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SF PERUSALS

Mom's Gift

Phil Olson

A Samuel French Acting Edition

SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

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MOM'S GIFT was first produced at the Lonny Chapman Group Repertory Theatre in Los Angeles, California, in December, 2013. The artistic directors were Larry Eisenberg and Chris Winfield, the president was Linda Alznauer, it was directed by Sherry Netherland, the assistant director and sound designer was Steve Shaw, the producer was Laura Coker, the set design and construction was by Chris Winfield, the stage managers/technical directors were Britt Chichester, Mindy B. Schiller and Jennifer Levinson, the lighting design was by Sabrina Beattie, the costume design was by Lynda Pyka, the publicist was Nora Feldman, the marketing was by Ben Goldberg, the program was by Drina Durazo and the cover art was by Doug Haverty. The cast was as follows:

KAT . . . . . Gina Yates
BRITTNEY . . . . . Trisha Hershberger
MOM . . . . . Julia Silverman
DAD . . . . . Chris Winfield, Patrick Skelton
TRISH . . . . . Lisa McGee-Mann
KEVIN . . . . . Cyrus Alexander
MRS. NORQUIST (VOICEOVER) . . . . . Laura Coker

The understudies were Paul Cady (Kevin), Joy Darash (Brittney), and Pascale Gigon (Trish).

CHARACTERS

KAT – 30. The older sister. Plain, extremely smart. Acerbic, but likeable, with a sense of humor. Vulnerable and sympathetic. Playfully sarcastic. Not mean spirited.

MOM – 60. Good sense of humor. Deeply caring. Vikings fan.

DAD – 60. A doctor. Nice guy. Reserved. Holds cards close to the vest.

BRITTNEY – 22. The younger sister. Pretty. A Hooters Girl. Peppy, ditzy, sincere, genuine, not sarcastic.

TRISH – 45. Pretty. A nurse. Kind.

KEVIN – 30. Neighbor growing up. Good looking, successful business person, jock in high school.

MRS. NORQUIST *(Voiceover)* **–** 70's. Neighbor. A little loopy. We never see her. *(Voiceover, can double cast - or if you would like, you can show her)*

PLACE

The living room and front porch of the Swensen family,
in a Minneapolis suburb.

TIME

A warm September day. Dad's birthday.

ACT I — Sunday. Early afternoon.

ACT II — Same day. One minute later.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

References to professional football teams (like the Packers and Vikings) may be replaced with local amateur or professional football teams.

All stage directions were written by the author and are not from a stage manager's book. Please follow those that affect the characters and plot of the story.

FOREWORD

I'm a big fan of quirky, small cast musicals, especially those that have a regional flavor to them, and that is why I write my *Don't Hug Me* musical comedies with my brother, Paul.

Once in awhile, however, I take a break from the *Don't Hug Me* musicals and write something from the heart. I wrote my play, *A Nice Family Gathering*, after my dad passed away. It was a very personal story for me.

Mom's Gift is another departure from my quirky musicals. My mother passed away in 2006 from breast cancer. It was a very emotional time for me. It took me six years to be able to start writing *Mom's Gift* after she died, but I knew I wanted to do something for her, so I started writing the play in 2012.

Although M*om's Gift* isn't about my real family, the character of Mom in the play has qualities similar to my mother, and some of the lines are things she said. My mother had a wonderful sense of humor until the end. She was faced with tragedy and could still laugh, and I admired that. I don't know if I could do that.

I wanted to capture that spirit in the play by combining a very tragic event with comedy. The comedy in *Mom's Gift* is not broad, but it comes from a very real place, from the tragedy of the underlying story. In *Mom's Gift* we have equal parts comedy and pathos.

In addition to Mom's mission to "get her wings," it's a story about second chances, miscommunication, forgiveness, and moving on when a loved one dies. There are also a few twists in the play that will surprise the audience. I haven't spoken to a single person who has seen the surprise coming at the end.

With *Mom's Gift*, it was important to me that people feel something when they leave the theatre. My hope is that the audience goes thru the same emotions, the same ups and downs that the characters are feeling on stage. After watching every performance during the world premiere and seeing audiences laugh and cry, I feel good about achieving my goal. It's the kind of story my mother would enjoy seeing.

– Phil Olsen

ACT I

(The setting is a living room complete with couch, coffee table, and easy chair. Upstage left is a door to the kitchen. Upstage center is a hallway that leads to the bedrooms (offstage right), and to a den (offstage left). There's a dining table stage left near the kitchen. Downstage left is a small bar with liquor bottles and glasses on it. Downstage right is the front porch of the house, leading to the front door. There's a bench on the porch.)

*(***KAT***, 30, plain, wearing slacks and comfortable shoes, carrying a bottle of Cabernet wine, a computer bag and a purse, walks up to the front porch of the house. As she approaches the porch, she's stopped by* **MRS. NORQUIST***, 70's, the neighbor across the street. She can't seem to break away from her. We don't see* **MRS. NORQUIST***.)*

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* Oh, hey there, is that you, Kathryn?

*(***KAT** turns back and sees **MRS. NORQUIST***.)*

KAT. Oh, hey, there, Mrs. Norquist.

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* So, what brings ya back home, then?

KAT. Oh, just a family reunion.

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* Oh, I'm sorry.

KAT. Yeah, me too.

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* Boy, it's been a long time, huh. Ya look kinda tired, there. Did ya just have a baby?

KAT. *(taken aback)* No. Don't have any babies.

(Tries to break away from her)

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* Oh, that's a shame. So are ya married?

KAT. *(Turns back, trying to be nice)* Nope. Not married.

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* Oh, that's too bad. Ya have a boyfriend, then?

KAT. *(Still trying to be nice)* Nope. No boyfriend.

(Turns to leave)

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* Oh, for cryin' in the bathtub. Not a lot of time before those eggs dry up, there…so is your sister comin' back?

KAT. *(Reluctantly turns back)* Yeah, she'll be here.

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* Now she's a looker. Oh, yah. That's okay, though. You got the brains.

KAT. Alrighty –

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* I bet she likes men?

KAT. Okay, I'll see you later, there, Mrs. Norquist. Good seeing you.

(Hurries to the front door, opens it and goes in) Hello, anybody home? Hello?…

(She looks around.) Huh. He redecorated… Dad?… Dad?…

(Imitating **DAD** *as she puts the wine on the bar, then sets down her purse and computer bag by the coffee table.)* "Kat's home! Yaay! So happy to see you! Oh, my gosh, you've gotten prettier. I didn't think it was possible. Yaay!"

