

# **Slow Kidz at Play**

a two-act play

by

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## **Slow Kidz at Play**

### THE CAST OF CHARACTERS:

Nolan Barnes:	31 year old mechanic. Pleasant, decent man, with a quick temper at times.
Erica Wooley:	29 year old e-business woman. Very intense person.
Kyle Barnes:	11 year old, fourth grader at Paine Elementary. Bright and outgoing child.
Riley Wooley:	10 year old, fourth grader at Paine. Shy and well behaved child.
Holli Masters:	10 year old, fourth grader at Paine. Kyle's girlfriend.
Principal Papp:	42 year old, principal of Paine Elementary. Strict, assertive and caring educator.
Deidre Acuna:	50 years old, special education teacher at Paine.
Young Girl:	10 years old, fifth grader at Paine.

THE TIME:	Present Day; spanning Monday to Friday of the same week.
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THE SETTING:	Paine Elementary's school yard in Warwick, Rhode Island. Small set with a school yard bench sitting USR with a tree just SR of it. USL is the brick lain corner of the school with a door leading into it. Far SL is a trash can, and another tree sits USL of center. DS area is open. With scene changes, a computer desk and chair with terminal is moved in and out of DSL, while a dilapidated green recliner gets the same DSR.
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THE PLAY:

**"Candidates"**

(Lights up. NOLAN and ERICA burst out of the USL door. Nolan wears coveralls, while Erica is dressed for success.)

ERICA

I HAVE NEVER BEEN SO EMBARRASSED IN MY LIFE!

NOLAN

YOU haven't? Can't even imagine who you are to put your son up to such a thing!

ERICA

Riley didn't start anything!

NOLAN

You're right! YOU did!

(Lights crossfade onto USR bench. KYLE and RILEY are both standing on it. Nolan and Erica continue to argue DSL in total silence.)

KYLE

My name is Kyle Barnes. Of course you all know that, sure. At the advice of my teacher, Mrs. Barrett, I'm announcing that I would like to serve as this year's student body president.

RILEY

I am Riley Wooley. You know me too. I would also like you to think of me as student body president for next year. I think our social studies this past year has been interesting and feel I can do what it takes to make sure everyone at Paine Elementary has a fun year.

KYLE

Think, after learning about our country's president with Mrs. Barrett, I would like to do the same here, to make sure our school events next year are fun and are run smooth. I hope you will think of me when you vote for student government this Friday.

RILEY

I would also like you to think of me when you vote, and remember I will make a much better student president than Ivar Sullivan this year...

RILEY (cont)

Especially after he dropped his pants during the Christmas music play.

KYLE

Some say IVAR was the best thing in the Christmas music play this year.

RILEY

That's only cause YOU told him to do it. It's not exactly the story of Christmas when Joseph decides to show everyone his ding-ding.

(Lights crossfade to Nolan and Erica.)

NOLAN

How could you feed your kid such a heap of bullshit?!

ERICA

Oh, really? What part? The fact that YOU can't keep money in your house, or the part about...

NOLAN

That is none of your business, lady! We can't save any money cause most of it ends up with his tutor every week! Unlike Riley, who can barely read past the second grade.

ERICA

That is a horrible thing to say about a child!

NOLAN

What? That his mother doesn't care a shred about his education? That he's fallen behind? At least, I'm getting Kyle the help he needs!

ERICA

Yeah. I'm sure those lottery tickets are the cornerstone of his learning, while HE comes to school in rags. Even a transient wouldn't accept the clothes YOU send Kyle in!

NOLAN

How would YOU know?! I've seen you hear maybe once this year. (beat) Know what? Forget it! This isn't about the boys, and we both know it! This is about you and ME.

ERICA

You and I.

(Nolan moans. Lights crossfade to Kyle and Riley.)

RILEY

We need to change our dances so that a good mix of music is played. No one wants to hear NSYNC right after the Backstreet Boys. No one wants Mariah Carey right after hearing Brittny Spears.

KYLE

And no one wants meat loaf Wednesday anymore.  
(Lights crossfade to the adults.)

NOLAN

Just hate me THAT much, you had to ruin this for the kids? Kids don't care about any of your shit. They want to vote for someone who'll smile and say "Hi" to them walking down the hall.

ERICA

So then why did Kyle start up about Riley's father?

NOLAN

I didn't put him up to that. He struck that nerve on his own.

ERICA

You had nothing to do with it?

