

THE LAST GIFT

BY EARNEST LEWIS

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

SAMUEL

MALE (Age, 60-70) A nursing home resident, bitter and filled with guilt after giving his newborn son up for adoption when his wife died in childbirth. He strongly dislikes singing, especially a certain song sung during the holidays. Gruff and guarded, he hides regret behind sarcasm while quietly longing for redemption.

MALACHI

MALE (Age, 10-12) A young boy who is Samuel's grandson (unknown to the audience/Samuel). Malachi is hopeful and energetic, but overcompensates to feel worthy of love. This leads to comedic mistakes being made and Malachi learning how to accept and move past his mistakes. His favorite foods are French fries and pizza. His is schoolmates with Nyla and Kylan.

KAIROS

MALE (Age, 35-45) Samuel's biological son, given up for adoption as a baby. A calm, patient man, who believes things happen for a reason. He is quite a successful man, and is constantly guarding and protecting his son, becoming a bit overprotective at times. In the end, he will learn what it means to let things go.

SIMONE

FEMALE (Age, 35-40) Kairos' wife and biological mother to Malachi. Recently, she has been terribly ill, but enjoys listening to Malachi's stories when he comes home from school. She is calm with warmth. She's sharp, grounded, and carries her pain quietly.

NURSE MINA

FEMALE (Age, 35-45) Mina is gentle in nature but no pushover. She is truly the heart of the nursing home. She hums while she works, calls everyone "darling" and can shut Samuel down with a single look. She deeply cares about each resident, and their wellbeing.

NURSE ARLEEN

FEMALE (Age, 23-28) Arleen is dry and practical. She is caring, a little sarcastic and can be a bit ditzy at times. She keeps the place running while pretending she doesn't care about the resident's antics. Eye-rolls are her love language.

WALTER

MALE (Age, 65-70) Old-school, picky, and effortlessly hilarious. Complains about everything, but secretly loves the attention. He's been in the home the longest and acts like he owns it. He has a large amount of paranoia, especially about secret government spying and possible UFO attacks.

MABEL & CLYDE

FEMALE and MALE (Ages, 65-70) These two have a mini love story brewing. Even though they're older, they have the attitude of teenagers, sneaking snacks, arguing playfully, and finishing each other's sentences. They are always commenting on the various crazy things going on around the home.

NYLA

FEMALE (Age, 10-12) This young girl carries herself like a princess, not snobby, but dramatic. Nyla "helps" people as if she's providing them with a royal favor. She is definitely all charm with confidence. Bossy in the sweetest way. She is schoolmates with Malachi and Kylan.

KYLAN

MALE (Age, 10-12) This boy is nonstop motion. Kylan's brain is always three steps ahead of his body. He touches everything, breaks half of it, then apologizes twice. Pure chaos with a big heart. He is schoolmates with Malachi and Nyla.

PROPS

- Fireplace
- Christmas Tree
- Christmas Tree Ornaments
- Table (2)
- Chairs (6)
- Christmas Decorations
- Backpack
- Broom
- Christmas Tree Star
- Deck of Cards
- Bowl
- Spoon
- Badges (2)

COSTUMES

- Nurse Scrubs (2)

ACT I

SCENE ONE

INT. NURSING HOME.

SAMUEL is sitting alone by the window fiddling with cash. NURSE ARLEEN is assisting other residents including WALTER, CLYDE, and MABEL with medication and drinks, while NURSE MINA is decorating the Christmas tree with ornaments.

NARRATOR steps onto stage as people in the background freeze. He says his lines.

KAIROS/NARRATOR

Now, this is a story, a strange little tale, about gifts not wrapped with ribbon, or sent by the mail. Not flashy. Not spoken. Not bought in a store. It's something much bigger, much harder to ignore.

This story begins late in the year, with something quite small that becomes very clear. Not shiny. Not loud. Not easy to see.

It's a gift that changes who we are. Who we choose to be.

The NARRATOR exits. Stage comes to life.

SAMUEL counts the money, glancing toward the window. He notices NURSE MINA approaching and quickly folds the bills, hiding them.

NURSE MINA approaches, humming a Christmas melody, and glances at him before stopping.

NURSE MINA

(Sweet tone)

You've been more quiet than usual today, SAMUEL. What's been on your mind?

SAMUEL
(Grunts)

None of your damn business.

NURSE MINA places a cup on a table
next to SAMUEL.

NURSE MINA
(Whispers)

Hot chocolate with extra marshmallows. Just how
you like it.

NURSE MINA continues to hum as she
leaves to help NURSE ARLEEN with
assisting the other residents.

SAMUEL
(Irritated)

And stop with all of that damn humming!

WALTER stands abruptly from his
chair and begins screaming.

WALTER
(Panicking)

See! I knew it! I knew it all along!

NURSE ARLEEN
What is it now, Walter?

WALTER
They said I was crazy! They said I was insane!
But now I have proof!

NURSE MINA
Proof of what, darling?

WALTER
You people are trying to kill me!

NURSE ARLEEN
(Unamused)
Oh, Walter. Sit down.

WALTER
No! I have proof. Take a look at this.

WALTER holds up his pudding cup.

NURSE MINA
Yes. What about it?

WALTER
It's my pudding!

NURSE ARLEEN

Grade "A" observation, Walter, but what about this pudding cup has you acting like this?

WALTER

There's poison in it! My tongue is ticking, see!

WALTER sticks out his tongue as
NURSE ARLEEN takes the pudding cup
and sniffs it.

NURSE ARLEEN

(Gasp)

Oh no!

WALTER

What is it? You see it, too!

NURSE ARLEEN

Yes! I see... I see that you're overreacting.
This is just a regular pudding cup, Walter. Now
sit down.

WALTER snatches the pudding cup.

WALTER

(Mumbling)

Give me my damn pudding cup.

Walter takes a big spoonful of the
pudding.

WALTER (CONT'D)

Mmmm. That's what it was...needs more sugar.

MABEL and CLYDE are playing cards
on a nearby table.

CLYDE

(Reacting to WALTER)

What a crazy old bastard.

MABEL

(Chuckling)

You're one to talk. The amount of hell you talk
down on this place.

CLYDE

Well, listen here. I'm pretend crazy. That guy,
Walter, is the real deal. One will talk about
causing hell, and the other will actually do
it.

Clyde places a card down on the
table.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

And it looks like this crazy old bastard just beat you! What's the score now?

MABEL

One to ninety-nine.

SAMUEL

You two want a microphone, or should I just applaud now?

MABEL

Oh, phooey. Who asked for your opinion, you grouch. Shall we all stop living to make you happy?

SAMUEL

(Grunts)

Oh, no, don't stop on my account. I would enjoy the silence too much.

NURSE ARLEEN

Alright, everyone, calm down.

NURSE MINA

Arleen is right. It's Christmas time. This is the time for cheer, laughter, and carols! Fa la la la la-

SAMUEL stands up abruptly.

SAMUEL

The hell you don't! I already told ya about your damn humming, and now you're singing.

MABEL stands up.

MABEL

I've had just about enough of you. Ever since you got here, you've been nothing but rude and nasty.

SAMUEL

Damnit. If talking were an exercise, you'd be in the damn Olympics!

CLYDE stands up.

CLYDE

You better learn how to watch your mouth talking to her.

SAMUEL

You standing up don't make you taller.

WALTER

Wow! This pudding is really good.

EVERYONE

(Bickering)

The doorbell rings.

NURSE MINA

Oh! Perfect timing. Our guests are here.

NURSE MINA goes to the door and
opens it.

NYLA, KYLAN, and MALACHI enter the
stage.

MALACHI, NYLA, KYLAN

Merry Christmas!

SAMUEL

And what the hell is this?

NURSE ARLEEN

Welcome in, kids. Come here, so I can get you
signed in.

KYLAN

It smells like my grandma in here.

NURSE ARLEEN takes MALACHI, KYLAN,
and NYLA to get signed in. SAMUEL
approaches NURSE MINA.

