB opens the book to the title
page. Rectangular windows are cut
from a hand-written dedication
there. She reads what's left of the
message as)*

*(MARRIS turns on a bedside
light; ANGIE is sitting up, her
eyes wide open. MARRIS speaks
into an intercom.)*

MARRIS

She's waking up in 216—Angela Holly's room—
send someone now!

*(JIB slides a record out of the box,
bringing a hand to her face as)*

*(ANGIE brings a hand to her
face.)*

MARRIS

Anj, look at me... Look at me... Angela!

*(ANGIE's gaze is forward. She
doesn't see MARRIS.)*

MARRIS

(intercom)

WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU?

(JIB places the record onto a player.)

MARRIS

Wake up, goddamn it. Look at me.

*(JIB touches the needle to the record:
crackling...)*

MARRIS

(shaking ANGIE)

WAKE UP. WAKE UP. WAKE UP.

(Music from the record begins: an unfamiliar tune; frostbitten concrete dissolving into water lilies...)

(TURNER appears near JIB.)

(ANGIE lifts her arms as)

(TURNER lifts his arms.)

(ANGIE's arms form a delicate loop around an invisible body.)

(TURNER's arms encircle JIB.)

MARRIS

What is wrong with you? ... WHAT THE FUCK
IS WRONG WITH YOU?

(JIB melts into TURNER's arms.)

MARRIS

WAKE UP. WAKE UP. WAKE UP. WAKE UP.

(The music from the record fades.)

***(Lights and sound out in
JIB's apartment.)***

(ANGIE falls back to the mattress; MARRIS climbs into the bed, struggling to keep ANGIE upright.)

MARRIS

Angela wake up. Wake up, baby, come on.

(ANGIE is asleep. An ORDERLY enters unnoticed.)

MARRIS

ANGELA. Come back to me. Come back.

ORDERLY

... Mrs. Holly?

*(MARRIS gets out of the bed,
laying ANGIE back down as she
does.)*

MARRIS

She was waking up.

ORDERLY

We should let Angie sleep / for a while.

MARRIS

She was JUST. WAKING. UP.

*(MARRIS straightens the
bedclothes.)*

ORDERLY

Mrs. Holly.

MARRIS

Miss.

ORDERLY

... I'm sorry, I don't understa—

MARRIS

It's 'Miss' Holly not fucking 'Mrs.'

*(The lights begin to flicker. The
ORDERLY flips a switch off and
on again; the flickering continues.)*

ORDERLY

I apologize.

MARRIS

It's fine. I was just leaving. Thank you.

(Beat.)

ORDERLY

Miss Holly.

MARRIS

(whispering to ANGIE)

Please wake up.

ORDERLY

... Miss Holly, I have to escort you out to the
waiting room for a little while.

(MARRIS gathers her things in a hurry and exits.)

(The ORDERLY follows.)

(Lights and sound out in the hospital room.)

❧ 1.5 ❧

(A hospital waiting room. 5:28 a.m.)

(MARRIS enters led by the ORDERLY. Her cell phone is ringing.)

(The ORDERLY exits. MARRIS picks up.)

MARRIS

Hello.

DEREK'S VOICE

Marris it's Derek—you awake?

MARRIS

... Uu—

DEREK'S VOICE

I'm sorry to bother you so late but—

MARRIS

It's five thirty—

DEREK'S VOICE

I have something for you and you've got to get going on it immediately—It's for the vlog.

MARRIS

You talk too fast. I don't understand / you.

DEREK'S VOICE

It's a VERY BIZARRE BREAKER. You're right down the street. I need you there in ten minutes.

MARRIS

Did you say it's for the vlog?

DEREK'S VOICE

Yeah, Karen's / meeting you there.

MARRIS

I'm not going on camera right now, Derek.

DEREK'S VOICE

You're three blocks away—TEN MINUTES /
MARRIS!

MARRIS

DON'T FUCKING SHOUT AT ME / DEREK.

DEREK'S VOICE

I NEED YOU TO MOVE YOUR ASS!

(Beat.)

DEREK'S VOICE

Look, Marris, it's just like, I need you on this one,
ok? It's perfect for you. It's exactly what you
need.

MARRIS

... Where is it?

DEREK'S VOICE

Fourteenth and Blanchard.

MARRIS

That's seven blocks.

DEREK'S VOICE

You'll thank me later. Ten minutes—EIGHT
MINUTES NOW—

MARRIS

Shit, man, calm down—

DEREK'S VOICE

Yes, right, I know, I'm sorry but trust me, like, this
is good. It's a great platform for your whole—
y'know—your angry anti-bureaucrat thing, you'll
love it—

MARRIS

Is that my thing?

DEREK

Marris, it's... It's a much-needed distraction.

MARRIS

... Ten minutes.

DEREK'S VOICE

Seven minutes or you'll miss it completely.

MARRIS

I'm out the door right now.

DEREK'S VOICE

Six minutes—Have fun with—

(She hangs up.)

(Lights and sound out in the waiting room.)

∞ 1.6 ∞

(The site of a traffic accident, 5:37 a.m. CB radio voices, yellow caution tape, police lights.)

(JANET, an EMT, a little beat up, 30s, talks to McKINNON, a police captain, 50s. CB VOICE interrupts.)

CB VOICE

///We need you, Janet///

JANET

(to CB)

I'll be there when I can. *(to McKINNON)* The driver was very much out of his head, sir.

McKINNON

(Writing...)*

Driver... out... of... his / head.

CB VOICE

///When can we expect you?///

JANET

Could be a minute.

McKINNON

You and also... *(* flips pages)?*

JANET

Three of us with the driver. He was *very* erratic. Hitting himself. Repeating words: “I’m sorry, I’m so sorry, I’ll do what you say, forgive me, forgive me, Ben, Ben, Ben”

McKINNON

“Forgive me, Ben” pleading with “Ben,” right. So this is Ben here in the thing?

JANET

We don’t know, sir, it was mostly babada-babada-babada.

McKINNON

What? bada-bada?

JANET

Like rhythms like strange mouth rhythms—
babada-babada-babada—

McKINNON

Oh I see, bada-bada-bada, right.

(MARRIS enters elsewhere with a camerawoman, Karen. MARRIS directs her silently.)

JANET

I need to get back to my team, sir.

McKINNON

Why?

CB VOICE

///We really need an extra set of hands over here///

JANET

I’m on my way!

McKINNON

Tell ‘em to take a break! No one’s leaving! I’m telling you—the sweeper will have to be dismantled.

MARRIS

(camera-persona)

The city’s finest, at it, yet again.

JANET

Forgive me, sir, but I really think it's in everyone's best interest here if we do our job quickly and / move along.

MARRIS

(camera-persona throughout. . .)

An officer and a medic on the dirty, dirty beat—

McKINNON

You try to pull him out you'll shred him! Wait for the sweeper mechanics! Stop!

MARRIS

You saw it here first Ls and Gs.

(She moves to cross the police line.)

McKINNON

Not to mention it's five-whatever-it-is—

(to MARRIS)

Why hello—hold on—the caution tape is there for caution.

MARRIS

(presents an ID to McKINNON)

Morning, officer. If I'm not mistaken, those are human limbs jutting out from this street sweeper. Please comment.

CB VOICE

///Kelly and Sam aren't doing well, Janet. We need to finish up A.S.A—///

JANET

(to CB)

I'll be right there!

McKINNON

(to MARRIS)

Here is your ID, Miss Holly—don't touch anything. *(to JANET)* Ten minutes break!

MARRIS

(to Karen)

Zoom in—You getting this? / This bit of the leg sticking out?

McKINNON

(to MARRIS)

C'mon, behind the tape.

MARRIS

Was the victim elderly?

McKINNON

No.

MARRIS

Yet street sweepers move, I'd guess five miles and hour?

McKINNON

More like fifteen.

JANET

It's more gruesome than you realize.

McKINNON

(to MARRIS)

This one was going maybe forty-five.

MARRIS

Driver was hittin' the sauce?

CB VOICE

///Okay—There's twenty miles of cigarette butts and beer cans ground into him, Janet, we can't get a grip on the man—Get over here and help for Christ's sake///

McKINNON

(to JANET)

Tell 'em to take ten! We're gonna have to disassemble the damn thing! Christ! They called the sweeper mechanics! TEN MINUTES!

MARRIS

(to the camera)

This is Marris Holly with an extra-special / V-log clip.

JANET

(to CB)

Captain wants you all to stand down for ten minutes.

MARRIS

(another take, more upbeat)

This is Marris Holly with an extra-special V-log clip!

CB VOICE

///Great!—We'll all just stop working!—*(aside)*
Take a brea!///

MARRIS

(to camera)

The Tale of the Two-Ton Death Broom.

McKINNON

(to MARRIS)

I'm supposed to make you turn that off.

MARRIS

Turn what off?

JANET

Sir.

McKINNON

(to MARRIS)

But I don't care! Film it! Show whoever! This is all clean!

MARRIS

Your name, officer?

McKINNON

(postures for the camera)

Captain Charles McKinnon, fifteenth / precinct.
Film all you want—my boys are clean as they come!

MARRIS

They're clean / are they?

JANET

Sir.

MARRIS

The driver was evidently drunk and speeding in a city vehicle paid for with tax-dollars.

McKINNON

(to MARRIS)

He wasn't drunk! *(to JANET)* What!?

JANET

(postures for the camera)

You need to shut down the camera, ma'am.

McKINNON

Let her film! Here's your story: this driver was playin' himself like a drum set and talking to invisible people! Put that on your program! Kenny and Benny! *(walks away)*

JANET

Shut down the camera.

McKINNON

(far away)

Yeah! Kenny and Benny!

MARRIS

Kenny and Benny?

*(Lights and sound shift
around MARRIS and Karen.)*

❧ 1.7 ❧

*(A police station. 6:26 a.m. A
GUARD pouring coffee.)*

GUARD

(macho)

I don't know if the victim is Ben—He might'a been? But the sweeper driver, Kenny, fucking bonkers. Holy shit. Took six of us to get him out of the goddamn van! *(re: camera)* You can bleep this, right?

MARRIS

It's fine. Kenny?

GUARD

Well, "Kenneth," you know. Here's coffee.

MARRIS

Kenneth was a big dude?

GUARD

Big n'fuckin spirited. *(re: camera)* They said the camera was ok in here?

MARRIS

They did—it took six of you?

GUARD

Yeah!

MARRIS

Sounds like you were having some fun.

GUARD

Ma'am, if you're insinuating six was overkill, go next door and talk to the officer with the ice bag

on his junk. This asshole was completely freakin' whacko.

MARRIS

And they told me he was drumming.

GUARD

Like Kieth Goddamn Moon, lady. Pounding on, whatever, himself, everything. Dabba-dabba-bobba-dabba.

MARRIS

Wasn't he cuffed?

GUARD

Sure was! Didn't stop him though! He was kind of slapping his cheeks and the cuffs were smackin his chin—red and purple all down here and around his neck.

MARRIS

So you think he's schizophrenic or something?

GUARD

Yeah, he's definitely something! Holy shit! I'm maybe the most awake I ever been for 6:27 in the morning.

MARRIS

So who is Benny? Or Benjamin?

(A LOUD CLAMOR from another room in the station.)

GUARD

(rushing out)

Christ. KENNY, KNOCK THAT SHIT OFF!

*(We hear a rhythmic clatter from a far room: Ken Ingram pounding out music in his detainment cell with his fists, a chair, a cot, etc. MARRIS listens to the music perplexed and mesmerized.....
.....
.....
.....)*

end polyrhythm

canon

❧ 2.1 ❧

(In blackout, ALL cast members other than BEN begin to repeat: "Benjamin!" "Hello, Ben!" "Hi Ben! Where have you been?" "Oh, look, it's Benjamin!" "Good morning, Ben!" and the like...)

(The sound swirls on all sides...)

(Then FLASHLIGHTS pop on, on all sides swirling with the sound... points of light in a large dark space, scattered throughout the room...)

(Then ALL FLASHLIGHTS point at BEN, center.)

What is this? **BEN**

(The voices begin to incorporate the phrase "What is this?" as they circle the room, still pointing their flashlights on BEN, center.)

