

~~happy~~
miserable
~~good~~
passionate
a successful marriage
~~struggling~~
reasonable
~~failed~~
loving

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

A NEIGHBORHOOD — DAWN

NOAH GABRIEL is running hard, his sweatshirt soaked through. He's 44, in good-enough shape, has worked mostly outside for many years now. A good man, responsible and smart. He jumps a curb and pain in his knee makes him wince -- he's mortal.

He seems to be focusing on something ahead, but in fact he is seeing a vision of --

A WOMAN'S BEAUTIFUL FACE, her eyes full of longing, her mouth smiling as she beckons...

HE RUNS QUICKER. A conversation begins in his head:

WOMAN (V.O.)

I told you it would be all right...

NOAH (V.O.)

I...didn't think it was possible.

WOMAN (V.O.)

You need to have more faith...

NOAH (V.O.)

How do I do that?

WOMAN (V.O.)

Look at me. I'm here.

NOAH (V.O.)

I love you so much...

A moment as he runs, then the woman's voice returns, but different now, from a different time:

WOMAN (V.O.)

Oh, God, make it stop--

NOAH (V.O.)

I can't make it stop--

WOMAN (V.O.)

MAKE IT STOP!!!

NOAH (V.O.)

Can I hold you--?

WOMAN (V.O.)

No, it hurts too much.....!

Noah shakes his head to stop the voices, runs harder...

WE NOW SEE THE WOMAN IN REAL LIFE

She walks down the stairs of her house. Her name is ABBY; she's Noah's wife. And we hear the voices in her head now:

ABBY (V.O.)
Why did you stay with me?

NOAH (V.O.)
Because I'm an idiot.

ABBY (V.O.)
I'm serious.

WE SEE HIM NOW, in profile, in a beautiful, timeless light.

NOAH
Because I would be lost without you.

IN THE KITCHEN

Abby makes coffee as the voices become a cacophony: "Bring me something sweet." "Listen, I bring in most of the money here--" "You never listen to me--" "Are you listening to me?" "Listen!" "I listen to you more than any man I know--" "You don't know what other men do!" "I'm going for a run."

Abby closes her eyes -- Noah comes in the back door, winded. A MOMENT -- as they look at each other. Then he quickly moves to her and takes her in his arms. They hug intensely.

NOAH
I'm sorry.

ABBY
No you're not.

NOAH
A little bit.

ABBY
I'm judging you for that.

NOAH
(kissing her face)
That's all you ever do.

ABBY
(kissing him back)
Which is why you married me. Just like your mother.

NOAH

I married you...because of your ass.

MADDY (V.O.)

Can you at least wait until I leave?

Their fifteen year old daughter MADDY enters the kitchen.

MADDY (CONT'D)

You guys are disgusting.

ABBY

It is disgusting that we love each other.

MADDY

In old people it is.

Noah picks up Maddy like a piece of wood under his arm.

MADDY (CONT'D)

Put me down!

NOAH

I can't hear you, I'm too old.

MADDY

You are old, you're a dinosaur, older than a dinosaur, a dimetrodon -- Mom, can I drive today...?!

ABBY

I'm thrilled beyond belief...

MADDY

Owww -- he just bit me!

NOAH

I can drive with her--

MADDY

Ooh! I get to drive the truck?

NOAH

No.

She hits him good-naturedly and he puts her down.

ABBY

You can drive, I'll close my eyes.

MADDY

She makes this noise every time another car goes by.

ABBY

It's an involuntary response.

MADDY

You didn't do it when Jake was learning.

ABBY

Jake already knew how to drive when he was learning.

MADDY

That's impossible.

NOAH

Jake knew how to drive when he was born. Because he's a MAN.

Maddy and her dad are comparing biceps. She's proud of hers.

MADDY

What time's he getting in tomorrow?

ABBY

You think he tells me?

MADDY

Is he staying till Monday?

ABBY

Sweetie, he has classes on Monday.

MADDY

Thank God, if he came to the recital I would barf.

ABBY

Stop it -- you're an incredible dancer, you've always been an incredible dancer.

(to Noah)

Tell her.

NOAH

You're an incredible dancer, you've always been an incredible dancer.

(they hit him)

What did I say?

The phone rings. Noah goes to pick it up.

The CALLER I.D. DISPLAY says: "Westside Oncology Group".

NOAH glances at Abby, picks it up.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Hello...

RECEPTIONIST (V.O.)

Hi, I'm calling to confirm an appointment for Abigail Gabriel--

NOAH

On Friday at 5:00. Yes, she knows.

RECEPTIONIST (V.O.)

And will you remind her nothing to eat or drink for 8 hours before?

NOAH

Yes, thank you.

He hangs up. Noah and Abby are looking at each other.

MADDY

I know what that was.

ABBY

You do?

MADDY

You think I don't know it's been six months...?

THE NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

As Maddy drives Abby's Prius.

ABBY

You're extremely close.

MADDY

I can totally stop in time and there's no one behind me.

ABBY

You never know what can happen.

MADDY

You mean like a meteor hitting us?

Abby winces as they come incredibly close to a parked car.

MADDY (CONT'D)

Sorry, my bad -- are you scared?

ABBY

Terrified but handling it.

MADDY

I mean of the follow-up.

ABBY

...Terrified, but handling it. What can I do, honey -- it'll be what it'll be.

MADDY

If you got sick again I don't know what I would do.

ABBY

Maddy, I'm going to be fine...

MADDY

(suddenly tearing up)
You know I love you so much, mom--

ABBY

(tearing up as well)
Oh, baby... Drive the car, drive the car!

Maddy laughs.

A CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

Noah pulls up to a small MOBILE OFFICE on the site of a BEAUTIFUL HOME in the last stages of construction. A sign reads "GABRIEL AND SONS, Pride in Construction. Since 1957".

Several WORKMEN greet him and ask questions as he walks into:

THE MOBILE OFFICE - DAY

A chaotic mass of equipment, samples, hardware, etc. On a tiny couch next to the drawing table, is JOSH GABRIEL, curled up asleep. Noah's younger brother, he's 41 going on 17.

JOSH

(not stirring)
I'm awake.

NOAH

I can see that. How'd it go?

JOSH

She wanted to know if this was "leading to a relationship"...

NOAH

Oooh. Which took until...?

JOSH

3:30. At which point I just came here.

NOAH

And other people are jealous of you...

JOSH

You're jealous of me.

NOAH

I am so not jealous of you.

JOSH

Stuck in a loveless marriage, fantasizing about every girl that walks down the street.

NOAH

I fantasize about my wife.

JOSH

You do not!

