

Triangles

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CHARACTERS

Beng - 35 years old
Allan - 35 years old
Marky - 14 years old

(The period of the play is the present.)

(The stage is a bare area where the blockings of the characters follow the different types of triangles.)

SCENE 1 - Three Sides

(The lights open onstage. Beng is sitting on a couch in the middle of the stage. She is dressed casually.)

BENG: (excited) I am ready. I am ready to go out there and face the world again. (pause) Yes. I am. (pause) How can I tell? (pause) I don't know. Everything just felt right. (pause) Feels right.... (pause) Well, at the moment, yes. (pause) What am I supposed to feel? (pause) Well, you're the therapist. What am I supposed to feel if I feel that everything feels right? (pause) Nothing? (pause) Oh. (pause) Well, relationships are another thing. (pause) He calls. He calls from time to time. (pause) Who? Allan.

(The lights open on one part of the stage. Allan enters and stands facing the audience.)

BENG: Allan. Who else? (pause) He never stopped calling. (pause) Yes. He never did. (pause) Well, the time periods got longer. At first it was everyday. As if he ... I never left him. Then it became thrice a week. Then twice a week. Then weekly. (pause) I hope it stops there. I do miss him. (pause) Why did I leave? (laughs) I told you about that months ago, remember? (pause) No? (pause) Really? (pause) Really.

(Pause. The lights go on in another part of the stage. Marky enters and stands facing the audience.)

BENG: I still miss him. (pause) But I have to move on. So I decided to go back to work. I mean ... Two years is a long time. But I have to start again somewhere. I mean, I really have to start again. Either that or I'd just pick up from where I left off with my life. Or start with a new one. (pause) What do you think?

(A brief pause.)

What do you think of all this? (pause and smiles) Well, you're the therapist. Aren't you glad I'm getting ok after all these months? (pause) Aren't you bothered that you might lose part of the money you usually get when a patient gets well? (pause) I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that. (pause) No. I shouldn't have said that. Well, I am paying you to listen to me.

(Beng laughs then pauses.)

What do I think of all this? (pause) I don't know. Have you ever heard of a love triangle? (pause) Of course, you have. (pause) Well, whenever I think of them, I think of a triangle. Three persons. Three sides. There may be dozens of ways to move around these angles and sides but you still end up with

three sides. You still end up with the same people. (pause) You have to decide between one of the two people in that triangle to get out of it. So you will end up with just one side. And that's it.

Or else? (pause) Or else what? (laughs) The triangle is like a point of a knife. I can stab. It can hurt. (pause the nods) Yes. The "d" word. (pause) I... I never used the "d" word. (pause) Too much, no? (laughs) Well, that's what you get from too much thinking. From too much moping around for the past two years. (pause) Has it been that long? (pause) Has it been two years already?

(Beng sits straight and stares straight ahead. Both Marky and Allan turn to her. The light slowly fades out.)

(Blackout)

SCENE 2 - Right Angle

(The sound of rain falling hard. The lights open onstage. Beng is standing downstage at a right angle to Allan and Marky. The lights on the latter two are dimmed. Allan is dressed casually and smoking. Marky is in shorts and a soccer shirt. A hand towel is draped over his left shoulder. Beng is dressed in business clothes and carrying a leather backpack. She is soaking wet. She is facing the audience.)

BENG: I first saw Marky the first week I decided to go back to work. That first week when I was all excited about getting back on my feet again. When getting my first client began that rush that I missed. (pause) Has it been that long? (pause) Has it really been that long? (pause then laughs) But then... then I realized the hard way that that first week I decided to work again was the first week of the rainy season. (pause) And... so much for that rush inside you when all you can see at the moment

is the rush of floodwaters in the middle of downpour in the middle of traffic in the middle of the city. (pause) Then Marky came....

(The light opens on Marky's side. Beng starts to rummage through her backpack, looking for something to dry herself off.. Marky goes up to her and hands her his towel. Beng takes it without looking at him first as she closes her backpack.)

BENG: Oh, Thank you. You're so kind.

(Beng looks at Marky then stops and stares at him. She is still holding the towel.)

MARKY: I guess you forgot your umbrella. Did you leave it in the car?

(Beng just stands there, looking at him.)

MARKY: You're soaking wet, Mom. Maybe you should dry yourself off. That's what you always tell me whenever I'd get wet in the rain. I might catch a cold. (pause) You might catch a cold. (pause) Use my towel.

(Beng just stares at Marky.)

MARKY: You're supposed to wipe yourself dry with it. Don't worry, Mom. It's clean. They made sure I always carry around a clean towel over there. (laughs) You'd kill me if I gave you a dirty towel. (pause) Mom? Are you ok?