SAMUEL

Explain, woman! What in tarnation is going on
here.

NURSE MINA

Isn't it wonderful? These children have come to
spread some holiday cheer!

SAMUEL

I don't want them here. Tell them to go
somewhere else.

NURSE MINA

Samuel. We've got to give them a chance. Hey,
you might even end up a little happier.

SAMUEL

And who says I ain't happy?

SAMUEL goes to sit down away from
the kids.

NURSE ARLEEN

Alright, we've got you all signed in. Now feel free to mingle with the residents, and spread some Christmas cheer.

WALTER abruptly stands up

WALTER

I knew it! I knew it all along!

NURSE ARLEEN

(Whispering)

Not again.

KYLAN goes over to WALTER.

KYLAN

You knew what, mister?

WALTER

These people are trying to get rid of me. I just know it, but no one believes me.

KYLAN

Well, I believe you, mister.

WALTER pauses.

WALTER

You...you do?

KYLAN

Yes! This is just like in volume three of my favorite Vampire series when the evil twins tried to get rid of their clan, so they could be the last ones standing!

WALTER

(Intrigued)

Evil twins? Clan? Tell me more.

KYLAN takes a seat next to WALTER and begins talking to him.

NYLA

(About WALTER and KYLAN)

What an...interesting duo.

CLYDE

And one that's crazy as hell, too.

CLYDE stares at MABEL.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

You know, Mabel. There's something I've wanted to say for years.

MABEL

Yeah? What is it?

CLYDE

It's that I...

CLYDE reaches over the table and
knocks a drink onto MABEL's dress.

MABEL

(Tearing up)

Clyde! Oh no! This was my favorite dress. My
grandmother gave it to me when I was a little
girl.

CLYDE

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to-

NYLA approaches MABEL and CLYDE.

NYLA

Don't worry. We can handle this. Fixing fabric
is usually something my maid does...but since
we are facing a full-scale fashion emergency, I
suppose I'll bless you with my talents.

NYLA gently takes MABEL by the
arm.

NYLA (CONT'D)

Come, now. A princess never panics.

NYLA leads MABEL off to the side.

SAMUEL

Damn kids...

MALACHI begins to approach SAMUEL

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Don't even try it.

MALACHI

Hi! My name's Malachi. What's yours-

SAMUEL stands up and exits off the
stage in a hurry, dropping his
money in the process.

MALACHI notices the money and
picks it up. He then walks over to
NURSE ARLEEN.

NURSE ARLEEN

I see you've met Mr. Samuel.

MALACHI

Yes.

NURSE ARLEEN

(Sarcastically)

Yeah. He tends to go missing at times.

MALACHI

Missing? But I have this-

MABEL

(Excited)

Oh my goodness!

Everyone stops what they're doing
and looks at MABEL and NYLA.

MABEL (CONT'D)

You cleaned it! You're amazing!

NYLA

And to make it even better, we can sew a patch
here, add some sparkles there, and then you'll
look like real royalty!

NYLA brings MABEL to center stage
in a clean outfit.

NYLA (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen. May I present to
you...Princess Mabel!

MABEL curtsies to the crowd.

Everyone in the room applauds.

MABEL

You're a special little girl. I used to be a
princess back in my day.

NYLA

Used to be? You still are, and will always be,
Princess Mabel. In fact, I think you're almost
as perfect as... well, me!

CLYDE

If you're a princess, Mabel. That must mean I'm
the frog.

WALTER

Frog is right. Have you seen yourself in a
mirror lately? Lookin' like a frog mixed with
"I'll be damned."

KYLAN

Well, he must be one of the good looking frogs.

WALTER

Yeah...if ya like crusty ones.

NURSE MINA

Alright everyone, it's time for afternoon activities.

CLYDE

Already?

NURSE ARLEEN

Bingo waits for no one.

NURSE MINA

Come along now.

Residents begin to gather.

NURSE MINA (CONT'D)

Kids, why don't you-

WALTER

(Screams)

WAIT!

Everyone freezes.

WALTER (CONT'D)

Where's my pudding.

CLYDE

You ate it.

WALTER

No I didn't.

CLYDE

I'm not doing this with you.

WALTER

If I did eat it, then why do I still feel hungry?

WALTER runs offstage.

WALTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

THEY TOOK IT!

NURSE MINA

Oh no.

NURSE ARLEEN

Not again.

NURSE MINA

Arleen, he's headed toward the west hall.

NURSE ARLEEN

Of course he is.

NURSE MINA

Kids, don't move.

KYLAN

We were just standing-

NURSE MINA

Good.

NURSE ARLEEN, NURSE MINA, MABEL,
and CLYDE exit the stage.

KYLAN

(To NYLA and MALACHI)

So...does blinking count as moving?

NYLA notices MALACHI shifting
something in his pocket.

NYLA

What's that?

MALACHI pulls out the money to
show NYLA and KYLAN.

MALACHI

It's just...some money.

KYLAN

Wow! That looks like more than just some! You
can buy a whole bunch of frogs with that!

NYLA

Eww. Gross. You should buy a horse. Like the
ones on our ranch!

MALACHI

It's not mine.

NYLA

Then why do you have it?

MALACHI

It's Mr. Samuel's

KYLAN

The mean old guy?

MALACHI

I saw him drop it, so I grabbed it so no one else would take it. I want to give it back to him.

NYLA

Well...where is he?

MALACHI

The nurse said he likes to go missing sometimes.

KYLAN

Like hide and seek?

NYLA

No, Kylan. Like the people on the news.

KYLAN

Oh no! We have to help find him.

NYLA

Okay. We need a plan.

KYLAN

(Shouts)

We shout his name?

NYLA

No.

KYLAN

(Whispers)

We whisper his name?

NYLA

No.

KYLAN

(Excited)

We chant his name!

NYLA

Definitely no.

KYLAN immediately drops to his knees and peers under a chair.

KYLAN

I'll look under things.

NYLA

That's not a plan.

MALACHI

What if we leave the money somewhere he can see it?

MALACHI gently places the money on the chair where SAMUEL was sitting.

KYLAN looks behind the Christmas tree.

KYLAN

He's not over here either.

NYLA walks to the window and looks out dramatically.

NYLA

Maybe he's in the guest house.

KYLAN

Guest house?

NYLA

Yes! Like the one at home. We have one for the dog, the cat, and...

KYLAN

Oh, yeah! I remember. The cat's guest house is bigger than my house!

NYLA

(Rolls her eyes)

Whatever.

MALACHI

How about I leave it here? If he comes back, he'll see it.

KYLAN approaches MALACHI.

KYLAN

And if he doesn't?

MALACHI

Then...I don't know what else to do.

KYLAN walks to the hallway entrance and leans forward.

KYLAN

(Yelling)

Mr. Samuel?

No answer.

NYLA
We are not yelling.

KYLAN
I was whisper-yelling.

NYLA
Still yelling.

NYLA straightens her posture,
trying to sound grown-up.

NYLA (CONT'D)
Hello, Mr. Samuel? This is a very official
announcement. You have dropped your money and
it would be very responsible of you to come get
it.

KYLAN salutes.

KYLAN
Very responsible.

No response.

MALACHI walks to a stack of boxes.

MALACHI
I don't think he's here.

NYLA and KYLAN look at him.

KYLAN
That's sad.

NYLA
Yeah.

Footsteps are heard offstage.

NURSE ARLEEN (O.S.)
Okay, Mina. I think we got him calm now.

KYLAN
Uh oh.

MALACHI quickly grabs the money
from the chair and stuffs it into
his pocket.

NYLA straightens up.

KYLAN hops back to where he was
standing.

NURSE ARLEEN and NURSE MINA enter
the stage.

NURSE ARLEEN

Alright. Alright. Sorry about that, kids, but
we need to get you signed out a little early,
I'm afraid. Your chaperone is almost here.

NURSE MINA notices MALACHI
nervously fidgeting around.
She goes over to him.