*(***BRITTNEY**, *22,* **KAT***'s sister, enters from the hallway, wearing a bathrobe.)*

BRITTNEY. Oh, hey, Kat, you made it!

KAT. Hey, Britt.

(They hug.)

BRITTNEY. Dad'll be happy to see you.

KAT. I can't imagine why.

BRITTNEY. Well, cause you haven't been around since Mom's funeral.

KAT. Is he here?

BRITTNEY. No, he's at church.

KAT. So, are you still living at home?

BRITTNEY. No, I just came over last night to watch movies with Dad and it got late so I stayed over.

KAT. Hard to cut the umbilical chord, huh?

(She walks over to the bar.)

BRITTNEY. Yeah. So, it's great that you're back!
(Excited) Hey, maybe we can hang out more, you know, watch movies and eat popcorn and have pillow fights. Like we used to.

KAT. Yeah, we never did that.

(Examines the bottles of booze, deciding what to drink.)

BRITTNEY. *(Hopeful)* We can start!

KAT. Are you on crack?

BRITTNEY. *(Excited, rapid fire)* No, I'm just looking forward to spending more time with you. I don't know why we don't. I mean, you just live an hour from me.

KAT. Yeah, I haven't been very social lately. Traveling, not home much, you know.

(Picks up a bottle of Scotch and pours some in a glass.)

BRITTNEY. Right, right, yeah. Anyway, I better get ready. Is that what you're gonna wear?

KAT. *(Turns to* **BRITT**, *indignant)* Yes.

BRITTNEY. *(Smiles, sincere)* Okay.

(She exits through the hallway.)

*(***KAT** *takes a drink of Scotch.)*

MOM. *(Offstage) (From the hallway)* A little early to be drinking, isn't it?

KAT. *(Turning to the hallway)* I'm just having one…
(No one is there.) Brittney?…was that you?
(She looks at the Scotch glass.) Oh, great, I'm hallucinating.

*(***MOM**, *60, steps into the hallway.)*

MOM. I'd pace myself. You got a busy day.

KAT. *(Turning to* **MOM***)* Brittney, I can make my own decisions–

(Sees who it is) Oh, hey, Mom.

(Realizing, steps back) HOLY CRAP!

MOM. Nice to see you, too.

KAT. *(Looks at the bottle of Scotch)* Never mix Scotch and antihistamines.

MOM. You're not hallucinating.

KAT. *(Puts the bottle down, looks at* **MOM***)* It's like a hologram. Okay, turn it off, Brittney. It's not funny.

MOM. I'm not a hologram.

KAT. Whoa, it's interactive. How cool is that? *(***MOM** *steps forward into the room)* Whoa, it's moving!

MOM. Actually, I'm a ghost.

KAT. Nope. No, you're not. No such thing.

(Looking around) Okay, you got me. I've been punked. Come on out.

MOM. I'm not a bad ghost. I mean, it's not like I'm here to haunt you.

KAT. *(Looking around for the projector)* Where are you coming from? I mean the technology is really good.

MOM. There's no technology. It's just me. I'm a ghost.

KAT. Oh, okay.

(Whispering) Why are you here?

MOM. What are you doing?

KAT. Ghost whispering.

MOM. Alright, just so we can move this thing along, why don't we do this, just pretend, for the sake of argument, that I'm a figment of your imagination. I'm in your head. You know, you haven't gotten over my death, you're distraught, you wish I were still alive, you're seeing things, yada yada yada.

KAT. I never should have done those mushrooms in college.

MOM. You did mushrooms in college!?

KAT. Really? I'm gonna argue about college mushrooms with Ghost Mom?

MOM. Okay, let's do this. I'm not going away, okay. So you have a choice, fight it or go along with it. What's it gonna be?

KAT. *(Holding up her index finger)* One minute.

(She turns away from **MOM**.*)* I am totally losing it.

(Takes a deep breath) Be strong. If this is how I'm gonna handle the stress of today, just go with it.

(Composes herself, turns to **MOM***)* Okay, fine. You're in my head. A figment.

(Realizing) An imaginary friend! Like when I was a kid! You know what, this could make the day go faster. I'm talking to myself and I'm crazy. Super! Okay, and you're here because…?

MOM. They sent me back. Unfinished business, your spirit can't rest until you come to peace. You know the program.

KAT. No, I seriously do not know the program.

MOM. I've been floating around in limbo for 11 months and I can't move on until I resolve something.

KAT. We're Lutheran. We don't have limbo.

MOM. Then what do we have?

KAT. Pot lucks.

MOM. Oh, for Pete's sake. Look, all I know is it's kind of like Clarence in "It's a Wonderful Life." You know, "when a bell rings, an angel gets it's wings."

KAT. Isn't that the movie about the irresponsible bankers who lose their customers money, drive drunk, have their debts paid off by local citizens and suffer no consequences for their carelessness.

MOM. Yeah, that's it.

KAT. I never saw it.

MOM. Okay, I'll get to the point. I need you to help me.

KAT. You want my help? Isn't that like cheating? So, now you can cheat to get into Heaven?

(Realizing) Maybe you're not going to Heaven.

MOM. Funny.

KAT. By the way, is there a Heaven? I never really bought into that.

MOM. For some people. You, I wouldn't hold my breath.

KAT. Whoa! A zinger! Wait, you're in my mind. That's coming from me. This is confusing.

MOM. They said I could get help from you.

KAT. They who?

*(***MOM** *points up)* Oh, up there. Really? Did they name me specifically? Because I don't sense that I'm on their radar.

MOM. Are you gonna help me or not?

KAT. Okay, so if I help you, do you and these voices in my head go away?

MOM. Since we're going with that narrative, yes.

KAT. Okay, fine. What do you want me to do?

MOM. I need you to help me complete a mission.

KAT. Can you be more specific?

MOM. I have to either heal a wound, right a wrong, help someone in need, or fix a relationship.

KAT. Well that narrows it down.

MOM. They don't tell you the mission. We have to discover what it is.

KAT. "We?!"

MOM. And it has to happen today, while you're here.

KAT. And if it doesn't?

MOM. *(Overly dramatic)* I go back into the system, and trust me, you don't wanna be stuck in the system. Floating around in Lutheran limbo for eternity, never to make it thru the pearly gates. Who knows where I'll end up. Maybe they'll send me down there…

(Gestures and looks down) Or worse…to New Jersey.

KAT. You been working on that?

MOM. Yeah, you like it?

KAT. Yeah, not bad… Look, I don't even wanna be here let alone be dragged into your angel scavenger hunt.

MOM. If you don't wanna be here, then why are you here?

KAT. My therapist told me I had to come here as an exercise in anger management.

MOM. You go to a therapist?