Stop! **BEN**

(The sound and lights cease abruptly.)

(Silence & darkness.)

Come back. **BEN**

(The sounds and lights burst back in.)

STOP! **BEN**

(Silence & darkness.)

*(A rattling sound begins...
Waves of aluminum cans crunching
and pounding on the ground...
becoming louder from every
direction.....)*

*(All of the rattling moves center,
closing in upon BEN in the dark.
It becomes aggressively loud.)*

BEN

No! I Don't want this! This isn't for me!

*(The rattle ends abruptly. The
actors that surround BEN now
make tiny rodent-like noises—
fiendish kissing and chewing sounds
in the blackout.....)*

*(The rodent sounds scatter from
center as flashlights illuminate
BEN center once again... The
flashlights carve spokes of light
from all directions in the now hazy
room...)*

*(We can see that crushed aluminum
cans have been tied to the bottom of
BEN's robe at the end of floor-
length strings... The sound of
rattling cans now follows BEN
whenever he moves. If he's still, he's
silent, but if he moves at all, he
reveals his presence with the sound
of the rattling cans he drags behind
him.)*

***(Lights up on a room with a
desk.)***

*(WYATT enters with a briefcase.
BEN is clearly unsure of how he
came to be in this room.)*

*(BEN watches WYATT move to
the desk, plop his briefcase upon it,
open the briefcase, and remove
several file folders, placing them
upon the desktop one-by-one in an
orderly, grid-like pattern.....)*

(Eventually WYATT is done with this task. He leaves the briefcase open, and looks over to BEN.)

BEN

Who are you?

(WYATT selects a single folder from the desktop and skillfully flicks it back into the briefcase.)

BEN

Where am I?

(WYATT flicks another folder back into the briefcase.)

BEN

Whats with the files, man?

(Another folder.)

BEN

Seriously?

(WYATT takes up another—)

BEN

Knock it off!

(WYATT freezes mid-gesture.)

BEN

I mean ... like ... will you just say something?

(WYATT replaces the folder to its previous position on the desktop, then picks up a different folder and flicks it into the briefcase.)

WYATT

Something.

BEN

Hilarious. Look, I'm not supposed to be here—I need to get back to my work!

(Another folder.)

BEN

I'm in the middle of an extremely important composition and I'm on a deadline.

*(WYATT stifles a chuckle.
Another folder.)*

BEN

What's so funny—Fuck you, man.

(Another folder.)

BEN

I will punch you in the face, asshole.

(Another folder.)

BEN

(lunging at WYATT)

Fine! Okay! If that's how we need to do this!

*(WYATT holds up his hand and
BEN is frozen mid-lunge. A
fluttering low tone is heard,
vibrating the entire
room.....)*

BEN

I'm sorry—My fault—seriously my fault.

*(One folder is now left on the
desktop. WYATT closes the
briefcase, picks it up from the desk,
gives frozen BEN a friendly pat on
the back, and exits.)*

BEN

No, no—you can't just leave me here like this!
You need to let me return to my work! I just had
a breakthrough! Finally! I think it was maybe my
first actual breakthrough. I have a serious
deadline, man! This, this, this thing this
phenomenon these rhythms in the hail storm are
my ticket, okay? I've got truly breathtaking works
on the horizon—works that need to be heard—
MY LIFE'S WORK! I mean, listen to me!—The
venue is literally seconds away from green lighting
my dates—I've got PR people, design people, I'm
talking with potential management, okay? This
hailstorm!—these intricate soundscapes from the
natural world—it's not as if average people can
comprehend the detail I'm capable of translating

BEN (con't)

here! I've trained for years—literally since I was four! I'm the product of prodigy plus twenty-seven years of focused study. I am meant to do this. I alone can deliver the majesty of nature's accidental song to the world!—A re-imagining of nature—my nature—nature organized and contained in the cast-iron fist of musical theory! I MUST. CONTINUE. MY WORK!

(Lights Out on the room with the desk. Lights Up on a room with a piano.)

(BEN is suddenly un-frozen, and, again, confused about how he came to be in this new place.)

(BETHANY is standing near the piano. She gestures for him to play for her.)

BEN

Where'd that other guy go?

(BETHANY shrugs, then gestures for him to play for her.)

BEN

... Right now?

BETHANY

(Nods enthusiastically)

BEN

I can continue working here?

BETHANY

(Nods enthusiastically)

BEN

Why can't I go home? ... Who the hell are you people? ... Can I get something to write with?

BETHANY

(Produces music paper and a pencil from thin air, then gestures for him to play)

(BEN sits before the piano and stares at the keys.....)

BEN

You just gonna watch me?

BETHANY

(Nods enthusiastically)

(This scene continues under the following...)

❧ 2.2 ❧

(JIB's apartment. Midday city sounds churn outside an open window.)

(JIB and GARY are working out a song together. He plays guitar, she has a notepad with lyrics.)

GARY

It goes verse-verse-chorus-bridge-chorus?

JIB

Yes, exactly.

GARY

That's absurd.

JIB

Why?

GARY

Because you're abandoning the verse—the verse is home—The song never goes / home.

(BEN plays a strange chord on the piano.....)

JIB

I thought the chorus was home.

GARY

The chorus is like the house and the verse is like the yard surrounding the house.

JIB

Ah. I see. So what's the bridge?

GARY

In this? Neptune.

(BEN plays another strange chord.....)

JIB

The bridge was your ideal

GARY

After a verse!—

JIB

It will work better this way, I swear to Jesus.

GARY

It's bad songwriting.

(BEN scribbles something on the paper and glowers at the onlooking BETHANY.....)

JIB

It's not bad, it's non-traditional. They're long-ass verses.

GARY

I just don't get it.

JIB

It's right for the story—she gives everything away.

GARY

Who does what?

(BEN plays another chord.....)

JIB

The girl in the story—she gives away all of her possessions.

GARY

So we're giving away the verse?

JIB

Exactly.

GARY

But she also, like, gives away her shit like three different times—the coat, then the food, then her clothes—three things—three verses. We have enough story for a third verse before the bridge.

(Another chord.....)

JIB

Your logic is stalwart as ever, my love, but can we just fucking try it this way, / please?

GARY

The Grimm's brothers would agree / with me.

JIB

I'm sure you're right—

GARY

So she gives all her shit away and then what?

JIB

The stars provide.

(Another chord.....)

GARY

... By raining down money on her.

JIB

Yes.

GARY

(leading her)

So that she can?

JIB

Can we just try?

GARY

So that she can replace her stuff! So she can buy more stuff!

JIB

What's your point?

GARY

The stuff comes back! She gets more stuff! We get home! Third verse, woman!

(Another chord.....)

JIB

I love you. Please try it this way. *(cute voice)*
Pleecease.

GARY

Oh, jesus.

JIB

I loooo / oooooove you.

GARY

Fine, fine, kiss my face and I'll play it the wrong way.

(Another chord.....)

(She does.)

(Gary begins to play.)

(BEN unconsciously outlines the chords of the song...)

Song: NAKED CASH RODEO NO. 1

VERSE 1:

JIB

TAKE IT – THIS MELODY
I DIDN'T REALLY WANT IT ANYWAY
SILENCE INSTEAD
SOUNDS BETTER ON A DAY LIKE TODAY
PLEASE SAY YOU'LL TAKE IT
YOU OBVIOUSLY NEED IT MORE THAN ME
I'LL BE JUST FINE

BEN

I don't know what this is...

(BEN repeats the opening form, adding small embellishments as the song continues...)

VERSE 2:

JIB & GARY

TAKE IT – MY COAT
PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE RAIN
MY SHIRT AND MY SHOES BELONG TO YOU
I DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO TELL YOU AGAIN

THEY'RE ALREADY YOURS, MAN
YOU OBVIOUSLY NEED THEM MORE THAN ME

JIB & GARY (con't)

P'LL BE JUST FINE

EVERYTHING WILL COME AROUND AGAIN
IN TIME

CHORUS:

LOOK ABOVE – THE STARS ARE FALLING
KISSING MY FACE WITH GOLD AND STERLING
A BRAND NEW DRESS OF THE FINEST SILK
AN IVORY CUP FULL OF HONEY AND MILK

LOOK AT ME – I'M A WHOLE NEW GIRL
JUMPING HOPSCOTCH ON THE TOP OF THE WORLD
I GAVE IT UP — THEN I STARTED WINNING
A FIST FULL OF MONEY AND A NEW BEGINNING
NOW

(BEN stops playing.)

BRIDGE:

JIB & GARY

AND I JUST WANT TO GIVE IT ALL AWAY

BEN

This is not the way I work—with you just staring
at me.

JIB

I JUST WANT TO GIVE IT ALL AWAY

BEN

Did you hear what I said?

JIB & GARY

I JUST WANT TO GIVE IT ALL AWAY

BEN

I cannot make my work if I'm not allowed my
process.

(BEN slams his fists on the keys.)

(GARY stops playing.)

GARY

It needs to go back to
A verse here, Jib—

BEN

What good is this?! What
are you trying to prove
here?!

JIB
Why did you stop?!

GARY
I'm telling you—

JIB
This defeats the whole
Purpose of trying to
run the fuckin' thing—

GARY
You just have to trust
me on / this, okay?

JIB
Play the fucking chorus!

GARY
I'm trying to help here!

JIB
Play the / chorus, Gary!

GARY
It needs a / third verse.

JIB
Play the chorus—

GARY
It needs another / verse,
Jib.

JIB
PLAY / THE FUCKING
CHORUS.

GARY
FINE. JESUS CHRIST.
YOU PSYCHO.

JIB
ONE. TWO.
BUCKLE MY SHOE.

(GARY resumes playing as)

BETHANY
(Shrugs.)

BEN
I'm telling you what I need
here, and I need you to respect
my requests. I need my own
space, in my own house, to
make my music.

I'm on a deadline!

BETHANY
(laughs)

BEN
I can't just open myself up
to the universe here and crank
out a concerto—I need
my things—I need my home
—I need my piano!

I mean, maybe you think
you're helping me out here?
But seriously.

I need my computer! I don't
compose for solo piano, I
write for ensembles of ten
or more—I use my computer
for advanced notation and for
playback—and my process is
private. I can't just share my
creative space in this way...

Fine. You want me to play?!
WHATEVER LADY.

*(BEN accompanies in a rage of
sorts.)*

JIB & GARY

LOOK ABOVE – THE STARS ARE FALLING
KISSING MY FACE WITH GOLD AND STERLING
A BRAND NEW DRESS OF THE FINEST SILK
AN IVORY CUP FULL OF HONEY AND MILK

LOOK AT ME – I’M A WHOLE NEW GIRL
JUMPING HOPSCOTCH ON THE TOP OF THE WORLD
I GAVE IT UP — AND I STARTED WINNING
A FIST FULL OF MONEY AND A NEW BEGINNING
NOW

WHO KNEW?

NAKED CASH RODEO NO. 1 ends

*(BEN holds the final chord
emphatically.)*

GARY

I still think it’s weird but it feels okay that way.

(JIB punches him hard in the arm.)

(BEN releases the held chord.)

*(BETHANY applauds with
gusto.)*

***(Lights and sound out in the
room with a piano.)***

***(Lights and sound out in
JIB’s apartment.)***

∞ 2.3 ∞

*(City streets. Midday.
Construction, people, traffic.)*

*(MARRIS' cell phone rings; she
answers with extreme reluctance.)*

MARRIS

Hi. I can't really talk right now Derek.

DEREK'S VOICE

Catch you at a ba////ime?

MARRIS

What?

DEREK'S VOICE

Did////atch yo////a bad time?

MARRIS

Yes, I'm rushing to catch a train.

DEREK'S VOICE

You////nal is weir////find Kenneth?

MARRIS

Did I find Kenny?

DEREK'S VOICE

Yeah, you f////him?

MARRIS

Yes, I found Kenny but I don't want to talk on the phone—signal is bad.

DEREK'S VOICE

They transf////red him! Outs////ding!

*(A bike messenger nearly hits
MARRIS.)*

MARRIS

SLOW DOWN, ASSHOLE. *(to DEREK)* Great news! Gotta run!