NOAH

(embarrassed now)

I actually do.

JOSH

That is so sad.

NOAH

Bite me.

JOSH

He fantasizes about his own wife, that's so disturbing. ...Your sex life is that good?

NOAH

Are you planning to work today?

JOSH

On what? The job is finished.

NOAH

How about getting us the next job?

JOSH

You're handling that.

NOAH

Yes, there's only one job in the entire world to be had.

JOSH

If that.

NOAH

You're such a dick.

Something changes in the room. Josh is serious now.

JOSH

Noah.

NOAH

You should at least pretend to work so the men don't lose whatever respect for you they don't have anyway.

JOSH

Noah.

NOAH

I'm tired of this. It's not my job to keep this business going for you.

JOSH

Noah.

NOAH

Put on your stupid date clothes and seduce somebody into building a house.

JOSH

When are you going to tell the guys?

Noah sits down and puts his head in his hands.

HIS FATHER DAVID

Is momentarily sitting across from him in a hospital gown, oxygen tube under his nose. He looks at Noah, then is gone.

NOAH

Fifty-two years next month. Dad started this.

JOSH

Dad's dead.

NOAH

I vaguely remember.
(looks at his brother)
And what do I tell them?

JOSH

They get it -- there's no work, it's just a lay-off, it's not permanent.

NOAH

If I shut us down we're never starting up again.

JOSH

You don't know that.

NOAH

(stands up)

I'm telling you we're getting the Davidson job.

JOSH

It'll be two months before we get the Davidson job and we're not getting it anyway.

NOAH

I'm not shutting us down before then.

JOSH

And how will you pay the men?

They just look at each other.

NOAH AND ABBY'S BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

Noah is in a T-shirt and boxers, in a Warrior's Pose, slowly putting more and more weight on his knee. The sounds he makes are more an expression of indignance than pain.

NOAH

Ow. Ow. Ow. Ow.

ABBY (V.O.)

(from the bathroom)

Go to Goldstein.

NOAH

My knee is absolutely fine. OWWW.

Abby appears, wearing an old, tattered flannel shirt.

ABBY

Damn it!

NOAH

What did I do now?!

ABBY

I forgot to call the School District about Friday.

NOAH

Today's Monday--

She sits on the bed, furiously types on her BlackBerry.

ABBY

They need a week to schedule a replacement. I knew there was something I was forgetting!

Noah steps up onto the bed, and starts bouncing.

NOAH

Hello...?

(Abby keeps typing)

You know you're insane.

ABBY

I'm obviously insane.

NOAH

(still bouncing)

Stop being insane.

ABBY

I would like nothing better than to stop being insane. And your bouncing is making me seasick.

NOAH

Counter-irritant. If you're seasick you won't be insane.

ABBY

Noah.

The tone relays the message. He throws himself down on the bed, shaking it more than his bouncing did. On her look:

NOAH

I stopped.

(she is silent)

Are you going to survive till Friday?

ABBY

I'll think about it.

He snuggles with her.

NOAH

Jake is coming home tomorrow. You can spend two hours in the market buying all the foods he likes.

ABBY

I did that already.

NOAH

Then you can obsess about whether
he's able to do his work...

ABBY

(not listening)
I'm sure it's back.

NOAH

It's not back.

ABBY

How do you know?

NOAH

Because my mother wanted me to go to
medical school.

She is unmollified.

ABBY

What if it is? I can't go through
chemo again, Noah.

NOAH

You can and you would and you won't
have to.

ABBY

29% of women with Stage III have it
return within five years.

NOAH

And 81% don't--

ABBY

71.

NOAH

What? Oh, 71, 81, what's the
difference -- come here.

He holds her, though she can barely allow herself to be held.

NOAH (CONT'D)

If you die I will raise the kids as
best I can and be sure to remarry as
soon as possible so they won't have
to go without a mother.

ABBY

Thank you.

NOAH
And she'll be very young and
beautiful.

ABBY
I hope so.

NOAH
Pretty soon we'll forget all about
you and everything will be fine.

ABBY
I'm easily forgotten.

NOAH
(nuzzles her hair)
Especially your smell.

ABBY
I have to wash my hair.

NOAH
And the way the skin on the back of
your neck feels.

ABBY
It's starting to sag.

NOAH
And your incredible ability to take
compliments.

ABBY
Only you would think those are
compliments.

They sit for a moment. He has calmed her down -- she loves
the way he holds her.

NOAH
Wanna have sex?

ABBY
No.

NOAH
Just checking.

She kisses him -- a consolation prize. He holds her.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

NOAH AND ABBY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Abby's eyes are open; she is looking at the door of the room. Suddenly it opens, and a LITTLE BOY in pajamas -- big smile on his face -- comes running in and jumps on the bed.

Abby doesn't move. The boy is not there. Noah nuzzles her:

NOAH

Your son is coming home today.

She smiles.

THE KITCHEN - MORNING

Noah is heading out as Abby gathers her work stuff.

ABBY

What's their name?

NOAH

Davidson.

ABBY

Sound rich to me.

NOAH

Richer than Midas.

ABBY

The Davidson touch. Has a ring to it. You better get this job.

NOAH

If you go to the market one more time, God will strike you down.

He kisses her and leaves.

THE DAVIDSONS, 50-ISH - LATER

Might be richer than Midas, which is why their 6,000 square foot house is not big enough for them. Noah sits with them.

NOAH

--we move the tower to this side, but it's exactly the same height.

NANCY

How many feet?

NOAH
 Forty-three from floor to ceiling.
 (Nancy looks up)
 Four times higher than this.

ALLAN
 I really want that feeling of space...

NANCY
 You are so good, Noah -- I can't
 believe you're not an architect.

NOAH
 I'd still be an English teacher if
 my dad hadn't gotten sick.
 (back to business)
 One thing -- the city is a nightmare
 about permits. The quicker we start--

ALLAN
 I know, I know. Look, how about we
 pull the trigger next week?

NOAH
 ...You mean we start next week or
 we...decide next week?

ALLAN
 Look, I have a board meeting on
 Wednesday, I just need to make sure
 the ducks are truly lined up.

NOAH
 Allan, you line up those ducks and
 I'll help you shoot 'em.

ALLAN
 A deal! We'll talk on Thursday.

They shake. But not on the deal. Just on the deal to shoot
 the ducks. Noah successfully hides his disappointment.

A HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Abby sits at the head of a circle of twelve GIRLS. There is
 an explosion of embarrassed laughter.

TANYA
 You can't say that in front of her!

ROCHELLE
 --I'm reporting what he said!!