(Beng doesn't answer. A cellphone begins to ring. Beng rummages through her backpack and answers her cellphone without taking her eyes off Marky.)

BENG: Hello?

(The lights open on Allan. He is talking on a cellphone.)

ALLAN: Beng? Beng? Hello?

BENG: Hello? Allan?

ALLAN: Are you ok?

BENG: Allan? I can't hear you! Your signal is glitchy!

ALLAN: ARE YOU OK?

BENG: Yes! (pause) What do you mean "Am I ok?"

ALLAN: I just heard on the radio that it was raining pretty hard in Manila. Are you ok?

BENG: If you mean, "Am I stranded yet", No, I'm not.

ALLAN: That's good.

BENG: I'm ok. (pause) Yes. I'm ok. (pause) Wait. What do you mean, am I ok?

ALLAN: I was just asking....

BENG: If it's about the rain, I'm ok. (pause) No. No, I'm not ok. I'm not stranded but I'm soaked. I had to run to the parking lot in the rain to get into the car because I forgot to bring an umbrella with me to the office because who would've thought it would be the first day of the rainy season when I finally decided to get back to work. Then when I got to the car it turned out I didn't bring an umbrella at all.

MARKY: Now, that sucks.

BENG: (at Allan) NO, I AM NOT OK! (pause) But that is not what you're asking about, I guess. (pause) Isn't it?

(Allan is silent. Beng stares at Marky then talks on the cellphone.)

BENG: (pause) Allan?

ALLAN: What?

BENG: There's a boy here who looks like Marky.

MARKY: What?

ALLAN: What?

MARKY: Mom, I am Marky

BENG: (to Marky) You can't be Marky.
ALLAN: What?
MARKY: I am Marky, Mom.
ALLAN: (pause) Beng? Are you alright? Was your first day on the job, ok?
BENG: Yes, it was. (pause) No, it wasn't. (pause) I mean ... (to Marky) How do I know you're Marky?

(Marky takes out a pair of Harry Potter eyeglasses and puts it on.)

MARKY: Ok?

(Beng stares at Marky then talks on her cellphone.)

BENG: Allan?
MARKY: Don't tell him.
BENG: (to Marky) What?
ALLAN: What?
MARKY: Don't tell him.
BENG: (pause, looks at Marky then talks on the cellphone) Marky's here.
ALLAN: What?
MARKY: I told you don't tell him. He won't believe you.
BENG: (to Allan) Marky's here. Now. Beside me.

(A brief pause)

ALLAN: Beng? (pause) Are you ok?
BENG: What?
MARKY: I told you he won't believe you.
BENG: Marky is here, Allan. I see him. He talks to me. I can talk to him.
ALLAN: And I suppose he is wearing those Harry Potter glasses that you always like on him.

BENG: (pause) Yes.

(Allan sighs.)

BENG: (pause) I don't know yet if I can hug him. I know I can feel him. But can I touch him like before? (pause) Because I am so scared he will disappear if I touch him. (pauses then sighs) I'm ok, Allan. I'm still seeing my therapist on every appointment she gives me. She referred me to a counselor who I can talk to so we can talk I'm alright... for now. (pause) Marky's here, Allan. And I'm ok. (pause) It is not your fault.

ALLAN: It's not even your fault.

MARKY: Things just happen. There are things you cannot change.

(A brief pause.)

ALLAN: I just called to ask if you're ok. If everything was fine. Cindy told me that you went back to work today.

BENG: Yes, I did.

ALLAN: (pause) So... Did you?

BENG: Did I what? I just told you I did.

ALLAN: Did you enjoy it? It is your first day.

BENG: I can't tell yet. It was my first day. (pause) Who could've known it would rain on my first day on the job.

MARKY: You could've checked the weather app on your phone.

BENG: I didn't bother to check my weather app.

(Pause)

BENG: Is there anything else, Allan?

ALLAN: No. (pause) I'll call back, ok?

BENG: Up to you. (pause) It's up to you. Not like I'm kind of always expecting it.

ALLAN: (pause) I see. (pause) Ok. Well... Good –

(Beng hangs up before Allan can finish talking and returns her phone to her bag. She then sits down and looks for something to wipe her shoes with. Marky is watching her. She looks at the towel draped on her shoulder, is about to grab it, then shakes her head and starts rummaging through her backpack again.)

MARKY: What are you looking for?

BENG: I need to wipe my shoes.

(Beng stops rummaging through her bag and takes the towel that she draped on her shoulder. She looks at it.)

MARKY: Don't you dare use my towel.

BENG: (drapes the towel again on her shoulder) I wasn't going to (looks through her back again and pulls out a wad of wet tissue paper) Shit.

(Beng begins to wipe her shoes while trying to balance herself, standing up. Marky is watching her.)

MARKY: Why do you always do that?