DEREK'S VOICE

Wait, Wait!—He's at St. Vincent?

MARRIS

No, Woodberg or Millgrove or whatever—I'm on my way to see him now—I'm at the train.

DEREK'S VOICE

HOLD ON! HOL////////arris, it's just that I haven't seen you in a couple weeks—I wa//// make sur////////still working for us.

MARRIS

Yes, Derek, I'm working diligently here. What do you want from me?

DEREK'S VOICE

I want updates!

MARRIS

They set him up so he can make recordings of his music, they gave him an old cassette four-track thing. It's the foundation of his new mental health program. *(A Taxi nearly runs MARRIS down, blaring its horn.)* EAT SHIT AND DIE.

DEREK

Excuse me?

MARRIS

I don't know—this signal is FUCKING TERRIBLE—I'm hanging up.

(She hangs up.)

(Lights shift around MARRIS; she's in a psychiatrist's office. Windows with drawn shades. Construction outside.)

(BARBER enters; 40s, in a lab coat.)

MARRIS

Say your name into the recorder please.

BARBER

(tidying the office)

Doctor William Todd Barber. Sorry about the pig sty . . .

MARRIS

Spelled like the hair cutter?

BARBER

Yep! Snip snip!

MARRIS

How long have you been working with Kenneth?

BARBER

Pff, let's see, two? Three weeks? He's my new favorite.

MARRIS

Why is that?

BARBER

Super interesting life he's lived. Keeps to himself. Well, keeps to himself and his invisible buddy. Takes his meds. Stays out of my hair. A little noisy but we have rooms for that.

MARRIS

And why is he so suddenly unavailable?

BARBER

Said he was mixing! Said he's "finally found the sound!" Couldn't be interrupted. He's really pretty jazzed about the whole recording thing. Which was my idea, by the by.

MARRIS

I'd really like to speak with him—I've been waiting for weeks, I'm willing to wait a few more hours.

BARBER

It would be my sincere pleasure to host you, Marris, for as long as you like, but I really don't think he'll be taking a break today.

MARRIS

So, what, he's calling the shots now?

BARBER

(a snort-laugh)

Aside from being a bit of a fire cracker, Kenny is reasonable and direct. That's somewhat rare in this wing so it's rewarded. He asked to be left alone for 24 hours minimum. Said he and Ben had work to do. Fine by me. When Kenny's busy my nurses get no bruises trying to calm him down.

MARRIS

Tell me about his condition.

BARBER

What would you like to know?

MARRIS

Why is he talking to invisible people? Why did he suddenly percuss compulsively after 22 years of living like a “weird but quiet neighbor?” What’s his background?—Where is he from?—Who are his parents?—

BARBER

Right. Gotcha. Yeah, sure, I guess I can tell you the Kenny Ingram saga. But that might be a confidentiality breach so ... I scratch your back...

MARRIS

... And I what?

BARBER

Maybe dinner?

MARRIS

(Giving him just enough so that he'll continue)
... Yeah sure, why not.

BARBER

Then lemme grab his file! *(* he rummages through a file cabinet and retrieves a file over the following)* ... You want details? Cliff Notes?

MARRIS

Well, I don't know what you're about to tell me.

BARBER

The reason why Kenny is the way he is. The thing that happened when he was a kid.

MARRIS

Good story?

BARBER

Above average, I'd say. *(he has the file now, he sits and *peruses its contents)*

MARRIS

Then gimme all you got.

BARBER

(chuckles)

Okey doke ... Kenny's a talker and when he gets going—ho. ly. lord. A recall like you wouldn't believe. Off the charts. All the way back to when he was three—which is unusual. And I cross referenced the police reports, copies of 'em right here, to verify accuracy. Complete recall of this event when he was three. I mean ... the guy's a real *elephant*.

(BARBER waits to see if his joke lands...)

MARRIS

Because he / never forgets.

BARBER

Because he never forgets, exactly. So:

Few years back—like 40: Mom is at her folks' place with little three-year-old Kenny, but her folks are gone for the weekend—just the two of Mom and Kenny hiding from Dad. And eventually, Dad shows up to drunkenly beg forgiveness from Mom. Again. So after screaming through the mail-slot for a while, Dad grabs the lug-nut wrench from the trunk of his car and breaks in through a window. Tracks down Mom. She's crouched in the corner of her bedroom holding onto Kenny.

Then Dad hits her over the head with the wrench—you know the kind I mean, right?

*(He * shows her a picture from the police report.)*

From the police report... Dad's a pretty big fella, ex-marine, so, she goes out like a light, but she manages to protect Kenny in her arms. Dad meanders out of the room, finishes what's left of the booze in the kitchen, falls asleep on the couch.

So Kenny is wrapped up in Mom's arms, and she's bleeding all over him and down to the floor, and he sings to her. Christmas songs.

A few hours go by and Mom wakes up. She wants to call for help, the only phone in the house is in the kitchen (her parents place, right? They

BARBER (con't)

only have this one old rotary in the kitchen), so she's stumbling into the hallway, begging Kenny to stay put but he wants to be with her and he clings to her leg.

In the kitchen, Mom begins to dial on this old, loud, rotary telephone. This wakes Dad, who, unbeknownst to her, is hidden in the dark living room six feet away on a couch. So Dad's on his feet again—Mom's screaming—Kenny's wailing—Mom drops the phone—and Dad picks it up, grabs Mom by the fabric of her nightgown and begins pummeling her with the telephone receiver. And he does this until he breaks her collarbone, and the earpiece gets stuck there, lodged between pieces of broken clavicle—*There's this picture from the report (he * holds up a picture, she looks away quickly) ...* So Mom stops moving. Dad leaves.

Kenny watched it all happen while hidden behind some clutter in the hallway. Boxes of his mother's stuff—she was still moving into her folks place, I guess... You wanna copy of the police report? My secretary can run a copy for you.

MARRIS

No.

BARBER

Anyhow. Mom's in real bad shape: she's bleeding, unconscious. Kenny climbs back into her arms and stays there, on her lap, for 2 days. He stays there until the grandparents come home at the end of the long weekend.

Soooo that's the nutshell version. Believe me, I saved you some space on your little recorder there—If Kenny was telling it you'd need two intermissions. *(Snort-laugh)* What else would he tell you? ... He hates talking on the phone—absolutely terrified of the thing... He still feels extraordinary guilt over hiding in the hallway behind all the boxes... No siblings.

MARRIS

His story doesn't seem to move you.

BARBER

Well it's certainly not the worst I've heard... You okay? Didn't mean to upset you.

(BARBER's pager beeps.)

MARRIS

Beyond helping him record what else are you doing for him?

BARBER

Oh, you know, asylum stuff. You'll have to excuse me, Marris. *(exits)*

(Lights and sound out in the office.)

∞ 2.4 ∞

(A small stage in a dive bar. Stark down-light. Conversations and glassware clinking.)

(GARY sets up electronics near an organ/ keyboard/ piano as JIB, now 27, struggles... to adjust... a microphone stand... She figures it out.)

JIB

(on mic)

Hi... I'm Jib... That's Gary... You'll appreciate all of his hard work in just a minute here... *(off mic)* How you doin', Squid?

(Gary shakes his head.)

Gary's almost done, so... This is our first open mic... But we're brimming with confidence... This song is based on a fairy tale. But it's the Brothers Grimm so it's, like, awesome. It's not all ponies n' elves n' shit. *(to GARY)* We good?

(Gary shakes his head.)

Great, so ... My dad used to read me this story—the story this song is based on... It's about a kid; The Kid Who Went Forth to Learn What Fear Was—that's the title ... And this kid, he's never scared of anything and for some reason all of his family gives him shit about it ... Seems like a pretty fortunate circumstance—especially considering that I'm completely terrified of you all right now... So the kid decides to go learn how to feel fear: he builds a fire under the gallows

JIB (con't)

late at night, hangs out in a haunted castle ... talks to ghosts... I guess I won't mention how it ends. I changed the ending anyway. And the beginning.

GARY

We're set to / pop here.

JIB

That's totally awesome. Here we go. Hope you enjoy.

(GARY begins to play the keys:)

(JIB's face grows stern, her brow furrowed.)

(The crowd is distant and conversational; however, as the song progresses, chatter falls away...)

Song: THE CHILD WHO WENT FORTH TO LEARN WHAT FEAR WAS

JIB

I DON'T WANT TO SCARE YOU BUT WE NEED TO TALK
IT'S ONLY FAIR THAT YOU KNOW A FEW THINGS ABOUT ME
BEFORE WE START
AND IF YOU DETERMINE AFTER LEARNING
OF THIS LITTLE ISSUE OF MINE
THAT YOU NEED TO GO
I WON'T BE SURPRISED

YOU STRIKE ME AS SOMEONE WHO'S SEEN QUITE A LOT
BUT IN MY HONEST OPINION I DOUBT THIS'LL WORK
LIKE YOU THOUGHT
THERE'S SOMETHING SPECIFIC I NEED YOU TO DO
IF YOU'RE UP TO THE TASK
(WHICH YOU DON'T SEEM TO BE FROM THE WAY THAT YOU'RE
STILL STARING BACK WITH NO CHANGE OF EXPRESSION)
BUT HEY — YOU CAN GIVE IT A SHOT.

I WISH I WAS, I WISH I WAS
I WISH I WISH I WISH I WAS
I WISH I WAS, I WISH I WAS, I WASH I WAS AFRAID BECAUSE...

I'VE SEEN HOW PEOPLE WORK
I'VE WATCHED THEM ALL THESE YEARS
THEY ARE NOT DRIVEN BY AMBITION

ALL THEIR MOTORS RUN ON FEAR
EACH ONE AFRAID OF AGING, DYING
BEING LONELY, MISSING OUT
THEY'RE TERRIFIED OF MOVING ON
BUT SCARED OF STAYING HERE

I BARED MY NECK TO THE TEETH OF A KNIFE
THEY'VE HELD MY HEAD UNDER THE WATER FOR MINUTES
I DIDN'T MIND
I'VE BEEN BLIND, BOUND AND TIED AT THE MERCY OF
STRANGERS, THEY BEAT ME, WHATEVER
MY HEART DIDN'T RACE
I WAS FINE

I GOT THEM TO HANG ME FROM TERRIBLE HEIGHTS
THEY TOOK ME TO PLACES OF POVERTY
MALICE, UNSPEAKABLE WAR
I HAVE SEEN PEOPLE DIE
THEY'VE LEFT ME AT NIGHT IN THE HEART OF THE FOREST
THE AIR FULL OF NOISES
THE CREATURES THAT EAT US JUST FEET FROM MY FACE
AS THEIR FAMISHED CRIES SOUNDED
AND DARKNESS SURROUNDED
AND STILL
I DID NOT BAT AN EYE

I WISH I WAS, I WISH I WAS
I WISH I WAS AFRAID BECAUSE
I WISH I WAS, I WISH I WAS, AFRAID, AFRAID
I WISH BECAUSE....

I WISH I WAS, I WISH I WAS

I WISH I WAS AFRAID BECAUSE
I WISH I WAS I WISH BECAUSE
IF YOU'RE NOT SCARED
YOU'RE NOT IN LOVE

THE CHILD WHO WENT FORTH TO LEARN WHAT FEAR WAS ends

∞ 2.5 ∞

(A room with a table.)

(BEN sits at the table, looking around, confused.)

(DEENA enters. She wears glasses with very wide and tall frames. A bit like a bug. she carries a grocery bag.)

(BEN stares DEENA down. She isn't affected by it. She strolls casually over to him, and begins emptying her bag's contents on the table before BEN: a jar of peanut butter, a jar of jam, a loaf of sliced bread, a cutting board, a knife, a plate.)

(DEENA steps behind BEN's chair. BEN tries to follow her with his gaze, but she indicates that he should remain facing forward.)

BEN

I can't look at you? ... Why? ... What are you doing?

(She continues to indicate that he is to face forward.)

BEN

Fine. Fuck it. Fuck you. Fuck me. Fuck this place. Fuck this peanut butter and jelly and bread. I don't care. I'll face forward. Just get this over with.

(DEENA places her hands over BEN's wrists; a fluttering low tone begins.)