ABBY
 (mock horror)
 You can't say that in front of me!
 Shame on you!

She puts her hands over her ears, and the girls laugh more.

ABBY (CONT'D)
 What did you say back to him?

ROCHELLE
 If he was so anxious to find a home
 for it he should put it on craigslist!

ALEXA
 They all think talking like that is
 gonna get 'em somewhere--

ABBY
 Maybe it does get 'em somewhere.

ALL
 Not with me. Yeah, right. No way.

ABBY
 Excuse me, but I'll bet more than
 one person in this room has done
 stuff she did not want to do...
 (the room goes silent)
 And I'll bet the guy said something
 just as stupid...
 (low murmurs)
 Because it's not really about what
 the guy says, is it? What's it about?
 (no answer)
 It's about what you think you lose
 if you don't go along with him.
 First of all you lose him, which
 means the end of life--
 (laughter)
 --you lose your standing in whatever
 group or clique or posse of mean
 girls you need in order to exist...

More laughter.

JENELLE
 And you lose either way, 'cause when
 people find out you did it you lose
 your reputation--

AMELIA
 If I even smile at a boy the next
 day people are saying I'm a slut--

ROCHELLE

'Cause you got a sign up top your head, "Hey, baby, let's get down!"

AMELIA

I do not!

Several girls are laughing: yes, she does.

ABBY

Why's it all about what boys want, or what other girls think, or what's going to happen to you or be said about you? Where's the part where you just get to want what you want?

The girls think about that.

ROCHELLE

What planet you from, Dr. Gabriel?

MADDY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Maddy is with her friends LAURA and SIMONE, amid the chaos of modern technology: Two girls on one laptop, one texting, the third girl dancing to the music in her earbuds.

LAURA

(pointing to the laptop)
Oh my God oh my God there he is --

MADDY

Oh my God. He's beautiful, he's so beautiful, I want your beauty, Sean! Wait a minute, why is he with Amanda?

SIMONE

Her cousin is like his best friend.

MADDY

So Amanda gets to hang with him? Look, she's touching him. Gross.

LAURA

He is SICK.

MADDY

He is friggingly awesomely SICK!
(moaning)
SEANNNNNN!!!

The girls laugh.

SIMONE

You ready for the recital?

MADDY

Shut up shut up shut up why don't
you wear a little eyeliner...?

SIMONE

It's an experiment!

LAURA

You look like an Egyptian.

SIMONE

I wish I could dance like you.

Maddy pretends to stick her finger down her throat.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

(to Laura)

Have you seen her routine it's like
genius.

LAURA

She won't show it to me--

MADDY

I'm not doing the recital.

Simone starts doing her version of Maddy's routine.

SIMONE

(singing)

...and when you tell me, tell me
slow, tell me nice--

Laura is laughing and clapping.

MADDY

You are so mean.

SIMONE

You do it.

MADDY

No.

Laura now joins in. Maddy is forced to do her own routine
since she's now the only person not doing it....

She begins to dance -- she's really good. And really sexy.

MADDY (CONT'D)

Tell me, tell me tell me, like you
never told anybody befoorrreeee.....

She's getting into it. The other two stop to watch. Maddy
doesn't notice as Simone starts **FILMING** with her cell phone.

MADDY (CONT'D)
...because when you tell me, and I
hear it --

LAURA

SEAN!

MADDY
Then I'll know -- Sean!
(screaming laughter)
-- and when a woman knows --

She has surrendered to some private, sensual experience.

MADDY (CONT'D)
She opens her heart and her soul and
her body to love -- Seannnn!!! --
(more laughter)
Body and soul to loovvvveeee.....

She takes a bow as Simone surreptitiously continues to film.

IN THE KITCHEN - LATER

Noah is looking into a cabinet.

NOAH
Where's that stupid casserole thing?

Maddy walks over and pulls out the casserole that was
essentially in front of his face.

MADDY
This stupid casserole thing?

NOAH
Yes. Which materialized as you walked
up to it, did you see that? It's a
singularity of quantum physics.

MADDY
Quantum physics doesn't account for
materializations.

NOAH
Did I ask you? Your mom is entirely
neurotic about Jake coming home and
then tells me to start dinner.

Maddy is staring at herself in the window above the sink.

MADDY
My hair is too curly.

NOAH

A singularity of quantum physics.

MADDY

You wouldn't notice if my hair was green.

NOAH

I noticed the point on the top of your head.

MADDY

Stop trying to annoy me. It's not cute.

NOAH

I'm sorry.

MADDY

I actually still like it but I know I shouldn't. I can't be a child forever, you know.

NOAH

You aren't one already.

MADDY

Hah.

NOAH

You're a beautiful young woman.

MADDY

That's so mean.

NOAH

I'm telling you the truth!

MADDY

Mom loves Jake more than me.

NOAH

Mom loves Jake more than me -- you she's okay with.

Maddy scowls. Abby runs in.

ABBY

I hate the school board. Anarchy would be far more efficient than the school board.

Noah forces her to accept a kiss.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Sorry.

(to Maddy)

Hi, sweet gorgeous thing, how was school?

(to Noah)

You didn't start?

NOAH

I'm trying to start. She kept interrupting me.

MADDY

How come you don't come to my school?

Abby is rushing to start dinner as she speaks.

ABBY

I go where I'm ordered, my dear. You're in the 4th District and I am restricted to the 6th. Will you wash the string beans?

MADDY

He doesn't like string beans. He's always been afraid to tell you.

ABBY

(genuinely upset)

Are you kidding me?

MADDY

Yes! Mom you are so whacked.

ABBY

I am the psychologist, young lady. Psychologists can't be whacked. Wash the string beans!

MADDY

Yes, ma'am. Geez -- I can't wait till I come home from college.

Abby looks at Noah, then at Maddy. She puts a hand on each of her daughter's shoulders.

ABBY

You know I love you--?

MADDY

Yes.

ABBY

You know it? In your heart.

MADDY

Yes.

ABBY

Good. Wash the string beans.
(Noah cracks up)
Nothing is funny.

NOAH

Not in the slightest.

The doorbell RINGS. Abby literally runs to get it.

AT THE FRONT DOOR

As Abby flings it open. JAKE is standing there. Dark hair, not entirely formed yet but we know he'll be handsome.

JAKE

I totally forgot my key!

ABBY

Jakey!

Abby pulls him into her arms. She then realizes -- as do the just-arriving Noah and Maddy -- that Jake isn't alone.

There's a beautiful blond GIRL standing with him.

JAKE

Guys, this is Sophie. I wanted her to meet my family!