KAT. I went one time!… Okay, six times.

MOM. Why?

KAT. Because I, sort of…shoved a cop.

MOM. I'm sorry, what?

KAT. Okay, after your funeral–that is so weird to say. After your funeral I got in a big argument with Dad, drove off and got a speeding ticket–you don't know this?!

MOM. They don't let you see everything until you *(Looks up)* get your wings!

KAT. Fine. A cop pulled me over for speeding, I was angry and I told him he had a tiny night stick. He thought I was drunk, made me walk the line, got into my personal space, and I… kind of shoved him.

MOM. You were always a little high tempered.

KAT. I am not high tempered!

MOM. You seem a little bound up. Are you regular?

KAT. Oh, my gosh! It was just a little shove! Come on, the guy was huge. It wasn't a big deal!!
(Catching herself, taking a deep breath, closes her eyes, does a zen-like movement with her hands) Control your anger. Don't let it control you.

MOM. At the risk of setting you off again, isn't it a crime to shove a cop?

KAT. Well, because of the circumstance, distraught and whatever, they said they wouldn't charge me if I went to see a therapist.

MOM. Well, that was nice of 'em.

KAT. Not really. The therapist ordered me to go to Dad's birthday party.

MOM. You were ordered by the court to spend time with your dad?

KAT. I know. Cruel and unusual punishment.

MOM. Wow. Daughter of the year.

KAT. Thank you, "figment!"

MOM. What if you don't go thru with it? I mean, walk out and leave right now.

KAT. I'll be charged with felony assault, lose my job and go to jail.

MOM. How will the court know you came here?

KAT. I have to have a witness sign a contract. I can't believe it. I've been sentenced to spend Dad's birthday with him. And what's worse, I can't yell at him. Not even once. It's in the contract.

MOM. *(Realizing)* Okay, that's it. I know what my mission is. Help you make peace with your dad.

KAT. How about if you just compliment me for an hour?

MOM. Why would I do that? No, it's gotta be bigger. I need to help you resolve your differences with Dad.

KAT. Yeah, I don't know if I can work with you on that. I mean, I'm just here to serve my sentence, pick up some of my things and tell him I'm leaving for a few years. Kind of a last supper.

MOM. Wait, you're leaving for a few years? Where are you going?

*(***DAD**, *60 enters the front door.)*

DAD. I'm home.

MOM. Hi, honey.

*(***DAD** *walks past* **MOM**, *setting his keys on the table.)*

KAT. *(to Mom)* He can't see you?

MOM. I'm in your head, remember?

*(***DAD** *looks over to* **KAT**.*)*

DAD. Hey, Kat, I'm so glad you could be here.

KAT. Really?

DAD. Yes, of course.

*(***DAD** *goes to hug* **KAT**. *It's the most awkward, arm's length, pat on the shoulders hug, imaginable.)*

KAT. *(As she continues to pat his shoulders, arms length.)* Yeah, well, you know, it's your birthday.

MOM. Worst hug ever!

KAT. *(To* **MOM***)* HUSH!

DAD. I'm sorry, what?

*(***BRITTNEY** *enters from the hallway.)*

KAT. *(Covering)* Hush…
(To **MOM***, spoken)* little mamma, don't say a word–

(Motions to **MOM** *to zip her lips)*

BRITTNEY. *(Singing)*
PAPA'S GONNA BUY YOU A MOCKINGBIRD. AND IF THAT–

KAT. *(Cutting her off)* Okay, thank you. Very good. You know the words. Great.

BRITTNEY. *(To* **DAD***)* How was church?

DAD. Good. Kat, you should go with me sometime.

KAT. Yeah, I'm not really a church person. I'm more of a brunch person.

BRITTNEY. You used to go to church. What happened?

KAT. *(Short)* Britt, it's Sunday. This is no time to talk about religion.

DAD. Can I get you something? A can of pop, or–

KAT. How about a Scotch? A double. Wait, do you have Jagermeister? No, just Scotch, that's fine.

*(***DAD** *goes to the bar to make the drink.)*

DAD. I didn't know you were a drinker.

KAT. I just started.

MOM. Easy, now. I need you alert for this.

KAT. *(Shoots* **MOM** *a look)* You re-decorated.

DAD. Yeah, I changed a few things.

KAT. A lot of things.

DAD. So, what have you been up to? I haven't seen you since the funeral.

BRITTNEY. That was eleven months ago.

KAT. I know. I just… I've been really busy at work.

BRITTNEY. What do you do again?

KAT. I'm an environmental aquatic engineer.

BRITTNEY. Oh, yeah… I don't know what that is.

KAT. I make water.

BRITTNEY. Oh, yeah. Like Jesus.

KAT. Yup. Just like Jesus.

MOM. Brittney hasn't changed.

DAD. So, what project are you working on now?

KAT. Right now I'm designing engines that purify water using reverse osmosis. They take any kind of polluted or contaminated water and make it potable. *(pron. poh-tuh-buhl)*

(To **BRITTNEY**, *condescending)* That means you can drink it.

DAD. So, you help supply water to…?

KAT. To third world countries.

BRITTNEY. Whoa, whoa, whoa. I thought we only had <u>one</u> world.

MOM. Wow.

KAT. You know, if we could harness the water between your ears, we could power a city.

BRITTNEY. Why don't we?

KAT. *(Changing the subject)* So, what are you doing these days, Britt?

BRITTNEY. Oh, I'm a waitress.

KAT. What restaurant?

BRITTNEY. Hooters.

KAT. You're a Hooters Girl?

BRITTNEY. Uh huh.

KAT. *(Sarcastic)* I am so proud of you.

BRITTNEY. Really?!–

KAT. No.

MOM. Don't do it.

KAT. Are you still going to junior college?

BRITTNEY. No, too much memorizing. I'm not really a memory person.

KAT. You're more of a mammary person.

MOM. Easy.

DAD. She actually makes pretty good money.

KAT. Enough to pay your own rent?

BRITTNEY. Almost.

KAT. *(To* **DAD***)* So, you're still helping her out?

DAD. She's my angel.

KAT. How's that drink coming?
(He hands it to her) Thank you.

DAD. I'm really glad you're here.

KAT. Hey, I had to come.
(They hear a knock at the door.)

DAD. Oh, that must be Trish.

KAT. Trish?

*(***DAD** *opens the door. We see* **TRISH**, *an attractive 45 year old woman, carrying two grocery bags, a purse and a tote bag over her shoulder, wearing a conservative top with a high neckline.)*

DAD. Hi, come on in.

TRISH. *(She enters.)* Happy birthday.

DAD. Thanks.