(During the following, BEN constructs a sandwich while DEENA 'guides' him – i.e. DEENA conducts [or puppets?] BEN's every gesture: neck angle, line of sight, finger positioning, blinks, breathing, etc.)

BEN

Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, what is this? Don't do this—I don't like this—this is not okay! Stop doing this!

(DEENA stops guiding him momentarily—they freeze... then resume.)

Why are you doing this? Stop doing this!

(They freeze... then resume.)

Okay! Okay. Ung—Okay. Slower please?—This is... I don't under—Caerful, careful, careful, please—Okay. Okay. Just gonna spread that that's okay. K, wait!

(They freeze... then resume.)

I'm not completely comfortable with this... Okay flip that over... okay gonna wipe... the knife ... okay fine... I think... okay.

Please don't make me eat it.

(The filling has been spread with balletic grace, the sandwich has been placed in the exact center of the plate, and with an agile flip of the wrist, the decrusted bread has been cut diagonally to finish.)

(Still guiding him, DEENA lifts BEN from the chair, moves him into a position behind it, and takes a seat in the chair herself.... The fluttering low tone ends. BEN is no longer being guided.)

(DEENA motions:)

DEENA

[Now you do it.]

BEN

I think I need to watch you one more time—

DEENA

[You're fine. Do it.]

BEN

It's just... I don't wanna do this.

(DEENA sits still and waits for BEN for a long time—she's perfectly content to do this...)

BEN

I'm not ready.

(DEENA turns and looks him deep in the eyes... for a while... Then sit's again.)

DEENA

[You're fine. Stop fighting it—shake it off. Now do it.]

BEN

Please.

DEENA

[Let's go.]

(Pause.)

(BEN tries; a fluttering lo—)

DEENA

[Nope. Felt it.]

(... A fluttering low t—)

DEENA

[Felt it.]

BEN

I will get. Better.

DEENA

[Okay! Go.]

(a flut—)

DEENA

[Nope.]

(... A fluttering—)

(A flutt—)

DEENA

[Uh-uh.]

(A flu—)

DEENA

[Very obvious.]

BEN

I don't get it, okay?! I'm a composer—I'm not a goddamn sandwich maker. When will I compose? This is asinine, lady, this is a waste of everyone's time.

(DEENA sits still and waits for BEN, perfectly contented...)

BEN

Got it. Awesome. Look: maybe if you'd let me play the piano for a minute I could clear my head.

(She waits, smiling...)

(BEN tries again. A fluttering low tone begins.....)

DEENA

[Better.]

(Guided by BEN, DEENA takes a slice of bread... retrieves the knife... and dips it into the jam...)

[Wonderful!]

(BEN jolts and DEENA knocks the jam jar over.)

BEN

(under-breath)

Son of a bitch.

DEENA

[... Take... Your time...]

(They right the jar... and continue... DEENA, like a jittery marionette, spreads jam onto the bread...)

DEENA

[Excellent, Benjamin...]

(Guided, DEENA reaches for another slice, and thrusts her hand into the loaf aggressively.)

[Okay. Slow down.]

(He flings bread, knocks the peanut butter over, scrambles to pick it up...)

DEENA

(her first spoken-line)

Benjamin.

(He tosses the jar high into the air, smacks the cutting board as bread flops to the floor, he stabs the knife into the desk, jerks it out, shoves the plate, drops the knife near BEN's foot and catches the flying peanut butter jar.)

(The fluttering low tone stops.)

BEN

I'm a certified musical genius.

(Lights and sound out in the room with a table.)

(Lights Up on BEN in a room with a piano.)

(The piano is far away. He begins to walk toward it... and eventually sits, staring at the keys. This continues under...)

∞ 2.6 ∞

*(ANGIE's hospital room. Night.
The heart monitor beeps.)*

*(ANGIE, alone, sleeps motionless
for several moments...)*

*(She begins to sing quietly – almost
inaudibly...)*

ANGIE

I'M GONNA LEAVE YOU NOW...
I HAVE TO LEAVE YOU NOW...
I HATE TO LEAVE YOU NOW...
BUT I WILL.

*(ANGIE sits up in bed and opens
her eyes.)*

*(Weightlessly, she folds the
bedclothes back, steps onto the floor,
and replaces the covers neatly over
the mattress.)*

(She walks into...)

*(A crowded bar. Many voices.
No one can see ANGIE as she
floats about the room.)*

*(JIB, now 31, is on stage with
SUN, FYE and GARY; they
prepare to play.)*

*(There's a commotion near the bar's
entrance.)*

JIB

Are they turning people away?

FYE

No way.

*(JIB steps up to a microphone; the
audience cheers.)*

JIB

There's room, Dave! Let 'em in!

DAVE

We're maxed, Jib! Fire code! Sorry, Princess!

JIB

(stunned)

... Come back next week! Come earlier for
christ's sake! *(to the band)* We're sold out?

SUN

So dope, y'all!

JIB

Where the hell is Video-Girl?

GARY

She's over there, baby. It's gonna be awesome.

JIB

(to GARY) Right. Totally. *(to VIK)* HI VIK! *(to
the band)* We set to pop here?

SUN

I'm set.

GARY

Good to gozer.

FYE

Rock and rozer.

JIB

(on mic) HIYA, KIDS! WELCOME!

*(The audience cheers. The BAND
bursts into an intro rumble; a
motorcycle churning beneath JIB's
following text...)*

JIB

I'm Jib, those are the boys—say hi to 'em.
(they do) Excellent. Well done. Boy's, say hello.
(they do) Awesome. That covers introductions—
On to the rock and roll music. Unless anyone has
something to discuss with the group? ... Kim? ...
No? ... Okay.

This first little ditty begins as daddy is about to
leave for a little while... He's bidding his three
little kids adieu and just as he leaves, wouldn't you
know it, a wolf comes 'round...

*(the BAND makes a kind of
instrumental wolf-growl in the
rumble...)*

...Mr. Wolf! You've come just as daddy has gone
away! My-O-my!

(the BAND builds a kind of short shriek into the rumble...)

JIB (con't)

Daddy's away just tryin' to rustle up some grub
for us kiddies—cuz we're hungry little assholes!—
and now we're aaaaaall aloooooone!

(the BAND makes a horrifying wail atop the rumble...)

And there's that wolf out there tryin' to get in
through the door!

(an even bigger ROAR...)

Through the door, through the door, one—two—
THREE—FOUR!

*(The band erupts: 2/4, quick dirt-rock, like fat Clydesdales trotting on bricks. Growl bass, sneer guitar, a tank for drums. **This is an indictment of the military.**)*

(VIK projects the animated short film "Fallen Art" by Tomek Baginski upon the bouncing band.)

(JIB scowls and barks at her adoring audience; she commands them, militarily, to move toward the stage in proper formation.)

Song: I SLICED YOU OPEN WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING

Verse 1:

JIB

I'M GONNA LEAVE YOU NOW
I HAVE TO LEAVE YOU NOW
I HATE TO LEAVE YOU NOW
BUT I WILL
BUT I WILL

SO KEEP THE DOOR LOCKS TIGHT
'CAUSE IF YOU DON'T THERE MIGHT
BE A VISITOR
LOOKING FOR A KILL

JIB (con't)

FOR A THRILL

I'LL BE BACK IN AN HOUR OR SO

Chorus 1:

WHO'S THAT KNOCKING AT MY DOOR?
HE DOESN'T SOUND LIKE A FRIEND
HE DOESN'T SOUND LIKE A FRIEND

AND WHOM DO I SPY OUTSIDE MY DOOR?
HE LOOKS NOTHING LIKE MY FATHER DID
HE LOOKS NOTHING LIKE MY FATHER

Verse 2:

SO I WILL CHANGE MY VOICE
I NEED A SOFTER VOICE
I NEED A DELICATE VOICE
SO I WILL
SWALLOW CHALK

AND I DON'T LOOK RIGHT
I NEED TO PLAY WITH YOUR EYES
AND RE-COLORIZE
YES I WILL
YES I WILL
YES I WILL

I'LL BE BACK IN AN HOUR OR SO

Chorus 2:

WHO'S THAT KNOCKING AT MY DOOR?
HE SOUNDS LIKE A FRIEND!
HE SOUNDS LIKE A FRIEND!

AND WHOM DO I SPY OUTSIDE MY DOOR?
HE LOOKS A LITTLE BIT LIKE MY FATHER DID
HE LOOKS A LITTLE BIT LIKE MY FATHER

Bridge:

NOW I ... WILL DEVOUR ... YOU WHOLE ...
I ... WILL DEVOUR ... YOU WHOLE ...
YES I ... HAVE NO CONSCIENCE ...
NO REMORSE ... NO SOUL ...
JUST GREED
SO FEED
JUST FEED ME

Chorus 3:

WHO'S THAT SNORING UNDERNEATH MY TREE
WITH HIS BELLY FULL AND ROUND?
WITH HIS BELLY FULL AND ROUND?

JIB (con't)

I'LL SLICE HIM OPEN WHILE HE SLEEPS
HOLD ON CHILD – I HEAR YOU WEeping
HOLD ON CHILD – I HEAR YOU WEeping
HOLD ON CHILD – I HEAR YOU WEeping

(The band cuts out momentarily.)

(ANGIE is standing near the band's amplifiers.)

(An amp/////picks up/////many radio signals/////GARY tends to it. The audience cheers.)

FYE

WHAT IS THAT?

GARY

I HAVE NO IDEA.

(Mesmerized by the cheering audience, JIB doesn't notice her struggling band mate. Instead, she cracks an unfamiliar grin.)

(The radio signals stop. JIB's scowl returns.)

(The band begins again. They play the song's coda: slow and watery, a wolf drowning, gasping for air, at the bottom of a lightless well.)

(This coda continues...)

∞ 2.7 ∞

(BEN begins to play the piano— his line blends seamlessly with the watery coda playing from the bar.)

(Lights up in the psychiatrist's office. Midday.)

(MARRIS is alone.)

(BARBER enters.)

BARBER

Hello, Marris! Good to see you! Been a while—
been a while—How are things?

MARRIS

Hi Bill! Things are wonderful. Yourself?

BARBER

Can't complain, can't complain.

MARRIS

Is Mr. Ingram on his way?

BARBER

Well, yeesh, no, sorry.

MARRIS

He canceled.

BARBER

Yeah.

MARRIS

Again.

BARBER

How about that?

MARRIS

(leaving)

Perhaps you can reach me before I leave my office
next time.

BARBER

(removing a CD from his pocket)

He said I could play some of his music for you...
Thought you might be pretty jazzed about that.

(MARRIS stays.)

BARBER

But you can't take it away! *(snort-laugh)* I have
instructions to play you no more than the first 42
seconds, which he says, are, quote, "finally not a
total nightmare." *(snort-laugh)* He's very particular.

MARRIS

How much has he recorded?

BARBER

I think there's an hour on here? Maybe a little more? It's full. But this is number 22 or something. He's been busy.

Shall we, uh *(gestures to a CD player)*?

MARRIS

Please.

BARBER

You'll have to turn off your little recorder there.

If this is any good ... Maybe I'll be his manager.
(snort-laugh)

C'mon, turn it off.

MARRIS

No problem.

(BARBER plays the CD.)

(Furiously fast percussion music begins. It is played on and with common objects: glass bottles, aluminum cans, a broomstick, a dustpan, a metal trash bin. It resembles falling hailstones.)

(The music from the CD blends perfectly with)

(BEN's piano piece and)

(The drowning-wolf-coda from the crowded bar.)

42 seconds of music...

(BARBER stops the CD abruptly as)

(Lights and sound cut out in the room with the piano.)

*(Lights and sound cut out in
the crowded bar.)*

MARRIS

How long has he been working on this?

BARBER

This one? Little less than a week?

MARRIS

It's incredible.

BARBER

Yeah? I'm more of a Steve Miller kinda guy.

MARRIS

This is better. Trust me.

BARBER

You strike me as a girl that likes some rebellious
punk rock or something... Courtney Love and all
her friends.

MARRIS

You serious?

BARBER

I'm right, aren't I?

MARRIS

Cat in a blender, dude.