BENG: Do what? I have to clean my shoes. They're muddy.

MARKY: Hanging up before he says goodbye.

(Beng remains silent. She continues to clean her shoes.)

MARKY: It's rude you know.

BENG: I never want to hear goodbyes.

MARKY: I didn't, you know... exactly say goodbye.

BENG: Wait. (pause) Before you talk any further ... who are you?

MARKY: You just told Allan who I was.

BENG: You look like Marky. You dress like Marky. You look like the Marky I wanted to look like Harry Potter. But you talk like an adult so I don't think you're Marky because Marky died when he was twelve two years ago. (pause) Are you Marky? Or did I just want you to be him?

MARKY: I'm Marky, Mom.

(A pause)

BENG: Ok. If you say so. (pause) So, why are you here?

MARKY: I don't know. I never did say goodbye.

BENG: (pause) Yes, you did.

MARKY: I did not.

BENG: I believed you did.

MARKY: You believed in a lot of things. Believing is different from realities.

BENG: You sound like my therapist. (pause then stares at Marky) Maybe you are my therapist. Maybe I'm having this depression attacks again and my medication is messing with my brain again...

(Marky laughs then looks at Beng then around him.)

MARKY: It stopped raining.

BENG: (looks around) Yes.

MARKY: We can go home now.

BENG: We?

MARKY: We. You. Me.

BENG: (pause) You need a ride?

MARKY: (laughs) Of course. How do you expect me to get home? Fly?

BENG: Don't they do that?

MARKY: They?

BENG: They. Like you.

MARKY: Like me? (pause) Oh ... (thinks then laughs) Oh. That. (laughs harder) I'm not a ghost, Mom. I'm Marky. (pause) Can we go home now?

(A brief pause.)

BENG: Ok.

MARKY: Is it still the same car?

BENG: Yes, I can't afford to buy a new one, you know. (pause) Let's walk to the parking lot.

(Marky reaches out his hand. Beng looks at it, hesitates, then looks at Marky.)

MARKY: It's just me, Mom.

(Beng tentatively reaches for Marky's hand then holds it. She takes a deep breath.)

BENG: Your hand is warm.

MARKY: (pause) What did you expect?

(The lights fade out.)

(Blackout)

SCENE 3 - Obtuse Triangle

(The lights open onstage. Marky and Beng are seated beside each other in Beng's car. Allan can be seen at the far end upstage at an angle to the two. The blocking is like that of an obtuse angle. He is sitting on a bar stool and smoking a cigarette.)

(The sound of traffic on a highway. There is also a faint sound of thunder and rain. Beng is driving. Marky is fidgeting in his seat. Then he removes his seatbelt and opens the glove compartment. He begins to rummage inside.)

BENG: What are you doing? Put your seatbelt back on!

MARKY: I'm hungry.

BENG: We can go to a drive-thru. We're on our way home anyway. What do you want? Burgers and fries?

MARKY: I'm not that hungry. (rummages through the glove compartment) You always kept a candy bar here for me when I'm hungry.

BENG: (pause) Not anymore. (pause) I forgot to buy a box. (pause) Well, I didn't exactly forget... (pause then annoyed) Will you please stop? You're going to mess up things in there.

(Marky straightens up, holding up a candy bar.)

MARKY: Aha! You see? Thanks, Mom!

BENG: That thing's probably expired by now.

MARKY: (reads the label) Nope, still good.

(Marky unwraps the candy bar and takes a bite. Beng just stares straight ahead, driving.)

BENG: Well?

MARKY: (shrugs while chewing) Tastes ok. Like candy.

(Beng laughs.)

MARKY: You want some?

BENG: No, thank you. I think you have a stomach made out of cast-iron if you can eat something that's half-melted in my glove compartment for two years now. (pause) Besides, I can't have too much candy.

MARKY: Why?

BENG: I'm a borderline diabetic.

MARKY: You weren't before.

BENG: Just a touch. I still have candy and cake but I have to watch the amount I eat.

MARKY: Was it because of me?

(A pause.)

BENG: Put your seatbelt back on.

(Marky puts his seatbelt back on then leans back and continues eating his candy bar. Beng continues to drive. Suddenly, she brakes hard and both of them are jerked forward as their car comes to a stop. Beng presses down on the car horn. The sound of car horns blaring.)

BENG: Shit! (rolls down the window and shouts) WHAT THE FUCK?!!! CAN'T YOU READ A TRAFFIC LIGHT!!

(The sound of a car screeching away. Beng rolls up the window, grips the steering wheel and takes a deep breath. She suddenly breaks down, puts her head on the steering wheel, and begins to cry.)

MARKY: Are you crying, Mom?

BENG: No. (pause) Yes. (pause) No. (straightens up and wipes her face with her hand) I'm ok.