MOM. Oh, my gosh, it's Trish. She looks great.

*(***DAD** *takes the groceries from* **TRISH**. **TRISH** *is a little nervous, breathing heavy.* **DAD** *notices.)*

DAD. You look a little flush. Are you okay?

TRISH. Yeah, just a little winded.

DAD. Trish, this is my daughter, Kat, and you remember Brittney. *(***DAD** *sets the groceries on the dining table.)*

TRISH. Hi.

BRITTNEY. Nice to see you again.

TRISH. Thank you. It's nice to see you, too.

MOM. Be nice to her.

KAT. You took care of Mom after the accident, right?

TRISH. Yes, I was with her for the last few weeks.

MOM. She was wonderful. I could not have died without her.

KAT. Were you her nurse?

TRISH. Actually, I kept your mother company, made her meals, you know, things like that.

KAT. Like a care giver.

TRISH. Exactly. We actually became friends.

KAT. Uh huh…

(Suspicious) and now you're back.

TRISH. Your dad invited me. I thought that was really nice.

DAD. I had an ulterior motive. She offered to make dinner.

MOM. She's a good cook.

BRITTNEY. Oh, I love to cook. Can I help?

TRISH. Absolutely.

DAD. *(To* **TRISH***)* Can I get you a drink or something?

TRISH. How about a Diet Coke?

DAD. Coming right up.

TRISH. I'll just put these in the kitchen.

(She grabs the groceries and heads for the kitchen. **BRITT** *follows her.* **DAD** *goes to the bar to pour the Diet Coke.)*

KAT. The kitchen is right in…oh, of course, you know where it is.

*(***TRISH** *and* **BRITT** *go in the kitchen. To* **DAD***, awkward.)* So… Trish is here.

MOM. She's very nice.

DAD. She was a big help with your mom.

KAT. I don't remember, was she at Mom's funeral?

DAD. Oh, no, she wasn't there. She had to attend a family matter in Ohio.

KAT. Uh huh.

DAD. We re-connected a few months after the funeral.

KAT. "Re-connected?"

DAD. Well, I mean, we saw each other again.

MOM. It's innocent.

KAT. Uh huh… So, where are the photos of Mom?

DAD. The what?

KAT. You used to have family photos with Mom on the wall. What did you do with 'em?

DAD. Oh, I, ah… I took them down.

KAT. Why did you do that?

MOM. This isn't resolving!

BRITTNEY. *(Coming out of the kitchen)* Anyone wanna try a mini-muffin top? *(Holding out a tray)* I made 'em myself.

KAT. No, thanks.

DAD. I'll try one.

(Takes one, takes a bite)

BRITTNEY. Mom used to make 'em.

MOM. I'd like one! Wait,
(Looks up) can I eat?

BRITTNEY. *(To* **DAD***)* What do you think?

DAD. Wow, these are really good.

BRITTNEY. I used her recipe.

DAD. Your mom was a great cook.

MOM. *(Humble)* Oh, you shouldn't.
(Then) Okay, you should.

DAD. You should enter 'em in a baking contest. Pillsbury has one. You might win something.

BRITTNEY. Yeah, that's something I wanted to talk to you about.

KAT. Why did you take Mom's photos down?

MOM. Keep it together!

KAT. *(To* **MOM***)* You're right. Breathe.

(Takes a deep breath, closes her eyes, does a zen-like movement with her hands.) Anger is the prison of the soul.

BRITTNEY. What are you doing?

KAT. Breathing exercise. It helps me to–

MOM. To not be such a butt head.

KAT. *(Looks at* **MOM***)* To relax.

DAD. You feeling stress? Is it work?

KAT. No, it's nothing. I'll be fine.

*(***TRISH** *comes out of the kitchen.)*

TRISH. So, Kat, I hear you're an engineer.

KAT. Yes, I am. Did Dad tell you that?

TRISH. Your mom did.

*(***DAD** *hands* **TRISH** *a glass of Diet Coke. Trish mouths, "thank you.")*

KAT. Right.

TRISH. A degree in mathematics from Dartmouth, an engineering degree from M.I.T. That's really impressive.

KAT. Thanks.

BRITTNEY. Kat makes water. Like Jesus.

KAT. Technically, Jesus didn't make water. He made wine from water. He walked on water, but he didn't make water. That is, if you believe any of that stuff. Dad, why did you take down the photos of Mom?

MOM. You have no filter.

DAD. Honey, it's been difficult since your mom… *(He can't say it.)*

KAT. Since she died. From a car accident. You were driving, remember?

MOM. Stop it! Right now! You need to get past this.

DAD. *(Sadly)* Yes. Of course I remember.

BRITTNEY. *(To* **KAT***)* Why are you being like this?

*(***KAT** *takes a deep breath.)* It's stress. She needs drugs. Dad, do you have any Xanax? Wait, I might have one.

KAT. I don't need drugs, just alcohol.

(She takes a sip of her drink.)

DAD. *(To* **BRITTNEY***)* Why would you have Xanax?

BRITTNEY. *(Busted)* What happened? Did I say that? Tourettes!

TRISH. Sometimes it takes a long time to heal after a loved one dies.

KAT. I'll be fine. I'm just going thru a thing.

TRISH. I'm very sorry about your mother. She was a wonderful person.

MOM. I really like her.

TRISH. I mean, the short time that I spent with her…

(Emotional) she really changed my life.

MOM. I really, really like her.

BRITTNEY. *(Holds up the plate)* Who wants a muffin top?

TRISH. Oh, I'd like one.

(Takes one, takes a bite)

KAT. No, thanks.

MOM. *(To* **KAT***)* Maybe if <u>you</u> eat one, <u>I'll</u> taste it.

BRITTNEY. What do you think?

TRISH. Wow, these are good.

BRITTNEY. Thanks.

(Looks at her cell phone) Oh, I just got a text from my boyfriend.

DAD. I didn't know you had a boyfriend.

BRITTNEY. Just for a couple months.

MOM. Good for you.

DAD. What's his name?

BRITTNEY. Manson.

KAT. Manson? As in Charles Manson?

BRITTNEY. Oh, no. My Manson hasn't been in prison for years.

DAD. You're kidding, right? *(To* **KAT***)* Is she kidding?

MOM. Let's hope.

BRITTNEY. I didn't wanna say anything until it got more serious.

DAD. It's serious?!

BRITTNEY. Well, sort of.

KAT. What does he do now? I mean, you know, since prison.

BRITTNEY. He's an engineer. Like you.

MOM. Well, that's good.

KAT. What kind of an engineer?

BRITTNEY. A custodial engineer.

KAT. A janitor?

MOM. Lovely.