So much can be packed in a moment: is she his girlfriend, why didn't he tell us, do we trust her, why not, she's too pretty, why should that matter, why does this feel so completely...wrong? All in the midst of smiles and embraces.

IN THE DINING ROOM - LATER

Everyone has sat down to dinner.

ABBY

So, Jake, how do you and Sophie know each other?

SOPHIE

He picked me up in the library...

JAKE

That is such a lie. I had literally five minutes to print out a Sociology paper and the printer wasn't working and Sophie works at the library.

MADDY

So you helped him.

SOPHIE

I thought he was just trying to pick me up, so I refused! Finally I realized nobody would be that upset if they just wanted to pick me up.

Jake smiles beatifically. Noah fives him low.

NOAH

So! Sophie. Do you know what you're going to major in?

SOPHIE

That's kind of, uh, complicated...

ABBY

Why?

Jake and Sophie glance at each other. Just a split second, but long enough to set off alarms in both Abby and Noah.

JAKE

Well, guys, see, uh, I've kind of decided -- not to go back to school.

ABBY

(shocked)

You don't...want to go back to school...

JAKE

I just don't see the point at this moment in my life.

Noah is speechless.

ABBY

But, what, what will you do, I mean in this economy, I mean you have a scholarship, I mean how will you find a--, I mean -- you don't want to go back to school?

JAKE

Sophie and I think there are better ways to spend our time right now....

Silence resumes.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

IN THE UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

They all walk upstairs in increasing trepidation...

JAKE

--much healthier when people raise
their own crops.

NOAH

Obviously if you don't use pesticides--

JAKE

Not just pesticides, it's land use,
run-off, humane livestock practices.

NOAH

So you want to be a farmer.

JAKE

It's not a dirty word--

NOAH

Excuse me, it's an honorable word --
also a difficult way to make a living.

JAKE

You make your own living. Literally.

They have arrived outside Jake's bedroom. An inevitably
uncomfortable moment.

ABBY

Okay, so, Sophie...

(oh, boy)

Uh, I guess, I mean I'm sure Maddy
won't mind--

JAKE

Mom...

ABBY

Well, I mean Maddy has a very large--

She looks to Noah for help, but he's not sure he agrees.

NOAH

Jake, I think Mom feels, I mean maybe
I shouldn't speak for her...

ABBY

Okay, this is uncomfortable. Sophie, we're a family that tends to...talk these things out, I hope that doesn't freak you out...

SOPHIE

Uh...No. I'm happy to sleep anywhere you want me to--

JAKE

Can I talk to you guys in private for a second -- Sophie, I'm sorry --

SOPHIE

You guys can talk in front of me.

Yikes. Okay. Jake turns to his mother.

JAKE

Sophie and I sleep together at school.

ABBY

Somehow I gathered. But you're not at school. Nor, according to you, are you going back.

JAKE

That has nothing to do with--

ABBY

Noah--

NOAH

I'm sorry, so...you think this is really a bad idea....

She stares in shock -- how can Noah betray her like this?

ABBY

If Maddy brought her boyfriend home would you let her sleep with him?

NOAH

No way?!

ABBY

Okay then!

NOAH

But that's because she's sixteen!

ABBY

Say she were nineteen!

NOAH

Oh.

(to Jake)

Maybe you guys shouldn't stay together--

JAKE

Dad!

NOAH

This is your parents' house and in
your parents' house you will follow
your parents' rules.

JAKE

You don't even agree with her!

NOAH

Well, I'm confused about it and mom
isn't, so she wins...

Jake throws up his hands. Abby savors victory.

ABBY

Sophie, let's just go see Maddy --
she has a blow-up bed for her friends,
it's a big room.

SOPHIE

Really, this is not a problem.

IN MADDY'S ROOM

Abby knocks while entering.

ABBY

Honey-dearest, we have to ask you a--

She stops at the sight of Maddy sitting on her bed. Maddy's
face is streaked with tears, her eyes filled with horror.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Maddy, what is it...?

(Maddy can't answer)

Maddy! Honey, what's going on?

Maddy finally turns her laptop around:

ON THE LAPTOP

Is her Facebook Wall. And a new -- yes -- video posted by
her friend Simone. She clicks Play.

WE SEE the cell phone video of Maddy singing and dancing.
Abby gets it immediately. Sophie doesn't.

SOPHIE

Wow. You are such a good dancer!

ABBY AND NOAH'S BEDROOM - LATER

Abby throws herself on the bed. Noah is working.

NOAH

Will she survive?

ABBY

Touch and go.

NOAH

It's absolutely horrible.

ABBY

Shut up -- you thought it was cute.

NOAH

Beyond cute. Super cute.

ABBY

You're hopeless. Her entire school has probably seen it already.

NOAH

And are completely jealous because they're not her.

ABBY

(glares at him)

This traitor of a friend videos her completely throwing herself at this boy in an obscenely sexual manner. It's a nightmare. She thinks she can never set foot in school again.

(shudders)

The poor thing, I just want to hold her and of course she won't let me.

NOAH

It's not like she's naked and pretending to give the boy a blowjob--

ABBY

NOAH!

NOAH

I didn't say that. I didn't even think that.

(a silence)

I'm just saying if she were sleeping with the guy I'd be freaking out, but singing on a video is not exactly--

ABBY

What if she's already had sex and didn't tell me?

NOAH

You had sex with Bobby Patrone when you were her age.

ABBY

I can't believe you would bring that up now.

NOAH

(lies next to her)

I had sex with Sherry Bamberger when I was her age.

ABBY

Who had the most amazing breasts you'd ever seen.

NOAH

How did you know that?

ABBY

Because you've told me a hundred times.

NOAH

That was because I hadn't seen your breasts yet.

Abby doesn't respond. Noah looks at her.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Hello...?

ABBY

Is he going to quit school?

NOAH

No.

ABBY

And then he brings home this girl...

NOAH

Doesn't he know you're his girl?

ABBY

That is so mean.

NOAH

I'm serious. He should've told you he was bringing her.

ABBY

I'm not some kind of sick, seductive
Oedipal mom, am I?

(before he can answer)

Shut up. And what happens when Maddy
goes off to school, too?

He moves closer and gathers her in his arms.

NOAH

Can you imagine having to spend all
our time together. Farting and
creaking around,

(old person's voice)

"What, Muriel? What'd ya say?"

(she laughs)

You know you're the most amazing
mother in the world?

She is so grateful she almost starts to cry. He kisses her.
She kisses him back, but isn't really into it.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Even if you were a slut in high
school.

He kisses her more, starts to unbutton her blouse.