BARBER

Well I beg your pardon.

*(BARBER returns the CD it to
its case and slips it back into his
coat pocket.)*

BARBER

So, Marris, tell me, what should I be listening to?

MARRIS

Steve Miller sounds about right. Or the Bee Gees.

BARBER

I love the Bee Gees.

*(Beat. MARRIS writes in a
notepad.)*

BARBER

... You're a single parent?

MARRIS

... Excuse me?

BARBER

I asked if you're a single parent?

MARRIS

Am I single?

BARBER

Yeah.

MARRIS

I'm here to talk about Kenneth.

BARBER

Well he's not here.

But he'd really take a liking to you, I'm sure of it.
He's got a thing for the pretty rock'n'roll girls...
You know what I mean: ladies such / as yourself.

MARRIS

Just drop it, / dude.

BARBER

What?

MARRIS

I've got mace, you creepy son of a bitch—

BARBER

Whoa-whoa-whoa! I apologize! I didn't mean to
offend you! It's just that you seem like you're all
alone! / Forgive me!

MARRIS

I'm all good.

*(A LOUD PHONE rings;
MARRIS flinches.)*

*(BARBER snort-laughs, picks up
the receiver and sets it immediately
down again.)*

BARBER

I know what it's like to raise a kid on your own.
Same with me.

MARRIS

How do you account for his sudden musical
aptitudes?

BARBER

Do you have a boyfriend?

MARRIS

What the fuck is your problem?

BARBER

Does your boyfriend make six figures?

MARRIS

Seven, actually.

BARBER

And you still work?

MARRIS

(gathering her things)

It's certainly been a treat, Dr. Barber—

BARBER

What are you thinking / right now?

MARRIS

Please have your secretary let me know when Ken
is available—

BARBER

(shouting after her)

I bet I can read your mind, Marris!

*(Nearly out of the room,
MARRIS stops.)*

You're thinking about my confidence—or you'd
call it arrogance—despite your efforts to distance
yourself... And you're wondering if taking a
swipe at me is worth the risk of retaliation.

MARRIS

Well that is just super impressive, Bill.

BARBER

It's not worth the risk.

BARBER (con't)

I know your type, Marris: you're a mother who regrets having children.

(Pause.)

And I know what it's like to resent your family. Same as you. All *you* need... pretty lady... is a *reprieve*.

MARRIS

You know what?

BARBER

Tell me.

MARRIS

You're absolutely right... And I'm really fucking scared.

(She falls into his arms, sobbing.)

MARRIS

I have three obnoxious boys and they're all assholes just like their fathers. They don't listen, they don't do their homework, I can't even get them to take a goddamn shower so they all stink like little / transients.

BARBER

Shhhh / it's okay, shhhh.

MARRIS

They just need a father to keep their asses in line but who's gonna want me after squeezing out three boys? I'm a wreck—I'm all stretched out / and used.

BARBER

Marris, stop crying / sweetheart, let me go.

MARRIS

I haven't gotten laid for *seven*. *Years*. SEVEN. I could rip a dick into pieces right / about now.

BARBER

Miss Holly, you need to get off me right now!

(MARRIS has stolen the CD of Ingram's music from BARBER's coat pocket and slipped it into her bag. He hasn't noticed.)

MARRIS

I should go. I'm so sorry.

BARBER

Okay.

MARRIS

I'd appreciate it if we could keep this between us.

BARBER

Of course. Absolutely.

MARRIS

I'm usually a very good journalist. I need this job. Obviously.

BARBER

Fine—No—Yeah—Fine. It's fine.

MARRIS

I'd like to continue this story.

BARBER

Of course. We will.

MARRIS

I'll be better next time.

(Lights and sound out in the office.)

∞ 2.8 ∞

(A stadium concert. An audience roars.)

(JIB, now 33, speaks over a microphone.)

JIB

More? ... You really want more? ... Well I suppose we could do one more.

I'm digging this little mosh pit out here but I feel
you holding back, kids... Get it all out... Get it
out while you can.

Lemme ask you: you ever get so much of
something that you just wanted more?

(The roar of the audience swells.)

And then you wanted MORE?

(They cheer even louder.)

YOU WANT IT ALL?

(Louder.)

YOU WANT IT ALL?

(Louder.)

Thanks for coming out tonight. You've been a
lovely crew.

HUT. HUT. HUT.

Song: THE FISHERMAN'S WIFE

JIB

MY BABY DOLL
COULD YOU JUST GO
DOWN TO THE SUSHI BAR AND GET ME WHAT I WANT
I KNOW YOU KNOW
I WANT A CAR
I WANT A DRESS
I WANT A BAG THAT'S BIG ENOUGH TO FIT
MY SEVEN HUNDRED FRIENDS

WE'RE GONNA NEED A MIRACLE
WE'RE GONNA NEED A PLAN
WE'RE GONNA NEED TO FIND A PLACE TO GO
WE'RE OUT HERE IN THE WATER WITH OUR POCKETS FULL OF SAND
AND THE SINKING SOULS AROUND US YELLING
NO, NO, NO

WE'RE GONNA NEED A BIGGER BOAT
FOR ALL THIS SHIT
WE CAN'T JUST GO AROUND PRETENDING
EVERYONE IS GONNA FIT

I KNOW I TOLD YOU
I PROMISED IT
BUT I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A LIAR
SORRY, LIFE'S A FUCKING BITCH

I WANT A CASTLE
IN THE COUNTRY
I WANT A LOFT DOWNTOWN
I WANNA CALL YOU
WHEN I WANT YOU
HONEY, I DON'T WANT YOU HANGING AROUND

AND WHILE YOU'RE OUT DEAR
GRAB ME A CHURCH DEAR
AND NOT SOME STRIP MALL SHIT
I'M TALKING REAL STAINED GLASS
AND MY BELIEVERS
PEOPLE WITH CLASS
I'M GONNA HANG OUT ON MY ALTER IN MY GOLDEN ROBE AND CROWN
PROFESSING ALL MY PROPAGANDA WHILE THEY KISS MY ASS

WE'RE GONNA NEED A MIRACLE
WE'RE GONNA NEED A PLAN
WE'RE GONNA NEED TO FIND A PLACE TO GO
WE'RE STUCK HERE IN A LIFEBOAT WITH OUR AMPUTATED HANDS
AND OUR AUTOMATED CAPTAIN YELLING
ROW, ROW, ROW!

WE'RE GONNA NEED A BIGGER BOAT
FOR ALL THIS SHIT
WE CAN'T JUST GO AROUND PRETENDING
EVERYONE IS GONNA FIT
I KNOW I TOLD YOU
I PROMISED IT
BUT I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A LIAR
SORRY, LIFE'S A FUCKING BITCH

WE'RE GONNA NEED A BIGGER BOAT
FOR ALL THIS FISH
WE'RE GONNA MURDER THE WHOLE OCEAN
WITH OUR FUCKED UP WISH
I KNOW I TOLD YOU
I PROMISED IT
BUT I WAS LYING WHEN I PROMISED
AND I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A LIAR
AND YOU'RE NOT GETTING ON THIS BOAT
SO FUCKING LIVE WITH IT

WHAT'S WITH THE STORM OVER-
HEAD? ALL THOSE WHITE CAPS? I'M
FEELING MY WISHES SINK
BACK UNDER WATER. THIS
CASTLE IS CRUM-BULL-ING
ALL 'ROUND MY BED AND I
THINK I JUST WATCHED ALL MY
TREASURE CHESTS WALKING A-
WAY WITH THE CIRCUS YOU
MADE FROM THE BONES OF MY
HUSBAND AND CHILDREN AND
NOW THAT THE WATER IS
UP TO MY PETTICOAT
I AM BEGINNING TO
WONDER HOW LIKELY IT
IS THAT I'LL FLOAT WITH MY
WRISTS BOUND WITH JEWELRY
BODY OF CORSETRY
SHINING BRASS LIVERY FROM MY BOOTS TO MY HEAD

WE'RE GONNA NEED A BIGGER BOAT
FOR ALL THIS FISH
WE'RE GONNA MURDER THE WHOLE OCEAN
WITH OUR FUCKED UP WISH
I KNOW I TOLD YOU
I PROMISED IT
BUT I WAS LYING WHEN I PROMISED
AND I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A LIAR
AND YOU'RE NOT GETTING ON THIS BOAT
SO FUCKING LIVE WITH IT

*(Lights up on ANGIE's
hospital room. Late evening.
The heart monitor beeps.)*

(JIB's band continues to play...)

*(MARRIS sleeps as ANGIE
rises and steps...)*

*(...into the world of the stadium
concert.)*

*(JIB's performance plays from a
TV on the wall of the hospital
room. Occasional / / bursts of
static / / overtake the set. A wall-
light flickers continuously.)*

*(The song ends. The audience
roars.)*

*(An audience///roars through
television///speakers.)*

*(JIB takes a bow. ANGIE stands
beside her, watching.)*

JIB

(shouting off mic to GARY)

WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?

GARY

WHAT WAS / WHAT?

JIB

YOU KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT,
DUDE. ARE YOU TRYING TO / FUCK
WITH ME?

GARY

I HONESTLY HAVE NO IDEA WHAT
YOU'RE TALKING / ABOUT, JIB.

JIB

YOU THINK THESE PEOPLE ARE HERE
TO LISTEN TO YOU SHRED?

*(The other band members exit the
stage. The audience continues to
roar.)*

*(The///and/////////
inues/////////ar.)*

GARY

THAT WAS A GREAT SHOW. WHAT'S
WRONG WITH YOU?

JIB

ME? WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR
FUCKING EARS, GARY? AM I THE ONLY
ONE WHO CARES ABOUT THIS SHIT?

GARY

(on mic, to the audience)

DO THEY SOUND UNHAPPY TO YOU?

(The audience roars louder.)

*(The////nce/////////
rs/////////
oud/////////)*

(The fans wave, and scream. JIB turns to face them and comes face to face with ANGIE.)

*(////////////////////
////////////////////
////////////////////)*

(JIB smiles gigantically, basking in the adoration. This is a face we have never seen on her before.)

(ANGIE steps away from JIB. Stage lights POP out. Amplifiers are overcome with static////////////////)

(JIB runs to the highest point of the stage. She bows and curtsies and leaps.)

(ANGIE looks across the space to)

(MARRIS who is sleeping soundly in the hospital room.)

(JIB runs across the stage blowing kisses as ANGIE steps...)

(...back into the world of the hospital.)

Mom. **ANGIE**

(Pause.)

MOM. **ANGIE**

MARRIS
(still sleeping)
Go back to bed, Anj. It's late.

ANGIE
What have you dressed my mother in?—holy moly.

MARRIS

I have to work in the morning, Kiddo, go to sleep.

ANGIE

A hoodie? ... Are you, fourteen?

(MARRIS wakes.)

MARRIS

Anj?

(Beat.)

*(MARRIS leaps to embrace
ANGIE.)*

MARRIS

Stay awake, baby. Stay here.

ANGIE

I'm awake.

*(JIB and the stadium concert have
been reduced to tiny flickering
images on the—)*

(bosp/////////evision////set.)

JIB

Thank you... thank you... thank you... *(con't)*

ANGIE

The TV is hurting my eyes.

*(MARRIS takes up a remote and
turns the TV off.)*

(Blackout.)

∞ 2.9 ∞

(A void.)

BEN

You must let me return to him before he left.

I command it.

Do you hear me?

BEN (con't)

You do what I fuckin' say. That's how this shit works, you hear me?—I'm done.

I'm done, that's it. I command it.
I *command* it.

You must let me return to him before he left that day.

You *will* let me return to him before he left that day because I fucking command it.

You will let me return to him before he left.

12 hours before he left. I command it.

I *command* it.

(WYATT rushes into the room, attached to bungees; he grabs BEN and the two slingshot out into the void. Blackout.)

end canon

fermata

∞ 3.1 ∞

*(HOARDER's apartment.
Midday. Sounds of the city.)*

(Throughout the apartment, there is an endless array of empty food containers, piled clothes, bike parts, tools, plumbing supplies, electrical wire, magazines, DVDs, CDs, records, laser-disks, beta-cassettes, reel-to-reel recording machines, eight-track tapes, and old clothing. There is an old filthy couch center.)