BRITTNEY. Yeah, he's been working for 14 years at Hubert Humphrey Elementary School.

KAT. How old is he?

BRITTNEY. He's 37.

MOM. He's what?

DAD. He's 15 years older than you are?

BRITTNEY. But he thinks so young. I mean, it's like we're the same age.

DAD. Where did you meet him?

BRITTNEY. Hooters.

MOM. *(Looking up)* Just take me now.

TRISH. I think I'll get the appetizers ready.

(She heads for the kitchen.)

DAD. I think I'll help you.

(He follows her.)

BRITTNEY. I like Trish.

MOM. So do I.

KAT. You're dating a 37 year old ex-con?

BRITTNEY. But he's so young. I mean, he rides a skateboard.

MOM. *(Looking up)* Is this part of the test?

BRITTNEY. And he has, like, nine tattoos.

MOM. *(Groans)* Ohhh!

KAT. Are you sure you weren't adopted?

BRITTNEY. Maybe you were adopted.

MOM. No one was adopted…

(Disappointed) Dammit.

KAT. You almost gave Dad a heart attack. That was awesome.

BRITTNEY. Well, I didn't mean to.

MOM. Yes, you did.

KAT. *(To* **MOM***)* She's just a–

BRITTNEY. A what?

MOM. You don't know her.

BRITTNEY. I'm just a what?

KAT. *(Covering)* You're just a…daddy's little girl.

BRITTNEY. Oh, yeah. Does that bother you?

KAT. *(Ignoring the question)* Why did Dad take Mom's pictures down?

BRITTNEY. It's been really difficult for Dad. He's trying to forget.

KAT. Forget Mom?

BRITTNEY. You know what I'm talking about.

KAT. What's the deal with Trish?

BRITTNEY. What do you mean?

KAT. Has he been seeing her?

MOM. They're just friends.

BRITTNEY. I think they go out maybe once or twice a week.

KAT. That's dating.

*(***DAD** *comes out of the kitchen with a bowl of chips and sets it on the dining table.)*

DAD. It's good to see you, Kat. I know we didn't end things well after the funeral.

KAT. Yeah, well, funerals will do that.

MOM. Here's your chance to make up with him.

DAD. I know you were upset at my decision.

KAT. You took Mom off life support. You didn't even discuss it with me.

DAD. Well, you were in India.

MOM. He's a doctor. He knew what he was doing.

KAT. You told me she was getting better.

DAD. I thought she was.

KAT. You couldn't wait until I got back?

MOM. This is making up?

DAD. It was tearing me up to see her like that.

KAT. I didn't even get to say goodbye.

DAD. Well, I'm sorry.

*(***TRISH** *comes out of the kitchen with a plate of appetizers.)*

KAT. Just like you're sorry for getting in the car accident?

MOM. Not helping the mission.

DAD. It was a hit and run. They ran a red light. Drunk driver, they think. You know that.

(Upon hearing that, **TRISH** *puts the appetizers on the table, and does an about face, going back into the kitchen.* **KAT** *notices.)*

You know, I really hope that some day you can forgive me. *(***KAT** *doesn't respond)* Look, I know you're busy, but it would be real nice if maybe we could spend a little more time together.

KAT. I wish you would have said that twenty years ago.

DAD. Is that what this is about? Not spending enough time with you when you were kids?

MOM. He was busy providing for you.

BRITTNEY. *(Singing Harry Chapin's "Cat's in the Cradle")**

THE CAT'S IN THE CRADLE AND THE SILVER SPOON…

(Everyone looks at her. She stops.)

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*Please see Music Use Note on page 3

KAT. You know what, it's okay. It doesn't matter.

DAD. Yes, it does.

KAT. No, it doesn't. I'm leaving in a couple weeks. I'll be gone for about a year. Maybe two.

DAD. You're what?

MOM. Where are you going?

KAT. We're installing several engines that will provide water to towns in Somalia. Oh, that reminds me. I need to send an email.

*(***KAT** *goes to her computer bag by the coffee table, takes out her computer, opens it up, and goes into her email account.)*

DAD. You're going to Somalia?!

KAT. Yes.

DAD. Honey, Somalia is really dangerous.

KAT. It's gotten better.

BRITTNEY. Isn't that where all the pirates are?

DAD. The Marines don't even go to Somalia. Remember "Black Hawk Down?" The Marines said, "We're outta here!" The Marines!

*(***KAT** *types in her email.)*

BRITTNEY. Dad, if you're worried about the ransom, they have kidnapping insurance.

MOM. Oh, my gosh.

DAD. Not helping.

BRITTNEY. But it's, like, really expensive cause there are, like, sooo many kidnappings.

DAD. Isn't that the responsibility of the company?

KAT. Are you trying to get out of paying my ransom?

DAD. No, I'll pay your ransom. Look, no one's getting kidnapped, okay, but the fact that we're even talking about it worries me, honey.

KAT. Don't worry, I don't spend the whole time in Somalia.

DAD. Okay.

KAT. I also go to Ghana, The Congo, Rwanda and Libya.

DAD. *(Sarcastic)* Well, that's a relief.

KAT. They need water.

DAD. Can't you just go somewhere like Fiji?

KAT. Fiji already has water.

DAD. Honey, why are you doing this?

KAT. Because they need me.

DAD. Can't they send someone else? I mean, you're always trying to save the world, helping others, which is admirable, but if you don't do something for yourself, you won't have anything to offer anyone else.

BRITTNEY. It takes a village!…

(A beat, looks around) I read that on a Snapple cap.

MOM. *(Laughs.* **KAT** *shoots her a look.)* It's funny.

KAT. Dad, I enjoy doing things for other people.

MOM. Hah!

*(***KAT** *rolls her eyes.)*

*(***TRISH** *comes out of the kitchen with a "Happy Birthday" centerpiece.* **KAT** *sees* **TRISH**.*)*

DAD. What about your family and friends?

KAT. I'll email you. And I'm not sure where my family is, anyway. They aren't on the wall.

(Testing **TRISH***)* I guess because a drunk driver took one of them. *(She looks at* **TRISH** *to see her reaction.)*

(Upon hearing that, **TRISH** *sets the* "*Happy Birthday*" *centerpiece on the dining table, then goes back in the kitchen.* **KAT** *watches* **TRISH** *leave.)*

DAD. You think I don't feel guilty about that?

KAT. I don't know.

DAD. Are you doing this to punish me?

*(***KAT** *doesn't respond.)*

Congratulations. It worked.

BRITTNEY. I'm gonna see if Trish needs any help.

(She goes into the kitchen.)

KAT. Look, it's just part of my healing, you know, to get it all out.