NURSE MINA

Is everything okay?

MALACHI

Yes. I'm just...itchy.

NURSE MINA

That's okay, sweetheart. This building makes
everybody itchy eventually.

Doorbell rings.

NURSE ARLEEN

Alright kids! Your chaperone is here!

NURSE ARLEEN answers the door.
KAIROS enters the stage.

NURSE ARLEEN (CONT'D)

Ah! You must be the chaperone. You met with
Mina before, but my name's Arleen.

KAIROS

Nice to meet you, Arleen. My name is Kairos.

NURSE ARLEEN

Doing your duties to watch over these kids, eh?

KAIROS

It comes with having a wife that never takes no
for an answer.

NURSE ARLEEN

I've been in the nursing home for a while, so
I've heard many stories like this. Yet,
somehow, they always have the best endings. The
kids were great by the way. Thanks for having
them stop by.

KAIROS

Thanks, but it wasn't my idea. It was my
wife... and son's.

KAIROS points toward MALACHI.

NURSE ARLEEN

So, Malachi's yours?

KAIROS

Yeah. He got his friends together and wanted to do something good for people who he felt like needed it.

NURSE ARLEEN

Well, he was right. The residents enjoyed every minute.

NURSE ARLEEN finishes checking everyone out.

NURSE ARLEEN (CONT'D)

And you are all good to go. Thank you for stopping by.

NURSE MINA

We enjoyed all of you!

MALACHI, NYLA, KYLAN, and KAIROS exit the stage.

NURSE ARLEEN

Now, as for the real troublemakers of the day-

WALTER, MABLE, and CLYDE enter.

WALTER

Who? Me?

NURSE ARLEEN

(Shouting)

Especially you...it's time to get washed up and ready for bed.

CLYDE

It's 5:00 already?

MABEL

5:00?! We have to hurry. I don't want to miss my stories.

NURSE MINA

Don't worry, Mabel. I have your stories already lined up. Now let's get you washed and into some warm PJs.

NURSE MINA, NURSE ARLEEN, MABEL, CLYDE, and WALTER exits.

After a moment or two, SAMUEL re-enters.

SAMUEL

(mumbling)

Finally those damn kids are gone. Next time
I'll really let MINA and ARLEEN have it if they
pull a stunt like that aga-

SAMUEL freezes as he checks his
pocket. He frantically checks all
of his pockets.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

What the hell?

SAMUEL frantically checks around
the nursing home, knocking over
objects.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

(Whimpering, panicked)

No...no...no...where is it? Come on...come
on...

SAMUEL searches the floor,
defeated.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

(Quietly)

It must've been him. That damn kid. He stole
it.

NURSE MINA enters the stage.

NURSE MINA

Hold on one second, Mabel. I'm getting the hair
tie now.

NURSE MINA notices SAMUEL on the
floor. SAMUEL freezes.

NURSE MINA (CONT'D)

Samuel? What in heaven's name are you doing
down there?

SAMUEL

I was just...uh smelling how good the floor
was. Is this new cleaner?

SAMUEL sniffs the floor.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Mmmm. Pinesol...

NURSE MINA

Samuel get up off that floor before you hurt
something important!

SAMUEL stands up.

SAMUEL

You worry too damn much. I'm as strong as a bull.

NURSE MINA

If it had arthritis?

SAMUEL

Yep. With arthritis...

NURSE MINA

Samuel, what are you really doing?

SAMUEL

Nothing! Everything is fine. Perfectly fine.

(Beat-thinking)

I just, uh, need you to do something for me.

NURSE MINA

Oh? And what's that, dear?

SAMUEL

I, uh, need those kids to come back.

NURSE MINA

Samuel! That's wonderful! I knew you'd warm up to them.

SAMUEL

Warm up? It ain't like that. I just need to talk to the boy.

NURSE MINA

Malachi?

SAMUEL

Yeah, I was a bit hard on him. I just owe the kid a proper Christmas greeting. Joy to the world, and all of that crap.

NURSE MINA

This is wonderful! I'll let Arleen know, so he can plan their next visit. It should be within the next few weeks.

SAMUEL

Few weeks? No. I need to see the kid soon.

NURSE MINA

Look who's got a soft spot after all.

SAMUEL

Whatever. Just don't tell anyone.

NURSE MINA

I'll see what I can do. The kids really lit
this place with the Christmas spirit.

NURSE MINA grabs the hair tie and
exits the stage.

SAMUEL sits down in a chair,
slumps, and takes a long exhale.

SAMUEL

(Beat)

..."Christmas spirit" my ass.

BLACKOUT.

END SCENE

SCENE TWO

INT. NURSING HOME.

The next day, NURSE ARLEEN and NURSE MINA are attending to the residents. SAMUEL is anxiously shifting in his chair, checking the door every so often.

NURSE ARLEEN
Samuel, sit still. You're making the whole room nervous.

NURSE MINA
Yeah, Samuel. Don't be too anxious, it's not good for your health.

CLYDE and MABEL are playing cards at a table.

CLYDE
You know what's funny...one day you have no interest in the kids, then the next you're ready to take them in as your own.

MABEL
Samuel has always been a strange one.

MABEL places a card down.

MABEL (CONT'D)
Go fish, hun.

CLYDE
So, it's like that huh-

WALTER abruptly stands up.

WALTER
(Screams)
They've breached the west wing! Defend yourselves!

WALTER rushes to hide.

NURSE ARLEEN
(Sighs)
Please...not today.

WALTER
I'm serious! Look at my soup. It gave me a message.

CLYDE

My soup gave me a message, too. It said "this guy is crazy as hell.."

NURSE ARLEEN goes to check
WALTER's soup and NURSE MINA helps
WALTER back to his seat.

NURSE ARLEEN

Walter...this isn't a message. It's just
alphabet soup.

WALTER

Exactly! And see what it spells?

WALTER points at the soup.

WALTER (CONT'D)

DOOM!

NURSE MINA takes a look at the
soup.

NURSE MINA

Actually, sweetheart, it spells LOOP.

WALTER

Yes! You see it, too! We are all trapped.
Trapped in one big time loop!

CLYDE

That explains why you've told the same story
every day for the last five years.'

WALTER

Repetition is a sign of wisdom.

CLYDE

Yeah? Tell that to people in the nuthouse you
lunatic.

NURSE ARLEEN

Walter. Eat your soup.

WALTER

No! That's exactly what they want me to do! I'm
not falling for-

WALTER sniffs the soup.

WALTER (CONT'D)

Actually. It does smell kind of good.

WALTER begins to slurp the soup.

WALTER (CONT'D)

Ahhh...delicious.

MABEL

I used to make some good chicken noodle soup back in my day.

CLYDE

I wouldn't mind trying some. If it's as good as you look.

The doorbell rings.

NURSE MINA

My goodness! That must be our visitors for today!

SAMUEL

Visitors! Finally.

NURSE ARLEEN

You seem awfully excited, Samuel. Even for you this is strange.

SAMUEL

Oh shut it. Go help Walter and his crazy ass brain.

NURSE MINA answers the door.
MALACHI, NYLA, and KYLAN enter the stage. They are followed in by SIMONE, their chaperone.

SIMONE

I'm so sorry. We were running a bit late than usual. My husband is doing overtime at work, so I had to bring the kids.

NURSE MINA

No worries, dear. The most important thing is that you made it here safely.

NURSE ARLEEN

Has everything been okay, Ms. Simone?

SIMONE

Yes. I'm great. My procedure was a success! Now we are just working on paying off those darn medical bills. But enough about me, the kids are here to have a great time.

NYLA

We're back again, everyone! Keep the applause to a minimum.

MABEL begins to clap
enthusiastically.

KYLAN

Are you really that happy to be here, Nyla?

NYLA

Oh, I really am! I love this place.

CLYDE smiles, and WALTER salutes
KYLAN.

KYLAN

I'm excited to be here, too. Everything just
feels so...dysfunctional.

CLYDE

Kid's got A-1 instincts.