MARKY: Are we still far from home?

BENG: Just a few more minutes. (pause) Are you ok?

MARKY: Yes. My seatbelt was on. (pause) I dropped my candy bar.

BENG: I'll buy you another one.

MARKY: At that store on the corner near the house?

BENG: Well, no. (pause) I moved out of the apartment.

MARKY: A new house?

BENG: Yes.

MARKY: (nods) I see. No wonder this ride is taking quite a bit long than I remembered. (pause) It stopped raining now. (pause) When I left, I thought at first that it was going to be a short trip. Then I would come back when you came home.

BENG: What trip? (pause) You call what happened to you a "trip"?

MARKY: I don't know what to call it.

BENG: A trip to where?

MARKY: (pause) I don't know. But the place where I am... (pause) I'm sorry I made you cry.

(A short pause. Beng stares at Marky.)

MARKY: (stares back curiously) What?

BENG: If I hug you ... will you disappear? Will you fade away if I put my arms around you?

MARKY: I'm not a ghost, Mom. (pause) I never said goodbye. Please believe that.

(Beng looks at Marky. She removes her seatbelt and turns to him. She then removes Marky's seatbelt and waits. Marky holds out his arms to her. Beng tentatively hugs him. Then, realizing that he will not disappear, she hugs Marky tightly. Marky hugs back.)

BENG: I miss you so much, baby.

(The lights fade out.)

(Blackout)

SCENE 4 - ISOCELES

(The lights open onstage. Allan is standing downstage, facing the audience. Marky is standing upstage right, playing a game on a tablet. Beng is standing upstage left, texting on her cellphone.)

ALLAN: Marky was not my son. He was Beng's. Oh, when I meant he was not my son, I meant it literally. She was a single mother when I met her two years ago. One of those ad conventions in the city. Product promotions that had an after-event cocktails and dancing. I liked her. She liked me. We went out for several weeks.

(The light opens on Beng.)

BENG: And on one of those dates, I told you about Marky.

ALLAN: Yes.

BENG: And you should've seen the look on your face when I told you I was a single mother. It was always that same look guys give

me whenever I tell them about Marky. (pause) They would never call again. I guess they were not ready for that kind of responsibility. They would never have that kind of attention they would get if I was single without a kid. (pause) I wasn't expecting you to call again after that night. Just like all of them.

(The lights open on Marky.)

MARKY: But he did.

ALLAN: But I did.

BENG: Yes. You did.

MARKY: You know, I think he was the first guy I met that Mom dated. I must admit, I liked Allan the first time I met him. (turns to Allan) Hello. I'm Marky. I'm ten.

ALLAN: Hi, Marky. I'm Allan. You look kind of tall to be ten.

BENG: (laughs) That's because he's twelve.

(Marky frowns at Beng then look at Allan as he laughs.)

ALLAN: Well, if he wants to be ten let's keep it at that, shall we?

MARKY: Are you in love with my Mom?

(Allan does not answer. Marky looks at Beng.)

BENG: (shrugs) Maybe.

MARKY: (to Beng) Are you with him?

BENG: Before, yes. (looks at Allan) Now... I don't know.

MARKY: "I don't know" can still be a "Yes."

BENG: (shrugs) Partially.

MARKY: It also could probably mean...

BENG: Ok. No.

(Silence. Beng looks at Allan and shrugs.)

MARKY: You told me before that before someone gets to you, he has to go through me first.

ALLAN: (to Beng) Marky was a smart kid.

BENG: Is a smart kid.

ALLAN: (pause) Beng....

BENG: No. Please. No. (pause) You wouldn't understand.

MARKY: It makes no difference now.

ALLAN: I treated him like a son.

BENG: I know. I saw.

ALLAN: Like a son.

BENG: (smiling sadly) You never had a son before. You were single when we met and decided to live together. With me. With Marky. I had the son. And we never talked about you adopting him when ... if we get married. (pause) But still ... Thank you.

MARKY: That was kind of awkward. wasn't it? My might-be or might-not-be Dad. (pause) I liked him, you know. It was too bad the relationship didn't last long.

ALLAN: Yes. We never did talk about that. I guess I was too much in love with you that I shut Marky out.

MARKY: No, you didn't.

BENG: (to Allan) No, you didn't. Don't blame yourself.

ALLAN: Then why this?

BENG: "This"?

ALLAN: Why did you leave?

BENG: It was ... for the best.

ALLAN: The best for whom? You?

BENG: (pause) I just needed to space to deal with it. (pause) Yes, it was for the best ... for me. (pause) But I'd like to state for the record that I didn't go crazy. That none of my screws were coming loose. (pause) No. None.

ALLAN: But you pushed me away.