NOLAN

No. I'm not like YOU. Not malicious.

ERICA

Don't use words you can't even spell. I only got involved cause Riley asked me.

NOLAN

Sure he did. You got involved cause you knew I was involved.

ERICA

Why would I?

NOLAN

Ha!

(Lights crossfade to the children.)

KYLE

If I am president I will hopefully get the chance to hear everyone's problems and help make school a better place to be.

KYLE (cont)

I would help our teachers with their anti-bullying rules.

RILEY

We can help each other learn and do well.

KYLE

I would want teachers to use any of the Harry Potter books as homework assignments.

RILEY

I think it would be neat to hand in movie reports for a grade once in a while. At least, once a week.

(Lights crossfade to the adults.)

ERICA

Riley didn't say anything that wasn't true, and those students had a right to know, to make an educated decision.

NOLAN

Educated decision? Having him suggest I'm only sexually interested in other GUYS?

ERICA

Well... How long has it been since you've even had a girlfriend? Since...Becky, at least.

NOLAN

(beat) Sorry. Didn't know it was such a concern for you, but you are wrong. I go for women. (beat) Even though dealing with YOU has been a case for the contrary. (beat) Stop trying to side step this issue.

ERICA

For what?

NOLAN

Stop it! Stop pretending you don't know!

(Lights crossfade to the children. Adults exit.)

KYLE

So this Friday, remember the name Kyle Barnes.

RILEY

And remember mine too. It's Wooley. Just like his grandma's upper lip.

Hey.

KYLE

(Lights bang out to black.)

**End of Scene One.**

**"Monday"**

(Lights up on the DSR green recliner. Nolan enters, aching.)

NOLAN

Kyle-boy!

KYLE

(O.S.) Yeah, pop!

NOLAN

Come here. Bring your stuff from school.

(He sits. Kyle enters from SR with backpack.)

KYLE

I didn't hear you come in, pop.

(Nolan takes his backpack and looks through it.)

There's a book I got to read. Four chapters.

NOLAN

HAVE to read.

KYLE

I'm on the second now, and there's a thing in there you gotta' sign for tomorrow.

NOLAN

Where's the book?

(Kyle exits SR.)

(yelling to O.S.) What's this I have to sign?

(He finds a note from school.)

KYLE

(O.S.) It says I can participate in student government next year.

NOLAN

Student government? Really? (beat) What makes you want to do that?

(Lights crossfade to DSL. Erica sits at her computer desk, typing. Riley quietly enters from SL.)



RILEY

Hey...Mom. (beat) Mom, I'm home.

(Erica is fixed on the  
computer.)

I stayed late to go over my fractions with Mrs. Poole. I  
hope that was okay.

(Erica glances at Riley and  
stops typing.)

ERICA

Hey. You're home.

RILEY

(beat) Yeah.

ERICA

(beat) You've been here awhile, haven't you.

(Riley shrugs.)

I'm sorry, kid. Got this lady on here whose having a crisis  
cause SHE feels her husband is in love with her mother.

(Riley looks confused,  
curious.)

It's like if your father decided he wasn't in love with  
Mommmy anymore and decided he was MORE in love with  
Grandma'.

RILEY

Ick.

ERICA

Yeah, so...

(She continues typing.)

RILEY

(long pause) When... When is Dad coming home next?

(Erica immediately stops.)

ERICA

Right. Your Dad... (pause) I'm thinking November, but the  
ranch's season may run longer.

RILEY

Can't even remember the last time I heard from him.

ERICA

Well, he's fine, and you shouldn't worry.

(Continues typing.)

RILEY

(beat) Guess what?

ERICA

Hmm.

RILEY

I'm running for student president.

ERICA

Really?

RILEY

Think it'd be cool. Need you to sign a thing that says I can.

ERICA

Sounds fun.

RILEY

Think I may have a chance of winning, too. There's only one other guy at school who wants to do it.

ERICA

Yeah.

RILEY

You know Kyle Barnes?

(Erica is interested. Lights crossfade to SR Nolan and Kyle.)

NOLAN

You really want to be student government president?

KYLE

Yeah, I think so. Like helping with everything at school. Think it'd be fun.

NOLAN

How many kids are running?

KYLE

Just me and Riley.

NOLAN

Riley. Wooley?

KYLE

Yeah.

NOLAN

The kid who put Ivar Sullivan up to showing his pecker in the Christmas play?

(Kyle giggles. Nolan thinks.)

(beat) You ever meet his mom?