NURSE ARLEEN

Alright...you are all now signed in. We'll see
you in an hour, Simone.

SIMONE

Thank you. Have fun, kids.

NURSE MINA

Here. Let me and Arleen help you to your car.
It's slippery out there.

SIMONE

Thank you. I'd appreciate that.

KYLAN, NYLA, and MALACHI wave at
SIMONE. SIMONE, NURSE ARLEEN and
NURSE MINA exit the stage.

KYLAN

Walter!

WALTER

Kylan!

KYLAN approaches WALTER.

KYLAN

How did your secret service mission go this
time?

WALTER

Well...let me tell you about it...

KYLAN and WALTER begin talking.
NYLA approaches MABEL.

NYLA

Hi, Princess Mabel! I figured you might miss me, so I rushed over. But, not too fast, because a princess never runs.

MABEL

Oh, sweetheart. I did miss you. It's nice to have some girl power around. I'm usually stuck with these buffoons.

MABEL, NYLA, and CLYDE talk.
SAMUEL stares at MALACHI and approaches him.

SAMUEL

Hey, kid. Can you, uh, step this way for a sec?

SAMUEL and MALACHI step to the side.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

So...how've you been and everythin-

MALACHI reaches into his pocket and hands SAMUEL the money.

MALACHI

Here. I kept this safe in my piggy bank.

SAMUEL grabs the money and quickly puts it into his pocket.

SAMUEL

I guess you're not that bad, after all. I'll talk to you in a couple of minutes. Go and talk to your friends until I'm finished.

MALACHI

But... Oh, alright.

MALACHI, noticeably hurt, walks towards the other kids. SAMUEL sees.

CLYDE notices MALACHI.

CLYDE

Samuel kick you to the curb again?

MABEL

It's strange he would do that. He's been asking for you kids to come over for a while now.

MALACHI

Yeah. But don't worry. It happens a lot.

CLYDE

Don't get used to people like Samuel, kid.
You'll always end up getting hurt.

MABEL

Oh, hush, Clyde.

CLYDE

And I ain't wrong either. You're like a broken
vending machine to him. He kicks you before you
pay out.

MALACHI

It's okay, really. I don't want to bother him
anymore.

CLYDE

(Smiling)

Trust me, kid. Bothering Samuel is half the
fun.

WALTER

Yep. His brain rattles like a loose jar of
marbles.

KYLAN

I love marbles!

NYLA

Speaking of marble. These tables and chairs
could really use an upgrade. The decor is
tragic around here.

SAMUEL finishes counting his money
and puts it back into his pocket.

NURSE MINA and NURSE ARLEEN enter.

NURSE MINA

That weather is something serious!

NURSE ARLEEN

It's like this every year, yet, somehow, we
never get used to it.

SAMUEL

You two ever think of takin' a day off? A week?
A month?

NURSE ARLEEN

Sorry, we can't do that. The building might
collapse.

CLYDE

Building's already halfway there. Looks like
its been smokin' two packs a day.

NURSE MINA

Oh! You just reminded me. We have some refreshments in the back! Come get washed up, children. Arleen get the residents ready.

NURSE ARLEEN

Alright. Lets get going. Samuel...you coming?

SAMUEL

Leave me alone.

NURSE ARLEEN

Suit yourself.

NURSE ARLEEN, NURSE MINA, CLYDE, MABEL, KYLAN, NYLA, and MALACHI exit the stage.

SAMUEL sits alone fiddling with his money.

SAMUEL

(Quietly)

I got what I wanted. I'm happy. I'm happy. I'm...fine.

SAMUEL stands up.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

This feeling. Why the hell does it feel so familiar?

SAMUEL paces around.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Every damn time...as soon as I get what I want my chest starts twistin' like a busted pipe.

SAMUEL shakes his head.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Stupid kid. Kids bounce back. They always do. I mean...this kid doesn't even know who I am. Am I that important to him?

SAMUEL flops back down onto his chair.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

(Whispers)

So why won't this feeling go away?

NURSE ARLEEN enters the stage, followed by NURSE MINA who is humming.

SAMUEL is staring with his eyes open in deep thought. NURSE MINA walks by SAMUEL and freezes.

NURSE MINA

(Whispers dramatically)

He's not moving. Oh....no! This wasn't supposed to happen. Arleen call the ambulance. I think Samuel is-

SAMUEL

Trust me, if I was dead I wouldn't come back to this hellhole.

NURSE MINA

(Gasps)

He's alive! Thank goodness. I was already planning the memorial service of our beloved Samuel. I even had a song picked out!

NURSE ARLEEN

Mina...it's only been 30 seconds.

NURSE MINA

Tragedy doesn't follow a schedule.

NURSE MINA leans in toward SAMUEL.

NURSE MINA (CONT'D)

Samuel. Are you sure you're feeling alright? You didn't yell at me for my humming. Not even a tiny grunt.

SAMUEL

Not in the mood.

NURSE MINA

He might be broken.

NURSE ARLEEN

I think I left Walter's prescription in my the medical quarters. Can you go grab it for me?

WALTER (O.S.)

I ain't never needed any meds!

CLYDE (O.S.)

People in the psych ward say the same thing.

MABEL (O.S.)

They sure do.

NURSE MINA

I see. Sure thing.

NURSE MINA exits the stage.

NURSE ARLEEN approaches SAMUEL

SAMUEL

You want me to thank you or something?

NURSE ARLEEN

No. But I do want you to tell me what's going on. We are concerned. You haven't eaten, or left that spot-

SAMUEL

What do you do when you can't run away from something?

NURSE ARLEEN

(Pauses)

You stop running.

SAMUEL

(Grunts)

That's a stupid answer.

NURSE ARLEEN

You have to face those things. Otherwise...it follows you everywhere you go. There is no escaping something that's a part of you. It'll always go as fast and as slow as you can run.

SAMUEL

That's what you think, huh?

NURSE ARLEEN

Coming from a person living life, yes.

(Beat)

Is this about the kids, Samuel?

SAMUEL

Kids? Hell no. They're loud, and noisy, and I don't give a damn about-

NURSE ARLEEN

I know you too well.

NURSE ARLEEN exits the stage to attend to the other residents.

SAMUEL

(Groans)

This damn place...

Phone rings at the front desk.
NURSE MINA rushes onto the stage.

NURSE MINA

Phones are such a good invention. They give us a way to talk to our loved ones, share good moments and-

NURSE ARLEEN (O.S.)

Just answer the phone, Mina.

NURSE MINA

Oh right.

NURSE MINA picks up the phone.

NURSE MINA (CONT'D)

(Phone mumbling)

Helloooo! This is (name of nursing home) Uh-huh. Yes. Oh! I see. I'll get him. Give me one second.

NURSE MINA exits the stage, then brings MALACHI onto the stage.

NURSE MINA (CONT'D)

You have a phone call, hun.

MALACHI answers the phone.

MALACHI

Hello?...I see. Okay.

MALACHI hangs up the phone.

NURSE MINA

Good news?

MALACHI

My mom is in traffic, and coming back here. She forgot to give me something. I'll wait here for her.

NURSE MINA

Okay. I'll wait here with you...so how's-

A loud crash happens offstage.
Residents and kids scream.

WALTER (O.S.)

I knew it! I knew it! This place is haunted!

NURSE ARLEEN (O.S.)

Mina! I'll need some backup here...Walter! Put that down!

KYLAN (O.S.)

I believe in you, Walter!

NURSE ARLEEN (O.S.)

Kylan! Stop encouraging him!

Loud crashes happen.

NURSE MINA

Backup is on the way! Malachi take a seat here.
I'll be right back.

MALACHI sits down. MINA exits the stage.

MALACHI stares at SAMUEL.

SAMUEL

If you're going to burn a hole in my face at least do it from a different angle.

MALACHI

I just-wanted to say sorry.

SAMUEL

Wha'cha apologizing for?

MALACHI

Taking the money. I saw you drop it, and I didn't want anyone to take it.