BENG: That doesn't justify me being crazy

ALLAN: That's not what I meant.

BENG: (pause) Oh. (pause) Ok. (pause) I needed space. You didn't want to give it to me. I wanted room. You just gave me this

square foot of space for me to move around in. I needed the space.

ALLAN: I was trying to help.

BENG: Helping me doesn't mean you trying to make me forget Marky!

ALLAN: I was just telling you to move on.

BENG: Move on? (pause) Losing a son isn't just something you "move on", Allan. (pause) You have never lost a son.

ALLAN: (pause) I lost a friend, Beng.

BENG: You can move on if it's a friend, Allan.

ALLAN: Not Marky.

BENG: (softly) You were telling me to forget him...

ALLAN: No, I was not!

MARKY: Whoa! Adult fight coming.

BENG: Yes, you were! (pause) You loved me too much.

MARKY: (to Beng) I guess the whole point of it is that he loves you.

BENG: (at Marky) But not to the point of losing you.

ALLAN: (pause) Are you ok, Beng?

BENG: No, I'm not! Not at the moment! Not now! Not yet! (pause) I'm not ready yet, Allan. Not for you. Not for anyone. There is just too much... love.

ALLAN: (nods) I see.

BENG: (pause) I'm sorry.

ALLAN: (pause) I know you are. (pause) I'm sorry, too.

(Beng turns around, and walks away. The lights fade out.)

ALLAN: (pause) Goodbye.

MARKY: I wonder if that word still means something to her.

(The light fades out on Marky.)

ALLAN: (pause) For now.

(The lights fade out on Allan. The lights open on one part of the stage. Beng is standing there, facing the audience.)

(The lights fade out.)

(Blackout)

SCENE 5 - RIGHT ANGLE (RIGHT)

(The lights open onstage. Beng is standing at downstage right. Marky is at downstage left. Allan is at upstage right. Beng is facing the audience.)

BENG: If there were one thing I had always wished for... if I were given that one big wish in my lifetime... I would wish for you to come back. (pause) But now that you're here... can I have one more wish? That you will stay? (pause) Please?

I am not looking for anything special. Just you. (pause) You are really here, are you? (laughs) At first, I thought it was just a figment of my medicated mind. A figment that I can hug and kiss and talk to after giving it candy. But are figments of imagination warm to the touch when it touches you back? (pause) Marky? (pause) Marky. (pause) Marrrrkkkkyyyyy. (laughs) It's been a while since I said that without that little start-up twinge that pinches my heart. "That twinge is called 'Memory', my therapist said. (pause) Maybe you are a memory In 3-D. That's why I see you. Like those holograms that you can see and talk to... but can't touch. (pause) Maybe heaven invented this new type of hologram. One that transports angels and disguises them as your loved ones so you can talk to them, be with them, touch them, hold them, love them... but soon the power runs out and they cannot stay. (pause) Because they are angels. And angels can only stay in heaven. And that was what I thought of you, Marky. An angel. When you... (pause) When you left, you became an angel. And now you're back. And you're going to be called back... soon. (pause) Aren't you? Soon? Nothing will stay the same anyway. Not even you. Now I know that angels can age like humans. (pause) I wonder what you will look like when you are as old as I am? (pause) When I decided to face the world again... you know... that "move on" thing they always talked about. They said I looked

better. I had lost weight. I mean, who wouldn't? But people are saying that I looked better. One or two of them would ask me if I was ok? (pause) And I would answer, "Yes, I'm fine. I'm fine already." (pause) Like I would tell Allan. (pause) I am. I really am fine. (pause) Of course, I can't stop having these... twinges. (pause) That's what I called them... (pause) Twinges. (pause) I'm fine. I really am.

(The lights fade out.)

(Blackout)

SCENE 6 - ISOCELES

(The lights open onstage. Marky is at downstage right while Beng is at downstage left. Allan is at upstage center.)

BENG: (to Marky) Ok. Time for bed.

MARKY: No.

BENG: (pause) What? (pause) Well, that's something new.

MARKY: What?

BENG: This "No" thing.

MARKY: Yes?

BENG: Never heard that from you before. "No"?

MARKY: I'm not sleepy

BENG: You can try.

MARKY: Haven't slept since that day. The long sleep day.

BENG: Really?

MARKY: Yes. I am always awake.

BENG: What do you do then if you don't sleep?

MARKY: Stuff.

BENG: Don't you get bored?

MARKY: No. (pause) Well, I don't know. I'm not doing anything much. But I don't get bored. I don't hungry. I don't get thirsty. But I feel... stuff. I can be happy, angry, sad... bored. (giggles) I can be crazy if I want to. (pause) Was I crazy before?

BENG: Child-crazy sort of thing. You were twelve when you left. You are supposed to be fourteen this year.