DAD. Honey, I'm worried about you. I really am.

MOM. So am I.

KAT. Why? I'm fine.

DAD. Have you considered seeing a therapist?

MOM. *(Leaning into* **KAT***)* Tell him.

KAT. Why would you say that? Look, it's just that… I've been thinking a lot about Mom lately. It's like she's right here, just…in my face. All the time.
(Moving her hand like a talking sock puppet) Wah, wah, wah, wah, wah.

MOM. I love you, too.

DAD. Is there anything I can do? Maybe prescribe something?

KAT. Is that your answer? Drugs and therapy?

DAD. I'm just trying to help.

KAT. Then help me understand why you removed every trace of Mom from the house.

DAD. Because I'm moving on with my life. And you should too. *(He goes into the den)*

KAT. That was harsh.

MOM. I wouldn't call this resolving your differences with Dad.

KAT. How do you even know that's your mission?

MOM. It's obvious he wants to spend more time with you.

KAT. Yeah, why now?

MOM. I don't know, I guess because, duh, life is short. And besides, aren't you supposed to get along with him? I mean, that's what the contract says, right?

KAT. Yeah, you're right. I just need to make it thru today. *(Takes a deep breath, closes her eyes, does a zen-like movement with her hands)* Anger is one letter short of danger.

MOM. Your dad has a point, you know.

KAT. You're siding with Dad? The guy who's "moving on" with his life?

MOM. That's the problem. He's not moving on.

KAT. Oh, you sound like my therapist.

MOM. What do you do for fun?

KAT. When I'm not watching Animal Planet, I go on the Papa John's website and build my dream pizza.

MOM. Don't you wanna settle down some day and get married?

KAT. Yeah, well, I thought I might for awhile. But, you know what I discovered? It's not really up to me.

MOM. Why not?

KAT. Remember when you called me "Princess" when I was little?

MOM. Yeah.

KAT. Yeah, well, later in life no one else was on board with that.

MOM. You should get one of those self esteem workbooks.

KAT. I have six of them.

MOM. I think you have a lot going for yourself and there are a lot of guys that would love to be with you.
(Realizing) Maybe that's my mission. To find you a guy.

KAT. Yeah, then what? Spend the rest of my life with the same person?

MOM. When you find the right guy, like I did with your dad, you never want to let him go.

KAT. You don't have any regrets about marrying Dad?

MOM. No. Not at all. He was kind and funny and great in bed.

KAT. Mom!

*(***DAD** *comes out of the den.)*

MOM. He was the greatest partner anyone could ever have.

DAD. Who are you talking to?

KAT. Oh, I'm just, umm…practicing a speech.

DAD. Have you looked at any of your mom's things?

KAT. No, why?

DAD. *(Calling to the kitchen)* Hey, Brittney!
(To **KAT***)* She's got a whole bunch of stuff in the back–

*(***BRITTNEY** *comes out of the kitchen, followed by* **TRISH**.*)*

BRITTNEY. What's up?

DAD. Your mom has some things she wanted you girls to have, clothes and jewelry and stuff. You wanna take a look at it?

BRITTNEY. Yes!

KAT. Yeah, in a little bit.

MOM. Why wait?

DAD. I'll show you where it is.

(Starts for the back room)

MOM. *(To* **KAT***)* There's something in there you need to see.

DAD. *(Turning back, to* **TRISH***)* Oh, can I get you anything?

TRISH. No, I'm fine. Go ahead.

DAD. Game is on in the den, Vikings, Packers, if you wanna check it out.

TRISH. And you're out here?

DAD. I'm recording it.

TRISH. Oh, by the way, how's your fantasy team doing?

DAD. Really? You had to bring that up? On my birthday?

TRISH. Oh, I'm sorry, did I strike a nerve?

DAD. *(To* **KAT***)* Her fantasy team is beating mine.
(To **TRISH***)* Thanks. Thank you. Oh, hey, how's your golf game?

TRISH. Oh, that is not fair bringing up my golf skills.

DAD. *(Playful)* Oh, I'm sorry, those aren't skills.

BRITTNEY. Oh, it's a smackdown.

DAD. *(Smiling)* It's my birthday.

TRISH. *(Playful)* Yes, and you've had five dozen of 'em.

BRITTNEY. Whoa!

DAD. *(To* **TRISH**, *smiling)*
Alright, serve it on–

(Quickly to **BRITT***)*
What's the saying?–

BRITTNEY. Nope! Nope! You're too old, Dad. Let's go.

*(***BRITT** *leads* **DAD** *thru the hallway into the back room, stage right.)*

MOM. Your dad and Trish seem to get along.

*(***KAT** *and* **TRISH** *look at each other. It's awkward.)*

KAT. *(To* **TRISH***)* So, it's nice that you could be here for Dad's birthday.

TRISH. Oh, well, he's been a good friend.

MOM. See, they're just friends.

KAT. Yeah, it's good to have friends. I just, sometimes find it hard to have guy friends.

MOM. Oh, for good grief.

KAT. I mean, there's always something more going on when there's a guy involved.

TRISH. Yeah, sometimes their motives are a little confusing.

KAT. Tell me about it.

TRISH. Why is it so hard to find men who are sensitive, caring and good looking?

KAT. I have no idea.

TRISH. Because those men already have boyfriends. *(She smiles.* **KAT** *laughs)*

MOM. *(Laughs, to* **KAT***)* That was good.

TRISH. You know, I bet you have a lot of guy friends. I mean, being an engineer and all isn't exactly a field you see a lot of women in. And you have so much going for yourself, I bet a lot of guys want to be friends with you.

KAT. *(Flattered)* Oh, well, I don't know.

TRISH. Your mother talked about you a lot.

KAT. She did?

TRISH. Yeah, she was really inspired by your work.

KAT. *(Looking at* **MOM***)* Really?

MOM. That surprises you?

TRISH. She told me that six thousand children die every day from a lack of clean water.

KAT. Yeah, it's a real problem.

TRISH. It is. And you're helping to solve it, and she really admired you for that. For the impact you had on people's lives.

KAT. *(To* **MOM***)* Oh, well, I think she had a pretty big impact, too.

TRISH. Yeah. Hey, I'm gonna go cheer for the Vikings. You wanna come watch the game?

KAT. No, that's okay. Go ahead.

*(***TRISH** *exits to the den.)*

MOM. She's like Mother Teresa with a sense of humor.

KAT. *(Skeptical)* She's good. She's very good.

MOM. She's a nice person.

KAT. There's something else going on there.

MOM. Yeah. She's a Vikings fan.