NOAH (CONT'D)

I wish I had known you then.

ABBY

You're lucky you didn't.

NOAH

I wish I had known you in
kindergarten. I wish I had known
you my whole life... No matter when
I met you I would have loved you the
first moment I saw you.

Her blouse comes off, but he can see she's just not happening.
So he stops. One more silence.

ABBY

I'm really sorry.

NOAH

It's a big week.

ABBY

It's a very big week.

She gently disengages and goes into the bathroom. He's upset.

AT THE JOBSITE - DAY

The job is essentially finished except for some clean-up. Noah and Josh are with the Argentinean owner, DIEGO.

DIEGO

Look at this. You guys. Four months late, but so beautiful...!

JOSH

(can't help himself)

A lot of change orders in those four months.

DIEGO

Change orders are for changes, my friend, not for work left undone--

This is an old argument. Noah steps in.

NOAH

Whatever the semantics, we're glad you got what you wanted.

DIEGO

My wife and I can't wait to move in!

JOSH

If you can just give us some sense of when to expect the last payment...

DIEGO

My business manager called you, didn't he? The invoice is very incorrect.

JOSH

No, it covers the third phase of construction, the final payment--

DIEGO

And I have already paid for the tile in the kitchen and several other items on the invoice.

JOSH

(getting mad now)

Diego, you paid for the original tile, not the new tile you ordered because you didn't like the first tile.

DIEGO

I never saw the first tile and it was laid without my approval--

JOSH

It was taken to your office and laid on the floor by Andre, we've already been through this--

DIEGO

That tile was an inferior substitute for what I--

NOAH

All right, guys -- hold on a second--

Months of annoyance on both sides is about to spill over--

JOSH

You're not moving into this house without paying us what you--

DIEGO

So? I have two other houses to live in until you correct your mistakes!

NOAH

Josh. Diego. Stop it. Come on.

Both men stop. The workmen are unabashedly watching.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Diego, if you have a dispute about the bill we can talk about it, but we have workmen to pay. We can't turn over possession until it's settled--

Noah's cell phone rings. He looks at it: it's Maddy.

NOAH (CONT'D)

(to Diego)

Excuse me one second, I'm sorry.

(answers)

Hey, sweetie--

INTERCUT: MADDY AT SCHOOL

MADDY

Can you pick me up?

NOAH

Huh...?

MADDY

I think I'm gonna throw up.

Noah looks around, completely at a loss.

NOAH
Did you call Mom?

MADDY
She's not answering. Dad, I really
feel sick...

Josh is rolling his eyes at Noah -- "come on!"

NOAH
Uh...I'll be there as soon as I can.
(hangs up)
Sorry guys, I have to... Diego, I'll
call your business manager, okay--?

IN NOAH'S TRUCK - LATER

Maddy sits in the passenger seat, eyes down.

MADDY
Can you like drive more smoothly?

NOAH
It's the suspension -- I'm driving
as smoothly as I can.

MADDY
This truck is a carbon nightmare.

NOAH
Thank you. Want to tell me what
happened?

MADDY
Nothing happened. I feel sick.

NOAH
Were people mean about the, the...?

She looks at him in disbelief.

MADDY
I should never have gone today.

NOAH
Did people say things...?
(no answer)
Hello?
(no answer)
Excuse me, only people married to me
are allowed to give me the silent
treatment, and then only under terms
of the Geneva Convention.

No answer. He gives up. After a few moments.

MADDY

There's just no way on earth you
would understand, okay? I'm sorry.

He looks at her, then drives.

MADDY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I love you, Daddy!

He turns in surprise to find Maddy as a FOUR YEAR OLD beaming
at him. As the apparition fades, he inhales the memory.

The current Maddy just looks straight ahead.

THE KITCHEN - DAY

Jake sits at the kitchen table, snacking, reading the paper.

ABBY (V.O.)

Anybody home--?!

Abby walks in and finds him.

ABBY (CONT'D)

Hello, handsome.

JAKE

Hey, mom.

ABBY

Where's Sophie?

JAKE

Out for a walk. She thinks our
neighborhood is like the country.

ABBY

It is. Can I get you something--?

JAKE

(smiling)

--No. I can get for myself.

ABBY

That's no fun.

She sits down with him. Both are quiet. Finally:

JAKE

Yes...?

ABBY

She's nice.

JAKE
She's very nice.

Abby nods. Another silence.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Mom. Spit it out or I'll never hear
the end of it.

ABBY
I'm just wondering what you think
you'll do if you quit school.

JAKE
Needing a college education is a
myth. Richard Branson doesn't have
a college education.

ABBY
If you want to start an airline I'm
all for it.

JAKE
Record label.

ABBY
That too. I didn't say I was against
quitting school--

JAKE
Hah--!

ABBY
I'm just asking what you'll...do if
you quit school.

JAKE
I don't know, I thought I'd stay
here for a while till we figure things
out.

ABBY
You and Sophie.

JAKE
Me and Sophie.

ABBY
And get a job.

JAKE
I guess.

ABBY
How else will you support yourself?

JAKE

Well if I'm living at home...

ABBY

And we pay all your expenses...

JAKE

Okay, I haven't thought this through, I'm sorry -- is this like a Grand Jury proceeding or something? Because I would have prepared for it better.

ABBY

Jake... I don't know if it's smart for you to live at home if you quit school, and of course you'll have to get a job, which may not even be possible in the current environment. So, yes, you better think about it.

JAKE

All of a sudden you realize you were too easy on me growing up and now it's time to get tough. Great.

ABBY

We were too easy on you growing up. I think my whole generation was...

JAKE

Here it comes...

ABBY

Nothing was ever asked of you, no responsibilities...

JAKE

Is that my fault?

ABBY

No, it's ours. We just have to figure out how to correct it.

JAKE

I think punishing me is a great way.

Sophie bounces in the door.

SOPHIE

Oh, my God -- it's so beautiful around here. I never want to leave!

THE GARAGE - NIGHT

Noah gets in the passenger seat of his truck; Abby climbs into the driver's seat. They're not going anywhere -- this is a ritual. Finally alone, both lean their heads back.

ABBY

Our kids are falling apart...

NOAH

No they're not.

ABBY

Your daughter's acting out some kind of sexual trauma or perceived peer-induced scenario--

NOAH

In English, please...

ABBY

--and your son is about to throw his life away.

NOAH

I don't agree.

ABBY

Do not try to make me the crazy one. We have got to act here, and quickly.

NOAH

Maddy is being a teenager, that's all -- with enhanced technology. This whole thing will blow over.

ABBY

She's being pressured into being sexual before she's ready--

NOAH

Believe me, she's ready!