MARKY: Oh, good.

BENG: Good? What is "good"?"

MARKY: Now I know how old I am. Fourteen. I'm grown up. A young adult.

BENG: Not exactly.

MARKY: Young, young adult?

BENG: More of a teener.

MARKY: A teener is between a kid and a young adult.

BENG: Well, you certainly didn't grow old.

MARKY: I don't know (pause) Maybe when you die, you stop aging.

(Silence. Beng bows her head, wipes her eyes, and tries to stop herself from crying.)

MARKY: Don't cry. (pause) I'm sorry.

BENG: I wish you wouldn't use that word.

MARKY: I won't use it again. (pause) Promise.

BENG: (pause) Promise?

MARKY: Promise, promise. Double promise. There? Ok?

(Beng wipes her nose and smiles.)

BENG: You were always the kid I knew.

MARKY: I never changed. (pause) I think.

BENG: You sound a bit old. I remember the time when you were starting to talk. You babbled and babbled and babbled. Then when you started learning your first words... (pause) Was it "Mama"? It couldn't be "Dada". You never saw him. (pause)

What I remember is how you described every bit of food that you ate.

MARKY: "Chicken".

BENG: Yes. Everything was "chicken".

MARKY: And you never corrected me.

BENG: It was the only way I could think of to make you eat everything I put before you on the table.

MARKY: Meat was chicken. Vegetables were chicken. Fish was chicken. And chicken was.... well, chicken."

(They both laugh.)

MARKY: I was nine when I discovered that not everything I ate was "chicken".

BENG: Then all that baby talk lessened and all that babble and first words became a single word.

MARKY: "Why?"

BENG: "Why?" (pause) Curiosity. The word that formed your mind.

MARKY: Why?

BENG: And made us close.

MARKY: "Why?"

BENG: Because it annoyed the hell out of me.

MARKY: (smiles) Why?

(A brief pause)

BENG: And in the end, it was I who ended up asking why you left. (pause) Why?

MARKY: (pause) And no one could answer you. No one answered you. (pause) Not even Allan.

BENG: Because no one could tell me to my face that I was a bad mother?

MARKY: No.

BENG: That I neglected you that's why you left? That I chose first to be with Allan instead of taking care of you that afternoon?

MARKY: It was an accident. (pause) It was an accident.

(Silence)

MARKY: An accident. (pause) And it happened so fast. It was like I was in a room one moment enjoying the grapes that you brought home the other night and the next moment ... I was in another place that I didn't know. (pause) And I never saw you again. (pause) Until the other day. When I came back here. And I'm seeing you again.

BENG: Did you come back for good?

MARKY: (pause) I don't know.

BENG: I wish it was.

(A brief pause)

MARKY: (pause) I don't know, Mom.

(The lights dim on Marky. A light remains on Beng. Allan enters and stands on one side of the stage in a dim light.)

BENG: (to Allan) I saw you. The day Marky left. (pause) You were in the hospital lobby. I didn't know you came. I didn't know who called you. (pause) You were crying. I watched you cry. I wanted to tell you (pause) I wanted to ask you ... (pause) He wasn't your son. (pause) He wasn't your son. Why would you waste tears for him? (pause) Am I being selfish? Am I the only one who should really cry? (pause) You didn't lose anything. (pause) I did.

(The light changes. Silence. Allan looks at Beng. Beng looks at Marky then at Allan.)

SCENE 7 - RIGHT ANGLE (LEFT)

(Allan walks to one part of the stage and sits on a stool. He takes out a small box of raisins and starts eating them by popping them in his mouth. His cellphone emits a musical tone and Allan checks it from time to time. Beng is watching him)

BENG: What are you eating?

(Allan does not respond. He continues to eat.)

BENG: I asked...

ALLAN: I heard you. (pause) You wouldn't like it if I told you. (pause)
Raisins.

BENG: Why would I be bothered by raisins?

ALLAN: Because they're made from grapes.

(A tense pause.)

BENG: (nods) Grapes.

ALLAN: Close enough. (pause) Raisins.

BENG: Never mind.

ALLAN: Okay. (pause) I wanted to offer you some...

BENG: No thanks. (pause) Thanks but no thanks. (pause) Never mind.

(A brief pause. Allan looks at his phone and continues to eat raisins. He puts the phone down and looks at Beng.)

BENG: (pause) I called... I called you.

(Allan's cellphone emits a musical message tone. Allan checks the message and texts back an answer. He puts the phone down and looks at Beng.)

BENG: I called you....

(The cellphone emits a message tone. Allan checks the message and texts back an answer.)

BENG: (annoyed) Are you listening?

ALLAN: (puts down the phone) Yes. (he begins to eat raisins again) I'm listening.