BRITTNEY. *(Entering. To* **KAT***)* Hey, check out the photo on Mom's driver's license. *(Hands* **KAT MOM***'s driver's license)*

KAT. *(Re; the horrible photo, laughing)* Oh, my gosh!

MOM. They didn't say "cheese!"

BRITTNEY. Come look at her stuff.

KAT. Yeah, I'll be there in a little bit.

MOM. Look at it now.

KAT. I'm just having a little trouble with the idea of pillaging thru Mom's things.

BRITTNEY. *(Smiles)* Okay.

(She disappears into the hallway)

MOM. *(To* **BRITTNEY***, as she leaves)* Look in the brown bag, back of the closet.

BRITTNEY. *(Coming back, to* **KAT***)* You say something?

KAT. No.

BRITTNEY. Huh.

(She disappears into the hallway)

KAT. *(Reading* **MOM***'s license)* "Margaret Ann Swensen. Five seven, green eyes, donor, weight, a hundred and nine!?" Hah! So, now you're writing fiction?

MOM. I weighed a hundred and nine once! Listen, you better get in there before Brittney takes everything.

KAT. She's like a vulture picking at a carcass.

MOM. So, now I'm a carcass?

KAT. No, but you're becoming a pain in the carcass.

MOM. *(Re: their banter)* Oh, I miss this… And you're still jealous of Brittney.

KAT. Jealous? Brittney's the reason they put instructions on shampoo bottles.

MOM. You can't judge a book by its cover.

KAT. Brittney's not a book. She's a pamphlet.

MOM. You should get to know her. You never did growing up.

KAT. She was on training wheels when I was learning to drive.

MOM. It's not too late. Now, are you gonna look at my things, or what? There's something in there you need to see.

*(***KAT** *looks out the window. Up the walk comes* **KEVIN***, 30, handsome, wearing a sport coat.)*

KAT. Fine, fine, I'll go…is that Kevin Reese?

MOM. *(Looking)* Yeah. Wow, he's more handsome than I remembered.

KAT. He's coming up to our door. What's he doing here?

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* Is that you, Kevin?

KEVIN. *(Turning back)* Oh, hey there, Mrs. Norquist.

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* I didn't recognize ya with all those muscles.

KEVIN. Oh, well, I grew up.

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* Ya look like a Chippendale Dancer.

KEVIN. *(Taken aback)* So, how's Mr. Norquist?

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* He's dead.

KEVIN. He's mowing the lawn.

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* That's a zombie.

KEVIN. Alrighty.

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* Come here for a second. I can't see ya. I got cataracts.

KEVIN. *(Hesitant)* Oh, umm, I'm actually–

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* Oh, come on! I got some candy!

KEVIN. *(To himself)* Oh, boy.

(He takes a few steps back toward **MRS. NORQUIST***)*

MOM. Make yourself look nice. Are you gonna wear that?

KAT. We'll I'm not gonna change.

MOM. I'm just saying, would it kill you to wear a dress?

KAT. I thought you said you weren't gonna haunt me.

MOM. What? You've had a crush on him since elementary school.

KAT. I have not. I hated him. He made my life a living hell.

MOM. You had a telescope in your bedroom so you could spy on him.

KAT. It was for school!

MOM. Really? What class? Voyeurism 101?

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* So, are ya married?

KEVIN. Nope, not married.

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* Oh, you should ask out Brittney. The other one hates men.

KEVIN. Okay.

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* If I were younger, I'd be on you like Cheese Whiz on a cracker.

KEVIN. Okay, Mrs. Norquist–

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* I'm the Cheese Whiz and you're the cracker.

KEVIN. Alrighty–

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* Saltine. Cause ya look salty.

KEVIN. Okay, good seeing you–

MRS. NORQUIST. *(Offstage)* You wanna see my tattoos?

KEVIN. *(Shielding his eyes)*
No! No!–

(Takes a peek. She flashes her tattoos. Grossed out)

Ohh!

(He gags, turns and hurries toward the door.)

MOM. Here he comes. Last chance to make yourself look presentable.

(He knocks on the door. **KAT** *doesn't move.)*

KAT. He's knocking! What do I do?

MOM. Go and bleach your mustache.

KAT. Really?!

MOM. You have Al Queda facial hair.

KAT. Mom!

MOM. I'd hate to see what's going on…
(Motions to "below **KAT***'s belt")* down there.

KAT. Oh, my gosh!

(He knocks again.)

MOM. Answer the door. But fix your hair first.
(Re: her hair) Seriously, it's like a rat's nest.

KAT. No! Maybe he'll think no one is home and go away.

MOM. He can see you! Oh, for goodness sake, answer the door. Stand up straight. And smile. You'll be more attractive.

KAT. Mom!

(Takes a deep breath)

*(***KAT** *opens the door and smiles.)*

KEVIN. Hey, Kat, long time no see.

KAT. Yeah…

(After a few awkward beats) And you are…?

KEVIN. Kevin Reese. We grew up together. Neighbors. Remember?

(Points to his parent's house.) Right over there?

*(***DAD** *comes out of the hallway.)*

KAT. Oh, yeah, right.

(An awkward pause) Okay, good catching up.

(She starts to close the door.)

DAD. Is that Kevin?

KEVIN. Hey, Dr. Swensen. Happy birthday.

DAD. Oh, come on, call me Jack, would ya?

KEVIN. Yeah, sorry, it's hard to get used to.

DAD. Come on in. Kat, you remember Kevin.

KAT. Yeah, I guess we grew up together.

KEVIN. I'm really sorry to hear about your mom.

KAT. Thanks.

KEVIN. She was a wonderful person.

MOM. Oh, how sweet.

DAD. Yes, she was. Thanks.

*(***BRITT** *enters from the hallway wearing one of* **MOM***'s dresses.)*

BRITTNEY. Hey, Kevin, good to see you.

(She hugs him. **KAT** *notices the familiarity.)*

KEVIN. Hey Britt.

BRITTNEY. *(Flirtatious)* You look good.

KEVIN. Thanks. You too.

KAT. Is that one of Mom's dresses?

BRITTNEY. Yeah, how does it look?

(She spins around, showing it off.)

DAD. You look nice, sweetie.

KAT. Whatever.

MOM. *(To* **KAT***)* You need to get in there before everything is gone.

*(***TRISH** *comes out of the den.)*

TRISH. Vikings are up by 17.

DAD. Yes!

MOM. Go Vikings!

DAD. Oh, Kevin, this is Trish.

KEVIN. Nice to meet you.

TRISH. Nice to meet you.

DAD. Kevin and I play golf together. He's joining us for dinner.

MOM. Excellent!