(A commercial plays on a small TV.)

(HOARDER, 50s, unkempt, sleeps on the couch fully dressed. His long hair is greasy. His long fingernails are dirty.)

(BEN appears. He looks around in amazement...)

(HOARDER stirs, opens his eyes, and sits up. BEN watches him.)

*(HOARDER looks to the TV.
* He picks up a remote. Changes the channel. News. Changes the channel. Soaps. Changes the channel. Another commercial. Changes the channel. A movie. Changes the channel. A different movie. Changes the channel. An old movie. He sets the remote down and watches.)*

(He picks up a piece of old food and eats it.)

BEN

Aw, man.

(HOARDER snaps his gaze towards BEN, moves to a window

and opens it. The city sounds become louder. HOARDER surveys the ledge... He scans the apartment... He moves back to the filthy couch. He sits and watches TV.)

(BEN crosses toward HOARDER cautiously.)

(A fluttering low tone begins.)

(BEN guides HOARDER to pick up the remote and turn off the TV. They cross the room, pick up an empty box, move to a pile of food containers, and begin sorting through the trash, placing particularly rancid items inside the box...)

(HOARDER flails in a rage. The fluttering low tone stops as BEN falls backwards.)

(Unguided, HOARDER overturns the box. Food containers fall back into the pile from which they came. He returns the empty box to its exact original location and returns to the couch. He sits, takes up the remote, turns the TV on again, and watches. He's terrified and breathing heavily.)

BEN

You disgust / me.

HOARDER

WHO'S THERE?

(Beat.)

(HOARDER turns up the TV's volume, beginning to panic.)

BEN

Can you hear me?

(HOARDER maxes out the volume.)

(A fluttering low tone begins.)

(BEN guides HOARDER to lower the volume, set the remote down, and take several... deep... breaths. HOARDER is calmer. The fluttering low tone stops.)

(Pause. They watch TV. They laugh at the same thing. Ben notices this.)

*(Unguided, HOARDER stands and moves to the kitchen. * He reaches into sink dishes, turns on the faucet, fills a cup, chugs it, fills again, chugs it, and sets the cup back amongst the clutter.)*

(He moves to a paper-pile, digs through it, chooses a magazine, crosses back to the couch, sits, flips through pages, finds a specific page, and begins to undo his belt-buckle.)*

BEN

Good christ.

HOARDER

WHO THE FUCK ARE YOU? *(he leaps up, refastening his belt)* ANSWER ME FUCKER.

BEN

I'm—

HOARDER

WHERE ARE YOU HIDING?

BEN

I'm not / hiding.

HOARDER

(screams)

(Lights and sound out.)

∞ 3.2 ∞

(A vocal booth in a recording studio. Over-produced electronic music plays.)

(JIB stands before a microphone wearing headphones and picks up HOARDER's scream.)

JIB

AHHHHHHH—STOP ... STOP! PLEASE.

(The music stops. The PRODUCER speaks to JIB over a mic from within an adjacent booth.)

PRODUCER

What's up, girlfriend?

JIB

I don't know.

PRODUCER

This makes twenty-two. Maybe I'm running out of ideas here.

JIB

Just run it again.

PRODUCER

Let's take a / break.

JIB

Run. It. Again.

PRODUCER

Listen, I'm gonna need to get some food pretty / quick here, Jib.

JIB

Can't break the flow, Alex. I've almost got it.

PRODUCER

Jib—

JIB

I've almost got it.

PRODUCER

Your voice sounds tired / to me.

JIB

FUCK YOU, ALEX, RUN IT AGAIN.

(Pause.)

PRODUCER

Okay, Jib.

(The music begins from the top. A heavily produced track begins which sounds nothing like her previous band.)

Song: STRIKE YOU DOWN

JIB

I WAS STANDING ON THE EDGE
BANDAGING MY SONGS
I REMEMBER WHAT YOU SAID
YOU TOLD ME TO BE STRONG

I COULDN'T FIND MY WAY
I'D GET OUT IF I COULD
YOU TOOK ME IN YOUR ARMS
AND YOU LEFT ME IN THE WOODS

YOU ARE THE SKY, YOU ARE THE TREES
YOU ARE THE GHOST THAT STRANGLES ME
YOU LEFT NO TRACE OF YOU BEHIND
YOU ARE THE LAST THING ON MY MIND

NOW I'M BUILDING MY HOUSE IN THE WOODS
OUT OF ANYTHING I WANT TO
I AM STRONGER THAN YOU
AND YOU CAN'T BLOW ME DOWN
EVEN IF YOU TRY TO

(A spastic and distorted synth solo plays for 10 seconds. JIB dances, pleased.)

(The music stops.)

JIB

WHAT THE FUCK?

PRODUCER

I'm taking a / break, Jib.

JIB

I *want it* to sound / raw, Alex.

PRODUCER

Your voice is tired and I'm not sold on your lyrics
for / this tune.

JIB

Too bad, man, Jackie signed off on the lyrics.

PRODUCER

Well, I'm not feelin' it.

JIB

Oh fuck you, man—what would you know about
a hit song? Mr. Grammy-Shelf.

PRODUCER

I'm done for the day, Jib. I'm taking tomorrow
off as well. We can / give it another try on
Thursday.

JIB

Alex! Jesus christ, man—I'm sorry? I wanna
keep rolling—shit, do a girl a favor.

...

It's been a rough month.

PRODUCER

That's the only reason I'm not dropping this gig
entirely, Jib. I'll see you on Thursday. Get rest.
Stay / off your voice.

JIB

Yeah, whatever dude.

PRODUCER

Good night.

(The booth speaker clicks off.)

(Lights and sound out.)

∞ 3.3 ∞

*(HORDER's apartment. BEN
and HOARDER are exactly
where we left them.)*

BEN

I'm not here to hurt you—

HOARDER

(screaming)

HOW DO I KNOW THAT?

BEN

Please calm down—

HOARDER

HOW COME I CAN'T SEE YOU?

BEN

I'm invisible—

HOARDER

Don't move!

BEN

I didn't move—

HOARDER

JUST STAY THERE!

BEN

I'M NOT MOVING!

(Pause.)

HOARDER

Are you from space?

BEN

No.

HOARDER

Are you here to abduct me?

BEN

I'm not here to abduct you.

HOARDER

Where are you?

BEN

Next to the sofa.

HOARDER

I'M NEXT TO THE SOFA!

BEN

I'm to your right.

(HOARDER swats at the air to his right.)

HOARDER

Okay... What happens now?

BEN

I don't know.

HOARDER

WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU DON'T KNOW? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO / DO TO ME?

BEN

Please! Stay / calm.

HOARDER

FUCK YOU, MAN—

BEN

I'm not here to hurt you.

HOARDER

Was that you trying to make me clean up?

BEN

Yes—

HOARDER

DON'T DO THAT.

BEN

Alright.

HOARDER

I need everything to stay like this—I like it this way.

BEN

That's fine—

HOARDER

It's my stuff and I like it *this way*.

BEN

I promise I won't make you clean up.

(Pause.)

HOARDER

What's your name?

BEN

Ben.

HOARDER.

... Short for Benjamin?

BEN

... Yes.

HOARDER

Do you want to know my name?

BEN

... Okay.

HOARDER

It's Kenneth... Or Ken... Ingram... Do you have a last name?

BEN

..... Yes but I can't remember it.

HOARDER

... That sucks.

BEN

My name should have been memorable... Like Schumann or Bartok ... Mendelssohn.

(Pause.)

HOARDER

(looks through boxes)

I don't have the Schumann but I have the Bartok and the Mendelssohn. You can borrow my copies just bring 'em back the same. I prefer the Mendelssohn—this one here. This one is good. Can you see this?

BEN

Yes.

(Beat.)

HOARDER

Wan't me to find the Bartok—I know where / it's at.

BEN

Maybe the Mendelssohn.

HOARDER

Okay.

(HOARDER removes the record from its sleeve and puts it onto a turntable that has a place of importance outside the clutter.)

(Crackle... Mendelssohn's Op. 27, A Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage plays.)

~ 55 seconds pass...

HOARDER

Where are you?

BEN

(lost)

Same place.

HOARDER

Do you know this?

BEN

Of course. It's one of his most exquisite—The basses.

HOARDER

Yeah, well... It calms me down.

BEN

It's perfect.

HOARDER

Perfect? I don't know, Ben, he's—he's—he's no Frédéric Chopin, I mean, he's pretty good, pretty good. A little too organized maybe.

BEN

... I'm sorry I wasn't listening.

HOARDER

You like metal?

BEN

No.

HOARDER

I can play you some sweet metal.

(Lights fade. Mendelssohn's Op. 27 continues under the following.)

∞ 3.4 ∞

(MARRIS's bedroom.)

(ANGIE speaks to MARRIS through a doorway.)

ANGIE

Mom?

MARRIS

Jesus! You scared me.

ANGIE

Sorry ... You interviewed Jib Turner, Right? Like four years ago?

MARRIS

Interviewed her a few times.

ANGIE

... Do you remember when she talked about touring in France and, like... crêpes... "Savory? Are you fucking kidding me? Nutella-banana, bitches!" And they couldn't bleep it fast enough.

MARRIS

Yeah. That was Portland.

ANGIE

Right—and after the interview her manager yelled at her in front of everyone. Told her to stop behaving like a child... Then Jib cried and the room got super awkward... And it was weird because she's the last person in the world to cry about anything.

MARRIS

... Thought I left that part out.

ANGIE

I think you did—It happened though?

MARRIS

Yeah.

ANGIE

In the hospital... I dreamt I was with Jib for a really long time.

MARRIS

... Like how long?

ANGIE

Like from before she was famous, like three years before.

MARRIS

What do you mean you were with her?

ANGIE

Like... Helping her.

(Pause.)

I'm gonna watch a movie—You want ice cream?

MARRIS

No, thanks.

(ANGIE begins to leave.)

MARRIS

I have something for you. *(retrieves a CD from a drawer)* This. Here. Listen to this.

ANGIE

Kenneth Ingram. Sounds like folk.

MARRIS

It's not. You'll like it.

*(Lights and sound out in
MARRIS's room.)*

∞ 3.5 ∞

*(A prestigious and bustling event.
Loud electronica. JIB | 34 and
dressed garishly, is with RED
CARPET.)*

RED CARPET

What a wonderful turnout this evening and look who I found—Jib Turner! Music trendsetter and fashionista alike! Jib—It's great to see you—How are you?

JIB

I'm amazing, Peter—Thanks for having / me.

RED CARPET

Absolutely our pleasure—Legend has it that you're working on a new record. Care to tell your fans about it?

JIB

Yeah, totally, it's my fourth record. I'm trying out a slightly different approach on / this one.

RED CARPET

That's right! A change in the line-up!

JIB

Yeah. We're going for a sort of electronic vibe on this one. Heavier beats. Tryin' ta keep things a little / more danceable.

RED CARPET

Some folks left the band, Yes?

JIB

Look, I don't want to... I mean yes but, uh...
Things are super groovy with the guys—it was
just time for a change / if you know what I mean.

RED CARPET

This is the band that you've played with for seven
years?

JIB

Six years. But I'm pretty sure we'll be at it again
before too long. So you old-school Jib Turner
fans shouldn't worry your pretty heads.

RED CARPET

So it's electronic! Tell us about that!

JIB

It's being produced by Alex Fielder—He did most
of the arranging / and the en—

RED CARPET

A department previously helmed by your
former / guitarist.

JIB

He's not my "former" anything—

RED CARPET

So what are the fellas up to now that they have a
little sabbatical?

JIB

Things are, like, I mean everything is super duper
with the guys so if we could just, like, mention the
new record or whatever—

RED CARPET

Well y'know, The word on the street / is that
you're having creative differences—

*(JIB snatches RED CARPET's
microphone and chucks it into a
crowd of bystanders.)*

JIB

You prick!—Really?

RED CARPET

(to the crowd)

Woah-ho-ho! There she goes / again!

(The crowd laughs.)