(A brief pause. Beng shakes her head.)

BENG: That indifference that you have. (pause) That infuriating indifference.

(Allan shrugs)

ALLAN: What do you want me to do?

BENG: This conversation will be different this time.

ALLAN: How different?

(Allan's cellphone emits a message tone. Allan checks the message.)

BENG: WILL YOU PLEASE LISTEN?

ALLAN: (pause) Basketball.

BENG: Excuse me?

ALLAN: Basketball. A friend of mine has been texting me the scores

BENG: You find basketball more important than what I am going to say to you?

ALLAN: No. But if we are going to talk about something that has been replayed over and over in our lives right now, I do prefer to watch replays of players' moves which are more interesting.

BENG: (pause) I never expected that kind of sarcasm from you.

ALLAN: (pause) I'm sorry. (pause) It wasn't suppose to come out that way. (pause) I never expected that we would talk anymore.

BENG: Have you given up on us?

ALLAN: I should ask you the same question. Or maybe you should ask yourself that same question.

BENG: (pause) No, I haven't

ALLAN: Neither have I.

BENG: (nods) Ok.

ALLAN: (nods) Ok. (pause) At least we got that out of the way.

BENG: Yes. (pause) I wanted to meet you because ...

(Allan's cellphone emits a message tone. This time, Allan turns off his phone and sets it aside.)

BENG: I wanted to meet you to know... if you still want me back?

ALLAN: It was you who left. Not me.

BENG: I know. (pause) I'm sorry. (pause) Do you still want me back?

ALLAN: What made you change your mind?

BENG: (pause) The fact that Marky will ... might always be there.

(Allan sighs then rolls his eyes. He reaches for his cellphone.)

BENG: No, wait. Allan, please. Hear me out.

ALLAN: I told myself this morning that we might be having this scene.
(pause) I was right.

(Silence)

BENG: I am not crazy, Allan.

ALLAN: I know you're not. What did the therapist say?

BENG: To hell what she said. (pause) Marky is here. I see him. I talk to him. I'm not crazy, Allan. But I don't know what this all means to you. Or me.

ALLAN: He will always be here, Beng. He will always be with you. As long as you believe he will always there.

BENG: (nods) Yes.

ALLAN: Yes. (pause) But, Beng. He will just be a memory.

(A brief pause. There is a look of hurt on Beng's face.)

ALLAN: Beng, Marky will always be there. But you should leave some space in there for me. Marky is a memory. I am here. (pause) You can still love us both. (pause) I loved him too, you know.

(Silence)

BENG: It never came to mind that this would be a short talk.

ALLAN: I was already thinking it would be one. (pause) Are you ok, Beng?

(Beng pauses then nods.)

BENG: (smiles) I always was.

ALLAN: If you need anything...

BENG: (nods) Just call. (pause) As long as you don't say goodbye.

ALLAN: I will try to remember that.

(Beng nods then turns and exits.)

(The light slowly fades out.)

(Blackout)

SCENE 8 - EQUILATERAL TRIANGLE

(The lights open onstage. Beng is standing at one corner of the triangle. Allan is standing at the far angle. Macky enters. He is eating from a bowl of grapes. He goes to the third angle.)

BENG: What are those?

MARKY: My favorite.

BENG: You're not supposed to eat those. (sighs) What is it with you guys? I just came from a talk with Allan and he was eating raisins.

(Marky giggles.)

MARKY: Raisins are made from grapes

BENG: Yes.

MARKY: I like raisins. I like grapes. I like them both.

BENG: You're not supposed to eat those.

(Marky tosses a grape in the air then catches it in his mouth.)

BENG: Stop that!

MARKY: It's just a grape, Mom.

BENG: It's not just a grape.

(Marky tosses another grape and catches it with his mouth. Beng goes up to him and snatches the bowl from his hands.)

BENG: (angrily) I SAID, "STOP IT!"

MARKY: Mom, relax. I'm not going to...

(Marky stops. Beng stares at him.)

MARKY: (pauses) I'm sorry.

BENG: Say it.

MARKY: Mom...

BENG: Say it. (sighs then speaks softly) You can say it. (pause) It's ok. (pause) I need you to say it.

MARKY: (pause then sighs) I'm not going to die... again, Mom. (pause) I'm not going to die... again.

(Marky goes up to Beng and gets the bowl of grapes from her. At first, Beng refuses to give it to him. Then she lets go. Marky goes back to his place.)

MARKY: It can happen only once, Mom.

BENG: I know. But that one time it happened was the most painful moment of my life. (pause) Who would've thought that something so small. Something that was your favorite. Something so sweet would kill you? (pause) I always asked God, "Why?" Why you? Why take the single most precious thing in my life? Why take him when I was not there? (pause) They say it was an accident. And accidents do happen. And kids always choke to death on small things that they like and put in their mouths that close their windpipes. (pause) But why you? Why you? (pause) You know, your grandmother told me the day after the funeral that I probably needed an angel to watch over me. That was why you were taken from me.