SAMUEL

That's some damn good logic. You didn't want anyone to take it, so YOU took it.

MALACHI

No! I didn't mean it like that. I'm sorry. I'm always messing things up.

SAMUEL

For cryin' out loud. You didn't burn the damn building down. Relax.

MALACHI

I just didn't want you to be mad at me.

SAMUEL

Why the hell would I waste my time being mad at you?

MALACHI

I don't know. People usually are.

SAMUEL and MALACHI sit for a moment in silence.

MALACHI (CONT'D)

So, what's it for?

SAMUEL

What?

MALACHI

The money. What's it for?

SAMUEL

You were never taught how to mind your damn business?

MALACHI

Sorry. I-

SAMUEL

And will you stop apologizing? Look. If you really wanted to know, I'm saving the money so that I can leave this place.

MALACHI

Oh. So you're going somewhere better?

SAMUEL

No..I'm..I don't know. Aw, hell. What do you know anyway. I've lived more than you have.

MALACHI

I can help you.

SAMUEL

Help me? With what? You gonna carry me out of here in your backpack?

MALACHI

(Smiling)

I could try.

SAMUEL

Don't get smart with me, kid.

MALACHI

I'm not. My dad always tells me to never abandon those in need.

SAMUEL

Your dad sounds like a decent man.

MALACHI

You remind me a lot of him.

SAMUEL

That's enough.

MALACHI

I didn't mean it in a bad way-

SAMUEL

I said that's enough.

Samuel stands up abruptly.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

You don't know a damn thing about me. Or what it takes to help people.

MALACHI

I just-

SAMUEL

Leave me alone.

MALACHI nods then exits the stage.
SAMUEL sits back down, and fiddles with his money.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

(Under his breath)

Kids...

MALACHI re-enters the stage carrying a large broom.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

What the hell is that?

MALACHI

You said you wanted to leave.

SAMUEL

And? I also said leave me alone. I guess you got cotton in your ears or somethin'?

MALACHI

Well, my dad always said you can never leave a place without cleaning up first-

SAMUEL

Get that thing away from me.

MALACHI

Okay.

MALACHI doesn't move.

MALACHI (CONT'D)

(Beat)

Do you want to help?

SAMUEL

Damnit, kid. I said get that thing away from me. Where did you even find this?

WALTER runs onto the stage.

WALTER
I escaped!

WALTER looks at MALACHI holding
the broom.

WALTER (CONT'D)
(Screams)
NO!

SAMUEL
(Sighs, mumbles)
Why me?

WALTER
That's my special alien tracking broom! They're
coming after us!

WALTER reaches into the bristles
of the broom and pulls up an
antenna.

MALACHI
See, Mr. Samuel! I told you it was important!

SAMUEL
(To audience)
I'm surrounded by lunatics.

WALTER points to SAMUEL.

WALTER
You! You told him to take my broom.

SAMUEL
The hell? I didn't tell him to do a damn thing.
Leave us alone. Go talk to your alien buddies.

WALTER
They're here! They're here!

WALTER runs around the stage with
the broom.

SAMUEL
You have lost your damn mind!

NURSE MINA and NURSE ARLEEN run
onto the stage.

NURSE MINA
Samuel!

NURSE ARLEEN

Walter!

NURSE MINA and NURSE ARLEEN chase
WALTER around the stage.

WALTER

You'll never catch me alive!

WALTER runs off stage. NURSE MINA
and NURSE ARLEEN chase after him.

MALACHI walks over to SAMUEL.

MALACHI

I see you're a little busy right now...so I'll
leave you alone.

SAMUEL

Hey, kid?

MALACHI

Yeah?

SAMUEL

Why don't ya bring a shovel next time, so you
can dig my grave faster.

MALACHI

But I don't know where to get a shovel-

SAMUEL

I'm Leaving.

SAMUEL exits the stage.

MALACHI paces around the stage
sadly.

MALACHI

(Insert song: Someday at Christmas)

As MALACHI finishes the song, he
runs off stage and accidentally
leaves his bag. SAMUEL enters the
stage as the ACT ends.

BLACKOUT.

END SCENE

END OF ACT I

ACT II

SCENE ONE

INT. NURSING HOME.

The next day, NURSE ARLEEN is attending to the residents.

CLYDE and MABEL are sitting at a table playing cards. WALTER is eating, while SAMUEL sits alone in a corner, thinking.

The actors freeze as the NARRATOR walks back onto the stage.

KAIROS/NARRATOR

Now, the last time we left you, something took place, as Samuel held a note up to his face. A small little moment that nobody knew, except for one person...and now maybe two.

(Beat)

So now that it's found, and now that it's there, Samuel's next move is up in the air. Maybe it's time to move. Maybe it's time to grow.

(Beat)

Or maybe...it's time to change what we think we know.

(Beat)

About a person or two.

NARRATOR exits. Actors resume their actions.

CLYDE

(To MABEL)

So, what's the score now, princess?

MABEL

(Smiles)

I told you already. That name is reserved for one special girl.

CLYDE

Talkin' about Nyla, eh?

MABEL

I wonder when they're going to come back.

SAMUEL shifts slightly in his chair with mention of the kids.

CLYDE

Soon enough, I'm sure. These kids are a blessing to this place.

WALTER

(To CLYDE)

That's because children are agents of chaos!

NURSE ARLEEN

(To WALTER)

You tried to microwave a fork last week.

WALTER

And I would've gotten away with it, if it weren't for you meddling kids!

NURSE MINA enters.

NURSE MINA

Good morning, everyone!

Everyone except SAMUEL greets
NURSE MINA.

NURSE MINA approaches SAMUEL.

NURSE MINA (CONT'D)

Good morning, Samuel!

SAMUEL

(Beat)

Morning.

Everyone pauses and stares at
SAMUEL.

CLYDE

Well...I'll be damned.

MABEL

Was that a greeting?

NURSE ARLEEN

Someone check the weather. Hell just froze over.

NURSE MINA

Are you alright, dear?

SAMUEL

I said, morning.

NURSE MINA

Alright.

NURSE MINA begins to fiddle with
the Christmas tree.

The doorbell rings.

NURSE MINA (CONT'D)
I'll get it.

NURSE MINA answers the door.
SIMONE and MALACHI enter.

NURSE MINA (CONT'D)
Simone! Malachi! It's nice to see you.

SIMONE
I'm really sorry about the inconvenience.
Malachi left his bag here last time.

NURSE MINA
No worries at all dear. Samuel kept it safe.
He's right over there.

NURSE MINA points to SAMUEL.

SIMONE
Oh. Thank you.

SIMONE and MALACHI approach
SAMUEL.

MALACHI
Hi, Mr. Samuel. I dropped my bag when I was
here last time. The nurse told me you found it.

SAMUEL
Hey, kid.

SAMUEL gently hands MALACHI the
bag.

NURSE ARLEEN
Alright, everyone. Bingo starts in a few
minutes. Take your seats in the west hall.

WALTER
(Excited)
Finally!

CLYDE
(To WALTER)
You're only excited because you cheat.

WALTER
I don't cheat. They send me signals. I'm
spiritually aligned with them.

CLYDE

Whatever.

NURSE MINA

This way, everyone!

NURSE MINA ushers CLYDE, MABEL,
and WALTER off stage.

NURSE ARLEEN

You coming, Samuel?

SAMUEL

Nah. I'll sit this one out.

NURSE ARLEEN

Alright. That's fine.

SIMONE

Arleen. Before you go, could you show me where
the bathroom is?

NURSE ARLEEN

Sure thing. Follow me.

SIMONE and NURSE ARLEEN exit.

MALACHI sits next to SAMUEL.

MALACHI

Thank you for keeping it safe.

SAMUEL

I took it to make sure no one else would take
it.

SAMUEL and MALACHI chuckle a
little.

MALACHI

My dad always says when you really care about
something, you hold onto it.

SAMUEL

Your dad sounds like he's got a lot of
opinions.