JIB

JUST CAN'T WAIT TO RAKE ME OVER
THE COALS, YOU MOTHERFUCKERS.
HARDEY-HAR-HAR.

*(Lights shift. RED CARPET
becomes TURNER.)*

TURNER

Do I need to be closer to the mic? Or—Not so
close—This good? ...

TURNER

Okay.

Hiya, Giblet... It's Daddy.

So if you got this recording here then, uh... I
guess I messed up.

*(Lights shift. TURNER
becomes TV INTERVIEW.)*

TV INTERVIEW

If you're just joining us, our guest today is
musician Jib Turner. You may be familiar with
her musical albums Record Box, The Book of
Grim, Moneysworth, and her self-titled fourth
release, Jib Turner. Thanks again for being with
us today, Jib.

JIB

Thank you for having me.

TV INTERVIEW

The subject of our program today: 'It's A New
Dawn, It's A New Day,' or, 'The Journey Away
from the Mainstream' and toward what some may
call a far more respectable tier of the music
industry. Jib, do you miss the limelight?

JIB

Hell no. The recording industry is very
inhumane. My world these days is much simpler.
Much more free.

TV INTERVIEW

How would you describe the change in your creative process now that you have more freedom and simplicity in your life?

JIB

The change in my creative process... I've taken a break from writing songs. I'm writing a book.

TV INTERVIEW

Do you feel the major-label recording industry was able to inspire you artistically? Or provide a circumstance where inspiration was possible?

JIB

... My dad was always my inspiration...

(Elsewhere, ANGIE changes clothes and makeup. She ages three years, becoming 19.)

JIB

But you've heard that one—Like, so the record industry is interested in money, right? So it's difficult to keep a clear focus on artistry. It's kind of impossible actually. My book is going to chronicle my life as a teenager without my parents

JIB (con't)

—my father in particular—I never really knew my mother.

TV INTERVIEW

How about your image—that was tightly controlled by your label for a time—

JIB

Yeah, I'm trying to tell you about my book.

TV INTERVIEW

... Have you already begun work on it?

JIB

Obviously.

(Lights shift. TV INTERVIEW becomes TURNER.)

TURNER

A good musician is the real deal.
No sleight-of-hand tricks.

JIB

I'm sorry, Dad.
What am I doing wrong?

*(Lights shift. TURNER
exits.)*

*(Lights up on JIB's office.
Day.)*

*(JIB | 35, interviews ANGIE,
19.)*

ANGIE

Nothing.

JIB

What?

ANGIE

You asked what you were doing wrong.

JIB

... Oh... Sorry.

ANGIE

It's all good.

JIB

... Cool.

ANGIE

So it's mostly organization and day-to-day?

JIB

Yeah. There's a stack of archives up to my eyeballs. Old concerts. Fan mail. Most of it probably just needs to get tossed but there are a few things in there worth preserving. Maybe. You know your way around a scanner and a video editor and all that?

ANGIE

Yeah, I'm tech savvy. I'm a pretty good sound engineer too. If old recordings need some touching up.

JIB

... That's good. How old are you?

ANGIE

Twenty-three. All good?

JIB

Fine. Yeah.

*(JIB lights a cigarette and * opens a window. City sounds pour into the room.)*

ANGIE

And the day-to-day?

JIB

Right, yeah, meetings, interviews, cabs, lunches. I'm trying to get in touch with publishers at the moment but they're a bunch of fuckin' whackos.

ANGIE

(laughs)

JIB

I'm sorry but something about you is so weirdly familiar and it's kinda throwing me for a loop.

ANGIE

You know my mom—or met her at least. Marris Holly?

JIB

Doesn't ring a bell.

ANGIE

She interviewed you for the NPR affiliate in Portland like seven years ago. We look alike. After your first big tour of the EU?

JIB

... Oh right. I remember Marris... That must be it.

(Beat.)

ANGIE

I've met you too... At a concert after you released your first record but I'd be surprised if you remember.

JIB

What, when you were 10? How old are you?

ANGIE

Twenty-three.

JIB

Bullshit.

(Beat.)

JIB

What was your name again?

ANGIE

Angie.

JIB

Listen, Anj, you seem like a super rad chick but uh... I think maybe this isn't a match.

ANGIE

... Okay. No worries. I understand.

JIB

I suppose it's protocol to send you on your way with the idea that you might have the job and then email you a rejection later but I sort of hate that, I'd rather just be up front.

ANGIE

I appreciate it. Up front is better.

JIB

Awesome. It was good to meet you.

ANGIE

I have something for you.

*(ANGIE retrieves the CD of
Ingram's music and offers it to JIB.)*

JIB

I don't / want your demo kid, sorry.

ANGIE

It's not a demo.

JIB

I understand what it's like tryin' to get your shit out there, believe me, but if you knew how much crap is stacked up / at my place.

ANGIE

I promise you this isn't a demo. You need to hear this.

JIB

I won't get to it.

ANGIE

In the book your dad gave you, five passages are missing / from the title page.

JIB

I get at least a dozen new records in the mail ... every week ... What did you say?

ANGIE

In the Grimm's. Five passages are cut from the title page with a razor... And when you flip it over, long rectangles are missing from the picture on the other side. Some of Rapunzel's face is gone.

(Pause.)

ANGIE

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to upset / you I just—

JIB

Who told you about that?

ANGIE

Nobody, I—

JIB

That's none of your business, kid.

ANGIE

Please, I'm / sorry.

JIB

Gary? What did Gary tell you?

ANGIE

I haven't spoken to Gary—

JIB

WHO TOLD YOU ABOUT THAT?

ANGIE

I—

JIB

You spying on me, you little cunt?

ANGIE

Jib, listen to me—

JIB

That is my business.

ANGIE

Please—

JIB

MY PRIVATE SHIT—DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

ANGIE

Jib—

JIB

DO YOU FUCKING UNDERSTAND ME— YES OR NO?

ANGIE

Yes.

JIB

Stay away from me, kid. Leave now.

ANGIE

I'm the real deal, Gabriel, no sleight of hand tricks.

JIB

STOP IT. Just stop, okay? It really isn't funny.

ANGIE

(re: the CD) This is to help you.

(Pause.)

ANGIE

Until about two years ago there was a distant little voice... She would sing to you when you couldn't sleep.

GOOD NIGHT, MY GIRL...

LET YOUR DREAMS TAKE YOU ALL OVER THE WORLD...

FLY ANYWHERE YOU WANT TO GO...

I LOVE YOU SO...

JIB

Stop. I don't know what you're doing but you have to stop.

ANGIE

... Please take this.

(Lights and sound out.)

∞ 3.6 ∞

*(HOARDER's apartment.
Late evening.)*

HOARDER

This one is very rare. Can't find it anymore. Lee Michaels. Side B is a thirteen-minute timpani piece. But not orchestral, just one timpani. He's bending the pitch up and down and playing all sorts of shenanigans while you hear field recordings of homeless people asking for spare change. It's called 'Spare Change'. There's an organ in it too—Very disorganized.

BEN

Sounds amazing—

HOARDER

Absolutely. Absolutely amazing. I'll play it for you later. This is P Funk. Live. Super rare, hard to get. This, Oh! This is Jib Turner. Three of my favorite songs of all time are on this. She fucking gets it man—like lyrics? Clutch. Band? Clutch. She has the fire, Jib Turner, like Duende—you know this word? Duende? From the Lorca? I have a copy, you can borrow it, just bring it back the same—but Lorca he writes about the Duende, it's like this flame that only few are able to hold, you know?—It's the willingness to invite death in all around you—to treat the performance like it's your last—the dance for the ghosts!—The song for death! And I love that. We don't have to fear death—we can celebrate it—we can dance with her—it can be honest. Like an honest way to see her, it's just another place, right? Like you tell me? What's it like?

BEN

I'm not dead yet.

HOARDER

Oh of course, right—duh—I should know that.
We don't have to talk / about it.

BEN

We should stay here and play records tonight—
can you cancel your plans?

HOARDER

Oh, man, I wish. (*re: another record*) Mozart, kinda
peppy for my taste. Skeleton Key!—This
drummer plays salvaged material like buckets, saw
blades, propane tanks, sometimes he plays
distorted harmonica. You know it?

BEN

... No.

HOARDER

We should put this on, it's totally sweet.

BEN

Do you play music?

HOARDER

Of course! All the time! What are you talking
about? (*pulls the record from its sleeve*)

BEN

Instruments, do you play instruments?

HOARDER

No good at instruments. (*places the record upon the
turntable*)

BEN

Have you tried?

HOARDER

I don't think so—I don't think so—I can never go
fast enough—I'm too slow.

(A fluttering low tone begins.)

*(Guided, HOARDER switches
the turntable off and crosses to the
kitchen.)*

HOARDER

I'm thirsty. I need water. I've been talking so much. It's good to talk though. Do you drink water? *(* retrieves a cup)* I bet you don't because you don't have a body. The water would just dump all over the floor. *(* cranks the faucet on)* Then, aside from the fact that you wouldn't have been able to quench yourself, *(* fills cup)* you'd have spilt water all over the place. *(gulps)*

*(Guided, HOARDER * slams the cup down, rattles dishes in the sink, slams the cup again, rattles, slams, kicks the trash bin, drops the cup, takes up two pieces of silverware, plays the countertop, plays the cupboard, plays the trash bin, plays a pile of dishes, knocks several dishes to the floor, opens the oven door, and SLAMS it closed.)*

(The fluttering low tone stops.)

(Pause.)

HOARDER

What was that?

BEN

You were playing mu—

HOARDER

You made me do that!

BEN

No, I—

HOARDER

WHY? WHY WOULD I DO THAT? I KNOW IT WAS YOU.

BEN

It wasn't just—

HOARDER

I ASKED YOU NOT TO.

BEN

Kenneth—

HOARDER

(throwing silverware)

DON'T MESS WITH ME LIKE THAT, BEN, I
DON'T LIKE IT.

(Pause.)

BEN

You don't need to shout.

I can hear you.

*(Unguided, HOARDER moves back to the sink. * He turns the faucet on full blast and listens... Water pounds the basin... He retrieves a cup and scrapes it along the countertop... then puts it back. He picks up silverware and taps the counter.)*

(HOARDER plays a deliberate rhythm of his own: Cup. Cup. Sink. Cup. Sink. Cup. Sink. Counter. Counter. Cup. Cup. Cup. Sink. Cup. Sink.)*

*(Then faster: * Cup-Cup-Sink-Cup-Sink-Cup-Sink-Counter-Counter-Cup-Cup-Cup-Sink-Cup-Sink.)*

*(Then faster: * CupCupSinkCupSinkCupSinkCounterCounterCupCupCupSinkCupSink.)*

*(HOARDER laughs loudly and * slams his fist against the laden counter. He picks up an armful of dishes from the sink, throws the bundle across the room, smacks his open palms on cupboard doors rattling the dishes inside, slams his body against the refrigerator, leaps into the air, and stomps his feet down hard. This broken rhythm continues...)*

(HOARDER's music is clumsy and welcoming at first but the affect quickly changes. His hands begin to bleed, his*

HOARDER

That was work. I'm late. I have to go.
(finds his keys)*

BEN

Slow down, my friend, you're not well—you
should take a day off.

HOARDER

She was there though.

BEN

Kenneth—you don't need to go to work—okay?!

HOARDER

Her heartbeat is always there so she can listen.
(undoes a series of locks)*

BEN

Ken—You need to stay home—Listen to what
I'm saying—DON'T LEAVE THIS
APARTMENT.

(HOARDER opens a door and
slams it closed.)*

(Lights and sound out.)

∞ 3.7 ∞

*(Lights up on JIB's apartment
as JIB enters. She carries the CD
of Ingram's music to a player and
starts it.)*

*(A furiously fast piece of
percussive music begins. It is
played on and with common
objects: glass bottles,
aluminum cans, a
broomstick, a dustpan, and a
metal trash bin. The music
resembles hailstones against
pavement during a storm.)*

~ 40 seconds of music pass...

*(This music continues as underscore
for the following.)*

***(Lights rise on the interior of
a street sweeper.)***

*(Rain pounds the windshield.
Wipers slosh and squeak. Bristles
broom pavement. HOARDER
flails; BEN is thrown. They shout
over the din.)*

HOARDER

STOP THAT. I KNOW HOW TO / DO MY
JOB.