MARKY: (laughs) I don't think I am the type that will be an angel, Mom. Remember I'm allergic to feathers.

(They both laugh. Marky takes a grape, tosses it in the air and catches it in his mouth. He offers the bowl to Beng.)

MARKY: Try it.

(Beng hesitates, then takes one and pops it in her mouth. She chews then swallows. Marky offers her another one. Beng takes it.)

MARKY: Now toss it in the air and catch it.

BENG: What?

MARKY: Toss it. Catch it with your mouth. You're still good at that, aren't you?

(Beng hesitates then steps back and tosses it in the air then catches it in her mouth. She chokes and falls into a fit of coughing. She continues to cough until she manages to cough out the grape.)

BENG: Shit. (coughs then take a deep breath) Shit. Shit. (pause) For a moment, I thought I was going to join you.

MARKY: Would you like that?

(A pause. Beng stares at Marky then looks at Allan. Then she looks back at Marky.)

BENG: That wasn't funny.

MARKY: Well, don't you?

(A pause)

BENG: I don't know, Marky. (pause) I don't know.

(Silence. Marky offers her a grape. Beng hesitates then takes it and eats it.)

BENG: I love you very much, Marky.

MARKY: I know, Mom.

(Marky offers the bowl again. Beng takes a grape and eats it. She nods and smiles.)

MARKY: I know what you've been going through, Mom. I know how you miss me. That doctor lady you've been seeing and talking to because of me. (pause) But you I am not everything. (pause) I mean, I wish I was. But your life. Your job. Allan. (pause) These are not me.

(Marky takes a grape, tosses it in the air and catches it with his mouth. He offers another grape to Beng. She takes it, tosses it in the air and catches it in her mouth. This time, she manages to chew it before she swallows.)

MARKY: There's nothing to it.

BENG: (nods) Is this why you came back?

MARKY: Well, yes. (thinks for a moment then shrugs) And partly because I missed you. We never did say goodbye to each other that day. I was asleep when you left for work.

BENG: Yes. (pause) And it wasn't work, Marky.

MARKY: (nods) I know. But I know you were happy to be with him that day. Like you are with him now. (pause) Always. (pause) Now I'm awake from that sleep.

BENG: Yes.

(Marky looks at Allan.)

BENG: You would've liked him a lot. If you stayed longer.

MARKY: Oh, I liked him, Mom. And I saw how he loved you very much. (pause) He always wanted you back.

BENG: But I always pushed him away.

MARKY: Do you want him back?

BENG: (pause) Would it hurt you if I said yes?

MARKY: No. (pause) There is no hurt in the place I've been.

(Marky offers the bowl of grapes again to Beng. She takes one and eats it.)

BENG: Ever since you left, I didn't want to hear goodbyes anymore. From my friends. From him. Goodbyes meant you left. Even if you didn't say it. Even if I didn't say it to you.

MARKY: You won't hear it again. (pause) If you don't want to.

BENG: (pause) If we said goodbye... will I lose you?

MARKY: (shakes his head) No. Remember what Allan said? (he touches his chest) I will always be here. In you. As you are with me. (pause) That is probably the reason I never said goodbye. Because I never left. I will never leave, Mom.

(Marky offers the bowl again to Beng. Beng shakes her head. She turns to Allan then goes to him. The lights dim slightly on Marky. The lights brighten on Allan's space. The two face each other.)

BENG: I pushed you away because you reminded me of the guilt I felt when Marky went away. We went out that afternoon. I wasn't supposed to go out that day. It was a Saturday and Saturdays

were for Marky. But I hadn't seen you for a while and that Saturday would be the only weekend I was free because of my work schedule. I left Marky with the maid. (pause) And it happened. (pause) And this happened. (pause) And I wish things would all go back to the way it was before. (pause) I miss him. I still do. (pause) I can't keep telling you I do see him because you will walk away from all this and one day you won't come back anymore. (pause) And I don't want that to happen. (pause) I want you to know that I know Marky might not stay. I know that now. And you will be left here. With me. (pause) Or I will be left without you. (pause) Sorry. (pause) I'd like to try again. With us.

(Allan nods)

BENG: Just us. (pause) I guess there is enough space still in here for you.

(Allan nods. Beng takes his hand. She looks at Marky and smiles.)

MARKY: (smiles back) Goodbye, Mom.

(Beng and Allan remain standing, still holding hands. The dim light remains on Marky.)

BENG: (to Allan) Just us. (pause) Here.

(The lights fade out.)

CURTAIN