MALACHI

He does.

SAMUEL

What else does he say?

MALACHI

He also says you shouldn't give up on people.

SAMUEL
Most people do.

MALACHI
Did you?

SAMUEL
Yeah.
(Beat)
So...how's school?

MALACHI shift's in his chair
nervously.

MALACHI
It's great.

SAMUEL
You're bad at lying.

MALACHI
How did you know?

MALACHI (CONT'D)
(Whispering)
Some people just don't like me.

SAMUEL
What was that?

MALACHI
I said some people don't like me. They don't
like who I am.

SAMUEL
(Beat)
They mess with you and stuff?

MALACHI
Yes. I try so hard to make friends, but I can
never do anything right.

SAMUEL
That's not okay.

MALACHI
It's fine.

SAMUEL
No. It isn't
(Beat)
Your mom and dad know about this?

MALACHI
No.

SAMUEL

Okay.

SIMONE enters. She approaches
SAMUEL and MALACHI.

SIMONE

Okay. I think we are all good to go, Malachi.

SAMUEL stands up and greets
SIMONE.

MALACHI begins playing with the
Christmas tree.

SAMUEL

I don't think we've properly met. I'm Samuel.

SIMONE

I'm Simone. It's nice to meet you. Thank you
for finding his bag.

SAMUEL

I wouldn't want it walkin' off on its own.

SIMONE

Sounds crazy, right? Somehow it still ends up
happening.

SAMUEL

That's what happens when you have a family.
Things get scattered sometimes.

SIMONE

(Quietly)

I'm just glad I've got mine.

SAMUEL

Your husband?

SIMONE

Yeah. And Malachi.

SAMUEL

The kid looks up to him.

SIMONE

They have a special bond. You know, father-
son...all of that stuff.

SAMUEL

Yeah.

SIMONE

I'm just glad they were around this year.

SAMUEL

Why's that?

SIMONE

I was in the hospital for a bit.

SAMUEL

You alright?

SIMONE

Yeah.

(Beat)

Lungs.

SAMUEL

Ah.

SIMONE

They fixed what they could.

SAMUEL

And probably charged you for what they couldn't.

SIMONE

(Laughs, quietly)

We're almost through the bill. Just a little left.

SAMUEL

That's never a little.

(Beat)

How much is a little?

SIMONE

Two-thousand.

SAMUEL

That much? What'd they do? Fill your lungs with gold?

SIMONE

(Laughing)

Oddly enough, I think it would be cheaper to do that.

(Beat)

My husband is taking extra shifts at work to make ends meet.

SAMUEL

Oh, really?

SIMONE

Yeah. Nights, weekends, whatever they'd give him.

SAMUEL

I understand.

(Beat, quietly)

I knew someone with lung problems.

SIMONE

Did you?

SAMUEL

(Beat)

My wife.

SIMONE

I'm sorry.

SAMUEL

Me too.

MALACHI joins SIMONE and SAMUEL.

SAMUEL rubs his hands nervously.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Sorry. I rub my hands when I'm nervous. Bad habit.

SIMONE

I understand. My husband does it all of the time, and now Malachi has picked up his bad habit.

SAMUEL

I see.

SIMONE

(To MALACHI)

We should get going. It was a pleasure to meet you, Samuel.

SAMUEL

Likewise.

(Beat)

Hey, uh... what'cha doing tomorrow?

SIMONE

For Christmas?

SAMUEL

Yeah.

SIMONE

We probably won't have Christmas this year. We're just trying to stay afloat.

NURSE ARLEEN enters.

NURSE ARLEEN

Ms. Simone. You're still here. Is everything okay?

SIMONE

Yeah. We were just talking to Samuel-

SAMUEL

(To SIMONE)

Why don't you come here?

SIMONE

Here?

SAMUEL

Tomorrow. For Christmas.

NURSE ARLEEN

If you have the time, we would love to have you. We're doing a big dinner and a whole thing.

SIMONE

I'll check with my husband, it's his birthday tomorrow, but that sounds wonderful.

NURSE ARLEEN guides MALACHI and
SIMONE to the door.

SAMUEL

Take care.

SIMONE and MALACHI exit the stage.

BLACKOUT.

END SCENE

SCENE TWO

INT. NURSING HOME.

The next day, Christmas. NURSE ARLEEN is helping WALTER, CLYDE and MABEL decorate the Christmas tree.

CLYDE is fiddling with tinsel.

CLYDE

Is this supposed to go around the tree? Back in my day, we were lucky to just have a tree.

MABEL

Times are changing. I'm okay with change.

NURSE ARLEEN takes the tinsel from CLYDE and gently places it on the tree.

NURSE ARLEEN

This goes on the tree.

CLYDE

(Sarcastically)

Yeah. No shit.

WALTER is standing on a chair, carefully placing the star on top of the tree.

WALTER carefully glances around the room, then secretly extends an antenna from the star.

NURSE ARLEEN

Walter, please get down.

WALTER

If I get down, the year collapses. Then...they will find us.

CLYDE

(To WALTER)

You know, somehow you always surprise me with how crazy your ass is.

MABEL

So what happens if the year collapses?

WALTER

Then only the worthy would have a chance to get redemption.

CLYDE

And what makes someone worthy?

WALTER

I can't say. Your mind wouldn't handle it.

CLYDE

I'm glad I don't understand your level of crazy.

NURSE ARLEEN

Okay. That's enough of the apocalypse for one morning. Let's finish decorating.

NURSE MINA and SAMUEL enter
carrying boxes.

NURSE MINA

Merry Christmas, everyone!

CLYDE

Our reinforcements are here.

MABEL

Merry Christmas, darling!

WALTER

Is it safe now?

NURSE MINA

As safe as Christmas ever is.

NURSE MINA looks over at SAMUEL.

NURSE MINA (CONT'D)

You can set those by the tree, Samuel.

SAMUEL

Oh. Okay.

SAMUEL places the box by the
Christmas tree and sits at a table
away from everyone.

MABEL

(About SAMUEL)

Even on Christmas, he sits away from us.

NURSE ARLEEN

I wouldn't worry too much. He will join us when he's ready.

The doorbell rings.

SAMUEL jumps up.

SAMUEL

I'll get it.

CLYDE

This must be his good deed for the year.

MABEL

Hush, Clyde. Let the man help in peace.

SAMUEL

(Quietly, to WALTER)

You're a damn fool...

SAMUEL answers the door.

MALACHI, SIMONE, NYLA and KYLAN
enter carrying five boxes of
gifts.

NYLA

We're here! And we brought gifts!

KYLAN

Merry Christmas!

NURSE MINA

How wonderful!

NURSE ARLEEN

That's perfect. Please set those under the
tree.

NURSE MINA

Arleen? Samuel? Could you lend me a hand in the
west wing?

NURSE ARLEEN

Sure thing.

SAMUEL

Okay.

NURSE ARLEEN, NURSE MINA, and
SAMUEL exit.

KYLAN, NYLA, SIMONE, and MALACHI
join the others and help decorate
the Christmas tree.

NYLA picks up an ornament.

NYLA

Are these authentic?

CLYDE

Yeah, they're from a far-off land.

CLYDE shows NYLA an ornament.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

See? Made in China.

MABEL

Just place one anywhere you want, sweetheart.

NYLA places the ornament on the tree.

NYLA

(Singing, softly)

Sleigh bells ring, are you listening...

MABEL hands NYLA another ornament.

MABEL

(Singing)

In the lane, snow is glistening...

NYLA hands the ornament to SIMONE.
SIMONE places the ornament onto the Christmas tree.

SIMONE

(Singing)

A beautiful sight, we're happy tonight.

MABEL, NYLA, SIMONE

(Singing)

Walking in a winter wonderland!

CLYDE hands MABEL an ornament.

CLYDE

(Singing to the tune of Winter Wonderland)

Somewhere quiet feels just right...

MABEL hands the ornament to WALTER.

MABEL

(Singing to the tune of Winter Wonderland)

Where our hearts are held so tight...