BEN

JUST KEEP FOCUSED ON THE ROAD.

HOARDER

CAN YOU HEAR IT? I'M PLAYING A DUET
WITH / THE RAIN.

BEN

KEEP YOUR EYES DOWN. STOP
LOOKING / AWAY, PLEASE.

HOARDER

I'M GOING TO BE / LEGENDARY.

BEN

SLOW DOWN, MAN. THIS IS WAY / TOO
FAST.

HOARDER

THEY'LL WRITE BOOKS / ABOUT ME!

BEN

WATCH THE / ROAD.

HOARDER

IT'S FOUR AM BEN, THIS ROAD / IS
EMPTY.

BEN

PLEASE! IT IS NOT EMPTY. I / KNOW
THIS.

HOARDER

I DRIVE THIS ROUTE EVERY NIGHT—I
CAN DO IT WITH MY / EYES CLOSED.

BEN

OPEN YOUR / EYES!

HOARDER

I CAN DO IT WITH MY HANDS OFF THE
WHEEL / STRAIGHT AS AN ARROW.

BEN

GODDAMNIT, MAN, I'M SERIOUS. YOU'RE
GOING TO HIT / SOMEONE.

HOARDER

I'VE BEEN DOING THIS FOR THIRTEEN
YEARS—NOT ONE INCIDENT—GIVE ME
SOME CREDIT.

*(BEN seizes a brief opening and
guides HOARDER. A fluttering
low tone begins. The rain gives way
to hailstones.)*

*(The music from the CD
blossoms into a vast organism.
JIB is thunderstruck.)*

(The sweeper slows.)

(JIB sits.)

*(HOARDER breaks away
violently. BEN is thrown. The
sweeper accelerates.)*

HOARDER

DO. NOT. DO. NOT.

BEN

LISTEN TO ME, TONIGHT IS THE
NIGHT / OF OUR ACCIDENT.

HOARDER

JUST LET ME PLAY—

BEN

YOU CAN PLAY / LATER!

HOARDER

I'M ON / FIRE!

BEN

LISTEN / TO ME!

HOARDER
I'M THE VOLCANO!

BEN
KENNETH—

HOARDER
I'M FASTER THAN / A HAILSTORM!

BEN
YOU DON'T / UNDERSTAND.

HOARDER
I'M FASTER THAN THE / WIND.

BEN
YOU KILLED / ME!

HOARDER
WHAT? I'VE NEVER / KILLED ANYBODY.

BEN
THIS IS MY / STREET.

HOARDER
I HAVE / A PERFECT RECORD.

BEN
I ONLY NEED YOU TO STOP FOR A FEW /
SECONDS.

HOARDER
NO. / WHY SHOULD I?

BEN
PLEASE—I'M / BEGGING YOU!

HOARDER
THERE'S NO / REASON.

BEN
MY LIFE'S WORK—

HOARDER
AHH! LISTEN TO THE / HAIL!

BEN
—YOU HAVE THE POWER TO / LET ME
FINISH IT!

HOARDER
LIKE A MILLION DRUMMERS AT ONCE!

BEN

THIS IS MY MUSIC.

HOARDER

WHAT BEAUTIFUL / INSPIRATION!

BEN

—YOU'RE HEARING MY DISCOVERY /
OKAY?

HOARDER

NO! THE HAIL! / LISTEN!

BEN

YES—THIS IS MY STORM—THIS IS MINE.

HOARDER

IT'S NOT YOURS, BEN, THAT'S /
RIDICULOUS.

BEN

I CAN NOTATE / THIS.

HOARDER

THE WEATHER / IS INFINITE.

BEN

MY WORK DESERVES A / LIFE.

HOARDER

IT BELONGS TO / EVERYONE!

BEN

LISTEN / TO ME!

HOARDER

AND NO ONE—

BEN

MY IDEAS MUST BE—NO! LOOK!
/ THERE!

HOARDER

THIS STORM IS THE BEST / MUSIC I'VE
EVER HEARD!

BEN

I'M LYING IN / THE ROAD!

HOARDER

LISTEN TO IT / GO!

BEN
LOOK UP NOW! / LOOK UP!

HOARDER
THE GREATEST MUSIC IN THE / ENTIRE
UNIVERSE!

BEN
STOP!—

*(Grinding gears and bending metal.
HOARDER slams the breaks.)*

*(Light and sound cut out in
the sweeper as)*

(The music from the CD ends and)

(Pause.)

(Another track from the CD begins.)

HOARDER'S VOICE

(faint)

Check check check check... *(claps hands)* I know, I
got it, Ben, I got it...

(louder)

Alright, this is a piece for Jib Turner. The woman
with the fire in her hands and in her soul. Her
beautiful, lonely, heartbroken soul. It's by me and
my good friend Ben. Here we go...

(faint)

Okay okay, Jeez, fine, whatever—

(louder)

This is a piece for Jib Turner written and
performed by Benjamin David Schaufler who is
just making up new last names, every time—
David Schaufler tonight so la-de-da. And I'm *still*
Kenneth Frederick Ingram. Soooooo Benny
and Kenny! ... Fiery explosions!

(faint)

God—Can we start now? We're wasting precious
tape here... Alright... Take one...

*(They play an unfamiliar music:
churning insects clattering light-years
off in the distance... ~20 seconds
pass... Then the scattering
commotion gives way to a steady
pulse. The music is now a single
heartbeat backlit by countless tiny*

*fractures... ~10 seconds pass...
This music from the CD continues.)*

∞ 3.8 ∞

(JIB retrieves a pad of paper, a pen, and her copy of Grimm's Fairy Tales. She finds a particular story in the text and reads for a moment.)

*(JIB begins to write enthusiastically.
Music from the CD continues...)*

(Lights up on BEN's apartment as we remember it from 1.1.)

(Sounds of rain falling on the windows. A distant street sweeper brooms asphalt. A faucet drips upon a pile of dishes in the sink creating a fast-paced rhythm.)

(TELE, 20s, an apparition, appears and steps into dim lamplight as BEN takes up a pair of large headphones, plugs them into his keyboard toy, and places them over his ears. He crosses to his cluttered workstation of sheet music and pencils.)

(The lamp nearest TELE begins to flicker, the bulb crackling faintly. There is an old-fashioned rotary telephone receiver embedded in TELE's torso: the earpiece at her collarbone and the mouthpiece cradling her heart. The receiver's cord wraps an arm, extends to the floor, and drags a quietly jangling base. The sound of her amplified heartbeat quakes the room. She is smiling, calm, uninjured.)

(Noticing that BEN can no longer hear the sound of the dripping faucet, TELE balletically turns the

sink's handle, and the dripping stops. She turns to watch BEN.)

(BEN sits with the keyboard across his knees, composing until—)

*(He jolts up from the couch in a rage, * snatches up his music and crosses the room tearing pages. TELE follows him; lights flicker as she passes them.)*

*(BEN stops... Fumes... Then * bends down to clean up the paper scraps.)*

TELE

(whispered, comfortingly)

Can you hear me?

(BEN doesn't.)

TELE

Benjamin? Can you hear me?

(BEN doesn't.)

TELE

Shhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh.....

(BEN stops gathering scraps.)

(JIB crosses to a piano.)

TELE

Just listen... Out there... Everything you need.

(BEN drops a handful sheet music fragments and the pieces scatter. He looks toward a window.)*

TELE

Can you hear it!

(A fluttering low tone begins. TELE guides BEN to a window. They open it as the rain becomes hail.)

TELE

Listen to that and listen to me:

You're gonna spend a very long time with my boy.
Longer than you can imagine. You're gonna meet
him soon.

You be kind to him. He deserves your kindness.

*(Winds gust and die. The
hailstorm intensifies.)*

TELE

You need each other.

*(Sounds of the street sweeper
approaching.)*

BEN

Of course... A hailstorm! ... IT'S—

TELE

Shhhhhhhhhhh ... Just listen.

(Pause.)

BEN

IT'S PERFECT!

*(BEN breaks away. TELE is
thrown. The fluttering low tone
stops as BEN races to collect a
jacket.)*

BEN

Perfect-perfect-perfect-perfect-*(con't)*

*(BEN darts to the door, * opens it
and runs out. SLAM.)*

*(TELE crosses back to the open
window and looks down to the
street. We can hear the street
sweeper becoming louder...
louder... louder)*

*(Lights and sound fade out in
BEN's apartment as)*

*(JIB slowly begins to play along
with the music from the CD. She*

*cobbles together a simple progression:
A flower that opens at night.)*

*(HOARDER and BEN's music
from the CD blends perfectly with
JIB's new progression.)*

Song: FIREWOOD

JIB

BOX ON A DESK
NEXT TO A CASTLE OF GLASS
THAT THEY BOUGHT FROM THE AIRPORT
THE PRICE ON THE BACK

SHELVES OVERFLOW
WITH PHOTOGRAPHS AND BONES
A MUSEUM OF SOMEONE
THAT WILL NEVER BE KNOWN

PENNIES FOR THOUGHTS
THAT COST A MOUNTAIN OF DEBT
RUSTING IN BOTTLES
THEY'LL NEVER COME TO COLLECT
THEY'LL NEVER COME TO COLLECT

AND YOU WERE SURE THAT YOU COULD KEEP IT ALL
OFF IN A TOWER WHERE THERE'D ALWAYS BE SPACE
AND YOU WERE SURE THAT IF YOU READ IT ALL
YOU WOULD EVENTUALLY COME ACROSS YOUR OWN NAME

DAFFODILS HANGING OFF A REARVIEW OF LIES
YOU KEEP YOUR FOOT ON THE PEDAL
AND YOU CAN'T SEE OUTSIDE

BOXES OF NOVELS
FILL ALL THE SEATS AND THE TRUNK
THERE'S BARELY ROOM FOR A DRIVER
IN THIS TREASURE CHEST OF JUNK

AND THE TOWER IS CRUMBLING
AND YOU ARE THINKING OF RUNNING
FROM ALL THESE YEARS OF COMMITMENT
TO KEEP THIS DEAD GARDEN GROWING
TO KEEP THIS DEAD GARDEN GROWING

AND YOU WERE SURE THAT YOU COULD LEARN IT ALL
AND IF YOU DID THAN YOU WOULD ALWAYS BE SAFE

JIB (con't)

AND YOU WERE SURE THAT YOU COULD USE IT ALL
TO BUILD A FORTRESS THEY COULD NEVER TAKE

*(Lights shift. We see JIB
reunited with her band at a small
venue.)*

IT'S GOT TO BE AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE
MAYBE YOU'RE REALLY GOING MAD
MAYBE IT'S BURIED IN THE OLD SCHOOL
MAYBE YOU NEVER REALLY-

AND NOW YOU'RE STARTING LOOK
A LITTLE LIKE SOMEONE IN A BOOK
YOU'VE TUCKED YOURSELF INSIDE
YOUR BODY PRESSED AND DRIED

FAIRIES AND PRINCES
AND THE STORY DOESN'T CHANGE
HE KEEPS SLAYING THE DRAGON
SHE'S STILL CHAINED TO THE CAGE

AND IT'S TIME TO RETIRE
BUT YOU CAN'T GIVE UP THE TITLE
AS THE HEAD OF COLLECTIONS
FOR THESE DEAD LETTER FILES

AND YOU WERE SURE THAT YOU COULD KEEP IT ALL LOCKED
AND ALL THE NICE DARK THINGS WOULD NEVER GET LIT
AND YOU WERE SURE THAT YOU COULD KEEP THEM OUT
AND YOU WERE SURE THAT YOU COULD KEEP YOURSELF HID

IT'S GOT TO BE AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE
MAYBE IT'S UNDER MOM AND DAD
MAYBE YOU WROTE IT IN YOUR DIARY
MAYBE YOU NEVER REALLY-
IT'S GOT TO BE AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE
MAYBE YOU HAVE IT TO YOUR SON
MAYBE IT'S TIME YOU JUST ADMIT THAT
MAYBE YOU NEVER REALLY HAD
A PAST WORTH PASSING ON.

end