ABBY

She couldn't possibly know that. You have no idea the pressure these girls are under, the images they see, they don't have a chance to know what their own sexuality is!

Noah completely disagrees, but knows enough to shut up.

ABBY (CONT'D)

And Jake thinks he can do this with no consequences whatsoever.

NOAH
Consequences? What, you think he
should he be fined?

ABBY
No, he should get a job.

NOAH
So he'll get a job.

ABBY
What makes you think he can even get
a job right now? Millions of people
are out of work!

NOAH
So he'll live with us---

ABBY
That's the whole point, we shouldn't
be infantilizing him. He needs to
understand how difficult the real
world is.

NOAH
He'll find out soon enough...

ABBY
Stop it.

NOAH
What?

ABBY
That. That thing you do. I hate
it.

NOAH
What am I doing?

ABBY
Agree with me or disagree with me,
but don't manage me, I'm not a child.

NOAH
I said he'll find out soon enough.

ABBY
Which means you don't want to take a
position with him--

NOAH
I didn't say that!

ABBY

Then what are you saying?! Say something and stick to it.

NOAH

Hold on, hold on -- is this about the kids or about me?

ABBY

It's about how I feel totally alone in these situations because...you're more interested in having everyone like you than in having an opinion.

NOAH

(pissed now)
That's uncalled for.

ABBY

You think I didn't see you flirting with what's her name, Sophia, Salome?

NOAH

My God you've gone insane.

ABBY

I don't mean that kind of flirting. I mean the...You're-The-Only-Person-in-the-World-Noah-Attention-Thing -- that makes everybody feel so special.

NOAH

Wait a minute--

ABBY

It's completely indiscriminate and occasionally inappropriate -- and it drives me crazy sometimes...

She can't look at him. He's hurt and confused.

NOAH

Well, thank you for bringing that to my attention. I will endeavor not to be so charming...

She's run out of steam, and now feels bad. They sit.

She crosses her legs -- he looks at them, then up at her face. She's lost in her own thoughts. He looks away.

She realizes he was looking at her and turns to him -- but he's now lost in his thoughts.

A DIFFERENT CAR -- A YOUNGER NOAH AND ABBY
Are trying to make love in his Alfa-Romeo.

NOAH
Move your leg up there--

ABBY
It doesn't go that way--

NOAH
Owww -- frigging gearshift!

ABBY
Anyone could see us right now!

NOAH
So...

ABBY
You are so bad. Wait, try this--
Their heads disappear below the window.

BACK IN THE PRESENT

They are both having the same memory.

ABBY
I forgot to ask how it went with the
Davidsons.

NOAH
It went great. The problem is the
Tiburani job, which we finished today.

ABBY
That's so great! Congratulations,
honey. What a godsend this job has
been. What's the problem?

NOAH
Diego won't pay the last installment.

ABBY
He has to.

NOAH
I'm not sure he has to, actually.

ABBY
(frightened)
He has to!

NOAH

Abby -- I'm working on it, okay.

ABBY

How are you gonna pay your guys if he doesn't pay you? Where will our money come from? What are you gonna do about this?

NOAH

I'll put a lien on him if I have to--

ABBY

But you'll have to go to court, it'll cost money---

NOAH

Yes, it'll cost money, hiring hit men would cost money, too, would you prefer that?

Abby is terrified at the prospect of no money coming in.

ABBY

Are you going to get the Davidson job?

NOAH

Damn it! Do I tell you how to counsel kids?

ABBY

I'm just asking you---

NOAH

No, you're doubting me, which is what you constantly do and I am friggin' sick of it.

(an angry moment)

I'm getting the Davidson job, okay? And I'm getting Diego to pay me, and I'm taking a position with my children, and I'm reducing my carbon footprint, and oh, yes, along with all of those things to please you, I'm making sure that I'm not concerned with pleasing everyone too much. Do I have it right? 'Cause if I don't, you know what? I could give a shit.

He gets out. Leaving her alone.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

THE KITCHEN - MORNING

Maddy and Jake share an amused look -- the tension between their parents is palpable as they get breakfast ready.

ABBY

Excuse me.

NOAH

Excuse me.

They dance around each other with exaggerated politeness.

MADDY

I'm not going to school today.

ABBY

Yes, you are.

MADDY

I'll throw up in front of my whole chemistry class--

NOAH

You could all analyze the contents...

Jake laughs, but Abby and Maddy look daggers at him.

ABBY

Sweetie, I know this situation is--

MADDY

I'm telling you I am sick--

JAKE

In the head--

ABBY

Staying home is not the way to--

MADDY

I could have E. coli or Salmonella or one of hundreds of food-borne illnesses.

NOAH

Not from this house.

Abby glares at him: Do Something.

NOAH (CONT'D)

You have to go to school.

MADDY
(pointing to Jake)
He doesn't have to go to school.

ABBY
That hasn't been decided--

JAKE
Excuse me--

MADDY
He drops out of school for good and
I can't miss one day?

NOAH
Your brother is nineteen -- he's old
enough to make certain life decisions.

ABBY
No, he's not---

NOAH
(oops)
No, he's not---!

JAKE
Wait a minute...!

MADDY
Excuse me, we're talking about my
situation! I am not going to school!

Abby would quail at her daughter's ferocity if she did not
recognize it as her own...

OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Abby and Noah are leaving.

ABBY
We suck.

NOAH
It's one day.

ABBY
We still suck. This is weak, this
is bad parenting.

NOAH
And this is me already ten minutes
late. It's not the Apocalypse, her
character will survive one day not
facing her problems.

ABBY

I can't deal with any of this and I have fifteen girls waiting for me.

NOAH

(touches her gently)

Hey...

ABBY

Please, let me just go.

She gives him one last despairing look and they both walk toward their cars.

THE LIVING ROOM - A BIT LATER

Maddy, Jake, and Sophie are on the couch, laughing hysterically at Jake's high school yearbook.

JAKE

I was not a geek, I was a member of an elite group of cultural renegades.

MADDY

Geek.

SOPHIE

Look at your hair, you were so adorable. I would have walked up to you in the hallway and kissed you.

JAKE

God, that would have made my life.

Sophie lights a joint and offers it to Maddy.

MADDY

Oh, thanks, no.

JAKE

(to Sophie)

I told you she was perfect.

MADDY

Shut up.

JAKE

I barely made it out of high school, and she gets all A's. J.V. volleyball, amazing dancer--

MADDY

Don't say that word!

SOPHIE
(getting up)
I can't wait for your recital!

MADDY
No way that's happening! Aaghhh!