WALTER inspects the ornament.

WALTER

(Singing to the tune of Winter Wonderland)

Where aliens come to see...

KYLAN grabs the ornament and places it onto the tree.

KYLAN

(Singing to the tune of Winter Wonderland)

To come and visit me...

WALTER, KYLAN, SIMONE, CLYDE,

MABEL, NYLA

(Singing)

Walking in a winter wonderland!

NYLA and KYLAN prance around the stage.

NYLA

(Singing)

In the meadow we can build a...

KYLAN

Vampire!

NYLA

Vampire?

KYLAN

Yeah!

(Beat, singing to the tune of winter wonderland)

And pretend that he's Dracula...

SIMONE

(Laughing, singing)

He'll say, "Are you married?"

CLYDE

(Dry. Singing to the tune of winter wonderland)

We'll say, "No, man..."

MABEL

(Singing)

But you can do the job when you're in town...

CLYDE

(Quietly)

I'd like to.

WALTER bumps into CLYDE.

WALTER

(Singing to the tune of winter wonderland)

Lots of theories to conspire...

CLYDE

(Singing to the tune of winter wonderland)

Please let me push him in the fire...

MALACHI

(Singing to the tune of winter wonderland)

I just want a place where I belong...

KYLAN

(Singing to the tune of winter wonderland)

I really love this song!

EVERYONE

(Singing)

Walking in a winter wonderland!

NURSE MINA, NURSE ARLEEN, and
SAMUEL enter.

NURSE MINA

What a wonderful song! We could hear it in the
west end!

SAMUEL

I'm just glad we made it in time.

NURSE ARLEEN

But the song's over.

SAMUEL

Exactly.

NURSE MINA

The tree looks beautiful!

MABEL

It's doing its best.

CLYDE

(Sarcastically)

Just like the rest of us.

NURSE ARLEEN

Alright. If everyone is ready, we have hot
chocolate in the west hall.

MABEL

Hot chocolate?

CLYDE

Now you're speaking my language!

KYLAN

I want extra marshmallows in mine!

NYLA

I want mine with extra lavender!

KYLAN

Lavender?

NYLA

Yes! You've never had it?

KYLAN

I don't usually eat colors. But I used to eat crayons.

NYLA

Okay...then.

NURSE MINA

Okay, everyone. Let's go!

NURSE MINA ushers KYLAN, NYLA, WALTER, MABEL, and CLYDE off the stage.

NURSE ARLEEN approaches SIMONE and MALACHI.

NURSE ARLEEN

(To SIMONE)

Oh, before we get our drinks, let me get you signed in. Follow me. I left my sheet in my office.

SIMONE

Okay. Malachi, I'll be right back.

MALACHI

Okay.

NURSE ARLEEN and SIMONE exit.

MALACHI approaches SAMUEL.

MALACHI (CONT'D)

You didn't go with everyone else. You don't like hot chocolate?

SAMUEL

(Playfully, sarcastically)

You must like bothering me. Am I a magnet to you?

MALACHI

I learned about magnets last month. I don't think humans can be magnets.

SAMUEL

I can never win with you.

MALACHI

(Beat)

Can I ask you a question?

SAMUEL

You already are.

MALACHI

Why do kids stop being nice?

SAMUEL

What?

MALACHI

(Sadly)

At school. They used to be nice to me, but now they're not. I don't know what I did wrong.

SAMUEL

(Jokingly)

Knowing you, it probably had something to do with a broom.

(Beat)

I'm just messing with you. You probably didn't do anything wrong.

MALACHI

Then why do they treat me like I did?

SAMUEL

It's because people don't know how to deal with pain. With what they feel on the inside.

MALACHI

They hide by backpack. They make up songs about me, and not the good kind.

(Beat)

I tried being quieter. I tried being funnier. I tried being different.

(Beat, quiet)

But no matter what I did, they never liked who I was.

SAMUEL

That's your mistake, kid. You spend too much time trying to be someone you're not.

MALACHI

(Quiet)

You think so?

SAMUEL

From what I've heard, yeah. And it almost never works.

MALACHI

How do you know?

SAMUEL

(Beat, quiet)

Because...

(Beat)

Because I tried to become someone different. I spent most of my life trying to fix a mistake by pretending it didn't happen.

(Beat)

Look. What I'm trying to say is...

MALACHI

Is what?

SAMUEL

You don't get to choose what hurts you.

(Beat)

But you do get to choose how to respond to what does hurt.

(Beat)

Don't be like me. A coward who runs away from his problems. You're a strong boy.

MALACHI

But what if part of me feels like I did something wrong?

SAMUEL

That part just needs someone to sit next to it.

MALACHI hugs SAMUEL

MALACHI

(Crying)

And sometimes that part of me needs a hug, too.

SAMUEL

Yeah.

(Beat)

You're a good kid.

SIMONE enters.

SIMONE

I'm glad to see the Christmas spirit is all around.

MALACHI

Hi, Mom.

SAMUEL

Hey.

SIMONE

Sorry it took so long. Arleen had me sign half the building in.

SAMUEL

They like their stupid paperwork.

SIMONE

(Laughing)

Trust me...I've noticed.

(Beat)

Malachi, are we ready to get some hot chocolate?

SAMUEL

I'll join you two.

SIMONE

You're more than welcome to.

MALACHI

Wait...before that.

(Beat, to SAMUEL)

What mistake did you make?

SIMONE

Mistake?

SAMUEL

(Beat, Quietly)

It was my wife. She had lung problems and-

SIMONE

You don't have to do this.

SAMUEL

(Quiet, chuckling)

It's okay. I've held it in for so long. It's nice to finally talk to someone...other than the nutcases here.

SIMONE

We're here for you.

SAMUEL

(About his wife)

She kept saying it was nothing. Just a cough. Just being tired.

(Beat, quietly)

And I kept believing her.

(Beat)

Saint Hurley is where they took her. She passed away there.

SIMONE

Oh, Samuel. I'm sorry-

SAMUEL

You shouldn't be. I'm a monster.

SIMONE

You're not a monster. Your wife had-

SAMUEL

She died while giving birth to my son.

Simone nervously glances around.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Today is the anniversary of her passing.

SIMONE

So, what happened after?

SAMUEL

After she died?

(Beat, emotional)

I ran. I did something terrible.

SIMONE

It's okay. I'm here if you want to talk-

SAMUEL

(Crying)

I gave him away. My kid.

SIMONE

For adoption?

SAMUEL

Yeah.

MALACHI looks around and realizes something, then suddenly exits the stage.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

(Beat)

Every time I looked at him. I saw her.

(Beat)

And I couldn't breathe.

SIMONE

(Empathetic)

Oh, Samuel.

SAMUEL

I thought by giving the kid away, I could run and start a new life. But it followed me.

(Beat)

She loved to sing. And I'd always sing with her.

(MORE)

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

(Beat)

Now, every time I hear that song...I hear her.

SIMONE

That song?

SAMUEL

It was *Silent Night*. She sang it all of the time, even during labor.

(Beat)

To her, our son was a Christmas miracle.

SIMONE

(Beat)

I can't imagine the pain you're feeling.

SAMUEL

Yeah.

SIMONE

(Beat)

I have memories at Saint Hurley, too. That's where I was.

SAMUEL

Recently?

SIMONE

Last year.

SAMUEL

The world must be smaller than I thought.

SIMONE

My husband and I have a history with that hospital.

(Beat)

Although...its for different reasons.

The room is silent for a second or two.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

(Beat)

You didn't run away because you didn't love them.

SIMONE hugs SAMUEL

SIMONE (CONT'D)

You ran because you did.

SAMUEL

That doesn't make it better.

SIMONE

No. It doesn't.

(Beat)

But it makes it honest.

SAMUEL

Honest doesn't fix what happened.

SIMONE

No. But it shows you what still matters.

SAMUEL

And what's that?

SIMONE

The part of you that stayed.