KAT. *(Unenthusiastic)* Great.

DAD. Can I get you a beer?

KEVIN. Sure.

DAD. *(Gets a beer at the bar)* Kevin has a computer company. Tell 'em what you do.

KEVIN. Oh, I design apps for i-phones and tablets. It's just a little company.

DAD. He's being modest. He just bought a big house on Lake Minnetonka. *(Pron. Mi-nah-ton-kah)*

TRISH. Oh, that's a nice area.

BRITTNEY. He's doing very well.

DAD. He's looking for a new receptionist. Sweetie, you should talk to him.

KEVIN. Oh, I don't know if Kat would wanna be a receptionist.

KAT. Seriously? You think he was talking to <u>me</u>?

DAD. I meant Brittney.

KAT. The Hooters Girl.

KEVIN. Oh, right, sorry.

BRITTNEY. Kat isn't dating anyone.

KAT. Whoa! Where did that come from?

BRITTNEY. Sorry, I just assumed. Are you?

KAT. I am in between boyfriends.

BRITTNEY. You dating anyone, Kevin?

KAT. Wow. I apologize for my sister.

KEVIN. That's okay.
(To **BRITT***)* Yeah, it's complicated.

BRITTNEY. Oh, did you change your Facebook status?
(To **KAT***)* We're Facebook friends.

KAT. I think my brain just exploded.

*(***TRISH** *laughs.* **KAT** *notices.)*

DAD. *(Hands* **KEVIN** *the beer)* Brittney, let's ease up on Kevin, okay.

BRITTNEY. Oh, sorry. I just think everyone should find love.

KAT. Hah!

BRITTNEY. Oh, come on, you don't wanna get married some day?

KAT. Not while I still have hopes and dreams.

*(***TRISH** *laughs.* **KAT** *looks at her.)*

TRISH. I'm sorry. You have the same sense of humor as your mother. She always made me laugh.

MOM. How sweet.

BRITTNEY. *(To* **KAT***)* You're gonna find someone when you least expect it.

KAT. You mean like while I'm clipping my toenails in a public restroom? That would be unexpected. I need a re-fill. *(Goes to bar)*

MOM. Easy, now.

KAT. Just a small one.

BRITTNEY. You should try Match.com.

*(***BRITTNEY** *goes to* **KAT***'s computer on the coffee table and types something as* **KAT** *pours herself a drink, her back to* **BRITTNEY**. **MOM** *looks over* **BRITT***'s shoulder at the computer screen.)*

KAT. Why are you still talking?

BRITTNEY. It's easy.

KAT. Britt, I am not in the market right now.

MOM. Why not?

BRITTNEY. Wait a minute. You're already on Match.com. "Looking for a man, any age, any income, any height or weight."

KAT. Turn that off.

BRITTNEY. Your problem is you're playing hard to get.

*(***KAT** *puts her drink down and hurries over to* **BRITT**.*)*

KAT. I will stab you in the face.

*(***KAT** *shuts the computer then looks at everyone staring at her. There's an awkward pause.)*

MOM. Awkward.

DAD. *(Changing the subject)* So… Kevin…how are your folks?

KEVIN. They're good. I was just visiting them when you called.

KAT. *(To* **DAD***)* You just called him to come over, just now?

DAD. Kevin was quite the star in high school. Weren't you the captain of the football team?

KEVIN. I'm not sure if that's saying much. We didn't have a very good team.

*(***MOM** *whispers something to* **KAT**.*)*

KAT. I played the clarinet in band.

DAD. *(Smiles at* **KAT**, *then to* **KEVIN***)* Weren't you the Homecoming King?

KEVIN. That was not my idea.

BRITTNEY. All the girls liked Kevin. They still do.

*(***MOM** *whispers again to* **KAT**.*)*

KAT. I was President of the Math Club.

BRITTNEY. *(Smiles at* **KAT**, *then to* **KEVIN***)* Any good homecoming memories?

KAT. 3.14159265358979323…

(Everyone looks at **KAT**.*)*

That's Pi to 17 decimal places.

*(***MOM** *gives her two thumbs up.)*

KEVIN. *(After a few uncomfortable beats)* Yeah, umm, my favorite homecoming memory was when someone buried a weather balloon under the end zone. During the 4th quarter the balloon inflated, rising out of the ground, above the crowd. When it got above the visitors' side, it popped, dumping thousands of pieces of paper that said "Release the Kracken!"

(He laughs.) I have no idea what that means.

KAT. It's from "Clash of the Titans."

TRISH. Who did it?

KEVIN. Oh, they never found out. It was awesome. It must have been on a timer.

KAT. Actually it was a remote control.

KEVIN. That was you!?

KAT. I will neither confirm nor deny it.

KEVIN. Well, whoever did it was a genius.

KAT. Okay, it was me.

MOM. I'm so proud of my daughter, the felon.

KAT. *(Changing the subject)* Enough about me.

MOM. No, stay on topic! You have him!

KAT. *(Ignoring* **MOM***)* Trish works in home care.

MOM. *(Groans)* Ohh!

KEVIN. Really?

TRISH. I was an E-R nurse for 15 years, then went into home care.

KAT. *(To* **TRISH***)* Would you like a glass of wine?

TRISH. No, I'll just stick with the Diet Coke. Thanks.

KAT. There's a real nice cabernet.

TRISH. Yeah, I'm not really a drinker.

BRITTNEY. I'll have one.

KAT. *(To* **KEVIN**, *ignoring* **BRITT***)* Trish took care of Mom after the accident.

MOM. She was great.

BRITTNEY. I'll get it.

(Goes to get some wine.)

KAT. What exactly happened to Mom? I mean, how did she die?

DAD. Honey, I don't think this is the right time for this.

KAT. I'd like to know.

MOM. Why?

KAT. I wasn't there.

TRISH. Well, in the accident she suffered a head injury. As you know, she was in the hospital for three weeks. She was stable enough to go home, and that's when I came in to help care for her. She was lucid for a few more weeks while I was with her, but then she took a turn for the worse.

DAD. I told you all this.

KAT. I know. I just wanted to hear Trish's thoughts.

TRISH. She suffered a subdural hematoma.

BRITTNEY. What's a–

KAT. A blood clot.

TRISH. She went into a coma and three days later she was gone.

KEVIN. You know, I'm just gonna go across the street to my parent's and, ahh…get something I forgot. I'll be back in a little bit.

(He leaves.)

MOM. *(To* **KEVIN**, *following him)* No, no, don't go!

(He's gone, she stops. To **KAT***)* Oh, you just lost him. Good work.

DAD. Kat, honey, it's just not appropriate to talk about that in front of guests.

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