SOPHIE
(going into the kitchen)
Who wants food?

JAKE
Me!
(to Maddy)
I hear your video got ten thousand hits--

MADDY
SHUT UP!

JAKE
Sean call you yet?

MADDY
You are the worst human being. Why are you here anyway.

JAKE
I missed you.

MADDY
Why do you want to drop out, really?
He looks down, a moment of vulnerability.

JAKE
I'm just kind of freaking out, that's all...

She leans against him.

IN NOAH'S TRAILER - LATER

He's at his laptop, going over a spreadsheet. Abby enters.

NOAH
(surprised)
Hello!

ABBY
Hello... Where's Josh?

NOAH
...Servicing one of his relationships.

She smiles, moves through the chaos.

NOAH (CONT'D)

What are you doing here? Looking so beautiful.

ABBY

I just. I don't know exactly.

NOAH

I'm so happy to see you. You never visit me at work.

ABBY

I never want to bother you.

NOAH

I like being bothered.

They look at each other.

ABBY

I'm sorry.

NOAH

For what?

ABBY

For....asking so much of you, for being... I just, oh, Noah--

He stands up and holds her, pulls her gently to the couch -- pushing aside papers and folders.

NOAH

Shhh. Everything is entirely my fault, I'm sure of it.

ABBY

(appreciates his irony)
It's just all too much. He comes home, and her terrible friends who I never trusted anyway, and the money stuff--

NOAH

Shhh---

ABBY

Not to mention the unmentionable.

He kisses her cheek and her temples. She drinks it in. He kisses her on the lips and she kisses back.

NOAH

Let me lock the door.

He gets up, does it, then sits back down--

NOAH (CONT'D)

It's so unbelievably sexy to have you in this trailer.

But she's lost it now. She looks down.

ABBY

--And this too. I know it's been forever.

NOAH

Not forever. Just five and a half weeks.

ABBY

He's counting. It's worse than I thought...

NOAH

Shhh. It's so unbelievably unsexually nice to have you in this trailer...

ABBY

Every time we start, all I can think is -- I have a dent in my breast, he's grossed out--

NOAH

Stop--

ABBY

I'm toxic, I can still taste the chemicals, my hair came in thinner...

NOAH

None of that is how I feel.

ABBY

I know. But it's how I feel.

(a moment)

Maybe after this...thing tomorrow.

NOAH

Sure...

ABBY

I do love it when you hold me...

And so he does. They sit there together for a moment.

ABBY (CONT'D)

You can tell Josh we did it anyway.

INT. FRONT DOOR OF THEIR HOUSE - LATER

Abby enters to find various messes wherever she looks.

ABBY

Hello...!

No answer.

IN THE UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

As she approaches Jake's closed door, she hears giggles and then MOANING. Oy. She tiptoes past.

IN MADDY'S ROOM

Abby comes upon Maddy lying on her bed, ear buds in.

MADDY

I found out everything I missed and already did all the homework.

ABBY

That's good.

Abby comes over sits on the bed.

ABBY (CONT'D)

You guys have fun today?

MADDY

Is that a trick question?

ABBY

No. I hope you did.

MADDY

Amazing. Jake treated me like a person...

Abby is moved. Silent for a moment.

ABBY

All right. Madelyn. When you...did that video--

MADDY

I didn't DO that video, it was DONE, without my knowledge.

ABBY

That's what I meant actually. When you were... dancing and that...snake Simone--

(Maddy rolls her eyes)

--video'd it, what were you feeling?

MADDY

Do we have to talk about this?

ABBY

Yes. Because I think I realized something, so I'm just wondering...what you were feeling?

MADDY

Mom....

ABBY

Maddy...

MADDY

(takes a moment)

I was having fun.

ABBY

It felt good.

MADDY

I guess so, yeah.

ABBY

Like how you might want to feel every day, dancing around and having a good time.

MADDY

Hard to imagine, but yeah.

ABBY

Oh, Maddy. I really blew this one.

(a moment)

I let you feel bad about this, because... I've been feeling bad about myself and so....lost in my own nonsense that I couldn't see that this...thing you did is like--

(eyes welling)

--the greatest thing in the world.

MADDY

Huh...?

ABBY

You're a beautiful, beautiful young girl who's alive, who likes a boy and wants to be with him--

MADDY

Mom!

ABBY

And it's like you...unleashed something...inside...that is so....powerful--

Maddy is shaking her head, but to Abby this is sacred.

ABBY (CONT'D)

--something that should never make you embarrassed or ashamed.

(beset by memories)

I struggled with this so much at your age -- and it makes me so...proud that you can do it.

MADDY

Do what? I was just dancing!

ABBY

Exactly! You were comfortable in your body and free and open -- and completely sexy.

MADDY

Can we stop talking about this. Please.

ABBY

Only if you've heard at least 4% of what I've said.

MADDY

(after a moment)

Three percent.

ABBY

Good enough.

She gets up to leave.

MADDY

You might want to stay. Otherwise you'll have to listen to them being comfortable and free and open in the next room...

Abby throws herself down on the bed beside her.

THE DAVIDSONS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Nancy Davidson gives Noah a warm kiss on the cheek as he enters their palatial living room.

NANCY
Want something to drink?

NOAH
No, I'm good...

Allan Davidson turns to Noah.

ALLAN
So, Noah -- I met with the Board yesterday...

And Noah knows it's not happening.

ALLAN (CONT'D)
And things are okay, actually. But Nancy and I have come to the conclusion that...well, it's just not appropriate to do a project like this with the economy the way it is.

NOAH
(dumbfounded)
You...have the money to do this, but you think it's wrong...?

ALLAN
To build a house this size while so many people are suffering just seems...irresponsible.

NOAH
But that's how you stop people from suffering, by putting money into the econ--

ALLAN
I know, but it just doesn't feel right, to either of us.

Allan goes on talking, but we can no longer HEAR what he's saying. Noah feels as if he's leaving his own body, as if he's watching this all take place from the 43 foot high ceiling of the living room he's never going to build....

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

NOAH AND ABBY'S BEDROOM/BATHROOM - MORNING

Abby waits while Maddy puts on make-up in front of the mirror.

ABBY

Sweetness...

MADDY

Tell Sophie to get out of my bathroom--

NOAH

(walking past)

Sure you're using enough eyeliner --
I can still see a little of your
eye.

MADDY

It's for the damned recital your
wife browbeat me into, so be quiet.

Abby leaves the bathroom and joins Noah in their closet.

NOAH

(hushed tone)

So we can go there straight from the
recital.

ABBY

I'll have my car with me.