SAMUEL

But I didn't stay.

SIMONE

You did. You're here, and you're talking about it.

(Beat)

So what're you going to do now?

SAMUEL

I don't know.

SIMONE

Good.

(Beat, smiling)

That means you've stopped running.

SIMONE rubs SAMUEL's shoulder.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

You're not as bad of a person as you think.

(Beat)

I should go check on Malachi.

SAMUEL

Yeah.

SIMONE exits. SAMUEL sits in his chair and begins to sob.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

(Quiet, crying, to himself)

I'm sorry, Margret.

BLACKOUT.

END OF SCENE

SCENE THREE

INT. NURSING HOME.

Later that day, Christmas, CLYDE, MABEL, WALTER, KYLAN, and NYLA are opening gifts.

WALTER

I got socks? Again? This is the third year in a row!

CLYDE

Yeah. That's what they give you when they can't trust you around sharp objects.

MABEL

Or brooms.

NYLA approaches MABEL.

NYLA

Princess, Mabel?

MABEL

Yes, sweetheart?

NYLA

I have a special delivery for you.

NYLA hands MABEL a box. MABEL opens it and reveals a crown.

MABEL

(Gasp)

Honey...this is beautiful!

NYLA

I asked for it to be custom made from the best diamonds in the world.

NYLA takes the crown from MABEL and places it on top of MABEL's head.

NYLA (CONT'D)

You are no longer Princess Mabel. From here on, you are now Queen Mabel!

MABEL hugs NYLA.

MABEL

(Emotional)

You made my inner girl happy again. Thank you so, so, so much.

CLYDE

Mabel...there's something I've wanted to ask
for a while now.

MABEL

Oh, and what's that?

CLYDE grabs MABEL's hand.

CLYDE

Now that you're queen
(Beat)
Would you..?

CLYDE holds MABEL's hand up to his
face.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

(Beat)

Would you accept me as your king?

MABEL

(Flustered)

Oh, Clyde.

(Beat)

I'd be delighted to.

CLYDE kisses MABEL's hand.

NYLA

(Playfully)

Then I suppose I approve.

CLYDE and MABEL hug.

KYLAN approaches WALTER.

KYLAN

This is for you, Mr. Walter.

KYLAN hands WALTER a box. WALTER
opens it to find a badge.

KYLAN (CONT'D)

It's a special alien tracking badge! I have
one, too.

KYLAN opens his jacket and shows
WALTER his badge. KYLAN winks at
WALTER.

KYLAN (CONT'D)

So, now we can both hunt them together!

WALTER

I couldn't ask for a better alien tracking
buddy than you.

WALTER places his badge on his
shirt.

WALTER (CONT'D)

We are now official!

CLYDE

Officially crazy...ah what the hell. It's
Christmas. I trust you two to keep this place
alien free.

KYLAN

We will do our best!

WALTER

(Scanning the room)

Do you see any yet?

KYLAN

Not yet. Let's keep looking!

SAMUEL enters. He sits near
everyone.

MABEL

Where have you been, Samuel?

SAMUEL

I was doing some counting. Did I miss
everything?

CLYDE

Nope. We are just getting started.

SAMUEL

(Playfully)

Aw, hell. Maybe I should've came a little
later.

MABEL

Speaking of which, where's Simone and Malachi?
They're missing all of the fun.

MALACHI and SIMONE enter.

SIMONE

(Smiling)

Sorry we're late to the party, Malachi had
something to take care of.

Doorbell rings.

NURSE MINA and NURSE ARLEEN enter.

NURSE MINA

We got it! Oh, goodness, he's a little early.

NURSE MINA opens the door. KAIROS enters.

MALACHI

Dad!

MALACHI hugs KAIROS. KAIROS joins SIMONE, MALACHI and SAMUEL.

MALACHI (CONT'D)

This is Mr. Samuel. He's the one I told you about on the phone!

KAIROS greets SAMUEL.

KAIROS

(Smiles, awkwardly)

Uh...nice to...

(Beat)

Uh...meet you.

SAMUEL

(Nods)

Are you this awkward with everyone?

MALACHI

It's my Dad's birthday today!

SAMUEL freezes.

KAIROS

Yep! Another year down, hopefully a bunch more to go.

SIMONE

I hope you're having a great birthday, hun.

NURSE MINA

Happy birthday, Kairos!

SAMUEL suddenly stands up and begins to back away.

NURSE MINA (CONT'D)

Samuel? What in the world has gotten into-

(Beat)

Are you okay?

SAMUEL

(To Kairos)

What's your mom's name?

MALACHI

(To Kairos)

Does he mean Grandma Jean?

SAMUEL

Oh. Sorry. I thought-

SIMONE

(To Malachi)

No. I don't think he means my Mom.

KAIROS

Margret.

SAMUEL

(Beat)

What?

KAIROS

My real mom's name is Margret. But I was adopted.

SAMUEL slowly walks over to
KAIROS.

SAMUEL

(Quietly, quivering)

Your mom...

(Beat)

She loved to sing.

KAIROS

(Quietly)

...Simone said she used to sing all of the time-

SAMUEL hugs KAIROS.

SAMUEL

(Crying)

You were our Christmas miracle.

KAIROS

Simone and Malachi told me everything. It's nice to meet you, Dad.

MALACHI joins the hug.

MALACHI

Merry Christmas, Grandpa!

SAMUEL pulls away from the hug and
holds KAIROS arm up.

SAMUEL
(Excited, jumping)
Hey, everyone!
(Beat)
This is my son!
(Beat)
This is my son!

SAMUEL approaches NURSE MINA and
hugs her.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
My son is here for Christmas!

SAMUEL then runs over to MABEL and
CLYDE and hugs them.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
My son is here for Christmas!

MABEL
Isn't this just the sweetest thing ever?

CLYDE
Even I don't know what to say.

SAMUEL steps back and pulls the
money from his pocket.

SAMUEL
Oh! And I almost forgot.

SAMUEL hands the money to SIMONE.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
Here. This should cover the rest of your
medical bills.

SIMONE
Samuel. I...I can't take this.

SAMUEL
Please. Take it.

SIMONE
But...

KAIROS takes SIMONE's hand and
smiles.

SAMUEL
I've spent so much of my life doing things
wrong. It's about damn time I do something
right for a change.
(Beat, quietly)
Margret would've loved to meet you.

SIMONE takes the money.

SIMONE
(Quietly)
I don't know what to say...

KAIROS gestures SAMUEL to the
Christmas tree. SIMONE and MALACHI
follow.

KAIROS holds SAMUEL's hand.

KAIROS
(Singing)
Silent night....

SIMONE grabs KAIROS hand.

SIMONE
(Singing)
Holy night....

MALACHI grabs SAMUEL's other hand.

MALACHI
(Singing)
All is calm....

SAMUEL smiles at MALACHI.

SAMUEL
(Beat, Singing)
All is bright...

MABEL and CLYDE hold hands and
joins the others at the Christmas
tree.

MABEL
(Singing)
Round young virgin mother and child...

CLYDE
(Singing)
Holy infant so tender and mild...

NURSE ARLEEN, NURSE MINA, NYLA,
and KYLAN join the others.
Everyone holds hands.

EVERYONE
(Singing)
Sleep in heavenly peace...

KAIROS steps away from the group
and comes to center stage.

The rest of the cast continues to hum *Silent Night* in the background.

KAIROS/NARRATOR

So, this was the gift we were meant to receive,
Not something you buy, not something you leave.

(Beat)

A gift we thought couldn't be saved. Of losses
that lingered, of chances we gave.

(Beat)

Because Christmas is about family, to show them
we care. Because each day we are reminded of
the moments we share.

(Beat)

When held in these moments we can dare to
believe, and choose to become...

(Beat)

The gift we receive.

SAMUEL joins KAIROS at center
stage.

SAMUEL

Merry Christmas to all!

Everyone joins SAMUEL and KAIROS
at center stage.

EVERYONE

And to all a good night!

END OF PLAY