NOAH

You're not driving yourself to this
appointment.They look at each other, the implied meaning obvious: "Because
if there's bad news, I don't want you to drive home alone."

ABBY

We'll drop my car off here...

MADDY (V.O.)

This affects me too, you know--

Noah and Abby look at each other, busted, as Maddy appears
in front of them.

MADDY (CONT'D)

What time are you going in?

ABBY

Five o'clock, and there's nothing to worry about.

MADDY

Of course there's something to worry about.

NOAH

Mom is going to be fine.

MADDY

(after a moment)

I know.

ABBY

And we already know you don't have the gene.

MADDY

I don't care about that. I want you to be okay.

Jake has come to the door.

JAKE

You're going in today?

MADDY

At five.

JAKE

Thanks for telling me.

ABBY

I'm sorry, Jakie, you've been gone...

JAKE

Well, I'm back.

Noah and Abby look at each other.

AT THE TURBANI HOUSE - LATER

Noah shows Jake around the completed house. WORKMEN are cleaning up, LANDSCAPERS are planting trees, etc.

JAKE

It's really great, dad.

NOAH

I got them to add some touches that made it more elegant.

JAKE

I'm sure that dormer was your idea.

NOAH

Thank you...

They walk in silence for a moment.

NOAH (CONT'D)

So...

JAKE

I just don't want to go back.

NOAH

Jake, I know how hard it is for you,
but you've come such a long way--

JAKE

Dad, I sit there sometimes and realize
I've read the same paragraph three
times and I still don't know what
they're talking about.

NOAH

There are counseling programs, tutors
available -- Jake, the college knows
you've had learning issues.

JAKE

(frustrated)

I don't want to do that my whole
life, I don't want to be the stupid
kid who needs extra time on tests
and special frigging treatment!

NOAH

You're not stupid.

JAKE

(hangs his head)

And neither was Winston Churchill
and Albert Einstein and Tom Cruise.
...Snore.

NOAH

I can't bear to see you denigrate
yourself.

JAKE

I'm not denigrating myself -- you
are. You think college is the only
way a person can amount to anything.

Noah looks at his son who he loves so much, and on whose behalf he has so many dreams.

NOAH

Jake. I'm just gonna say it: I think you're running away. I think you're scared and ashamed and it's easier to try something else than--

JOSH (V.O.)

There you guys are!

Josh is approaching, clueless to the scene he's interrupted.

JOSH (CONT'D)

Hey, Jake, you worthless dropout. Your father needs to deal with his soon-to-be ex-employees. Who are all waiting in the trailer.

Noah looks at Jake, who is still stung by his words.

NOAH

I'm sorry. Can we continue this later?

JAKE

Go deal with your people. They need you.

He walks away. Noah watches him, brokenhearted.

JOSH

Just think -- if we still had a company you could give him a job...

A SERIES OF IMAGES -- MUSIC OVER:

SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER

Maddy pulls her dance bag out of her locker, shuts it, and takes a deep breath...

INSIDE NOAH'S TRAILER

Noah stands before his assembled EMPLOYEES. He also takes a deep breath.

ABBY'S CAR

As she arrives at the high school. Her turn to take a breath.

SCHOOL HALLWAY

From behind we watch Maddy walk toward the auditorium. She passes SIMONE -- the betrayer. Maddy looks her in the eye.

IN NOAH'S TRAILER

NOAH

You guys know where the construction business is these days...

SCHOOL HALLWAY

Maddy passes a group of GIRLS, who watch her intently. Near them is SEAN, the object of Maddy's fantasy. He is goofing with his FRIENDS and doesn't see her.

IN THE AUDITORIUM

Abby is sitting, waiting, sees Jake and Sophie approach.

IN NOAH'S TRAILER

NOAH

...particularly hard for those of you who have been here since my dad started this company, as it is for me...

BACKSTAGE AT SCHOOL

Maddy is putting on her dance shoes.

IN THE AUDITORIUM

The room is filled, the lights go down, and the first STUDENT PERFORMER begins. Abby looks around for Noah.

BACKSTAGE

Maddy waits. To her shock, Sean appears next to her.

SEAN

Good luck, Maddy...

MADDY

(can barely speak)
Thank you...

IN THE AUDITORIUM

Noah arrives just as Maddy comes on stage. They all watch as she throws herself into the movement and the words.

She holds back not at all, and Abby watches -- tears streaming down her face -- in amazement and awe. Noah smiles as his daughter's infectious abandon captures the whole audience.

THE MUSIC CONTINUES AS:

THE HOUSE - DAY

Noah and Abby pull up separately.

NOAH

I just have to get my insurance card.

She is silent, following him into the house.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

Noah is about to go up the stairs, but Abby stops him. She holds him intensely.

ABBY

Make love to me.

Noah is speechless at first, just kisses her and holds her.

NOAH

(gently)

We need to get to the--

ABBY

Make love to me, Noah. Now.

NOAH

Oh, God, Abby--

(they are kissing)

Come upstairs.

ABBY

No, now. Here, I don't care. Noah,
I--

She pulls him to the couch.

NOAH

(as he kisses her)

They'll all be home in like--

ABBY

Shhh. Quick, there's no time. Oh,
Noah--

He is overcome by her love and urgency. They start to take their clothes off, which makes them both giggle a bit, but mostly they just hungrily hold and kiss each other.

Abby holds Noah's head against her breasts and that's when he STARTS TO CRY.

He tries to stop it, but it just intensifies. He covers his face, mortified.

ABBY (CONT'D)

My baby, it's okay.

NOAH

I just love you so much.

ABBY

It's okay.

NOAH

It's not okay, it's not okay, I can't even--

ABBY

Noah---

NOAH

I can't face this today, I can't even think about it, if you die I don't know what I---

ABBY

Shhh, stop---

NOAH

I haven't let myself even think about it and now I can't--

ABBY

I'm not gonna die--

NOAH

How do you know--

ABBY

I don't know. I just want to be with you now, because...now is what we have -- the rest is, the rest is -- the rest.

He looks at her for a moment, and they start to make love.

EXCEPT FOR THE MUSIC, THE FOLLOWING IS SILENT:

MEDICAL BUILDING

As Noah and Abby walk hand-in-hand into the Westside Oncology offices.

IN THE WAITING ROOM

Abby watches peacefully, as Noah talks to the RECEPTIONIST.

THE IMAGING ROOM

As Noah watches from behind the thick glass of the observation room -- as Abby, now in a gown, maneuvers herself onto the cold, metallic CT scan table.

She looks over and meets his eyes. They both smile.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW

marriage 011