(Lights crossfade to Erica and Riley.)

ERICA

Isn't he Nolan Barnes' son?

(Riley shrugs.)

RILEY

See him down at school a lot. Well, not a lot. Couple times a week maybe.

ERICA

Kyle Barnes, eh? (beat) Anyone else running?

RILEY

No. Just Kyle.

ERICA

Hmm. (beat) We're just going to have to make sure you win then, eh?

RILEY

Yeah... WE will. (confused) How? Mean, how are WE going to win, Mom?

(Lights crossfade to Nolan and Kyle.)

NOLAN

With posters, lots of colors and your name on everything so the other kids'll remember it when they vote. When is it?

KYLE

Friday.

NOLAN

This Friday. (beat) We'll hit the school first thing in the morning. I'll tell rusty I'm going to be a little late to work.

KYLE

What? We're gonna do these tonight?

NOLAN

There's only four days, Kyle. How much time you think you have? (beat) Go finish up your homework.

NOLAN (cont)

Bring me your markers, and I'll start putting slogans on those pieces of cardboard closet.

(Lights crossfade to Erica and Riley.)

RILEY

What's a slogan?

ERICA

A catch phrase. Something the other students can identify with when they hear and see your name.

RILEY

Like?

(Erica thinks.)

"Vote for Riley and kiss hardship goodbye-ly." Maybe,  
"Everyone says, Wooley for Pres."

RILEY

(beat) Can't I just hand out some cupcakes?

(Lights bang out to black.)

**End of Scene Two.**

**"Tuesday"**

(Lights up on the schoolyard. Nolan and Kyle are hanging a "Vote For Barnes" poster on the USL school wall. Kyle holds others.)

KYLE

Why out here, pop?

NOLAN

After every recess and lunch, you guys come through this door to go back to class, right? So, THIS way you'll be sure every student sees your name running for president as they head in. At least until Friday.

KYLE

So what do I do with these one's?

NOLAN

Put them wherever you know kids are going to have to go?

KYLE

(Thinks.)

The bathrooms?

NOLAN

Good one. (beat) Hurry up. Bell's gonna' ring here in a sec.

KYLE

The bell is GOING TO ring in a SECOND.

(Kyle crosses USL. DEIDRE ACUNA enters from SR.)

NOLAN

HEY.

(Kyle looks at him.)

KYLE

What?

(Nolan holds out his arms.)

Ah, hurry it up, old man.

(Kyle crosses to Nolan, gives a hug and exits into the USL door.)

ACUNA

I really like him. He's sharp.

(Nolan sees her.)

NOLAN

Thanks. (beat) How are YOU?

(Acuna shrugs.)

Heard you were on your way to junior high next year.

ACUNA

That's the rumor. As an aide though.

NOLAN

An aide? Really?

ACUNA

Made it official last Thursday, effective June first.

NOLAN

Whose going to run special ed next year then?

ACUNA

I hear the district is looking at some Providence College grad.

NOLAN

Hmm. You have like a Masters in that kind of education, though.

ACUNA

This new girl is coming in with a four year.

NOLAN

(beat) Well... That doesn't make any sense. Why would you want to be an AIDE at the junior high?

ACUNA

I don't want to go anywhere. They're forcing me.

(Nolan is confused.)

Student enrollment is low. Even lower than the year before. All the kids are heading to Ponaganset. According to projections, district is looking at almost quarter million short fall from state allocation alone.

NOLAN

Holy shit. (beat) How's that YOUR problem though?

ACUNA

I'm at a masters with twenty-three years experience. They'll save maybe seventeen thousand a year bringing in some spring chicken from Providence.

NOLAN

Yeah, but... This girl, maybe she's done her student teaching, but... You're definitely more qualified. Special ed in this district is already hurting. Why move YOU to an AIDE position?

ACUNA

I don't know. And according to the pay scale, I'm looking at losing nine thousand a year from my salary, not to mention benefits.

NOLAN

So, rather than maintain quality special education, the district would rather save money.

ACUNA

(Shrugs.)

Scarey, isn't it? (beat) The tutor you have for Riley... That's the way to go, cause if a child gets behind HERE...watch out.

NOLAN

What about YOU? Nine grand a year is a lot for a teacher. You've been with the district ever since I can remember. That's not fair.

ACUNA

I put in a request for an executive session with the school board next week. I'm sure they had no idea what they did when they voted on those transfers.

NOLAN

They're never clued in, from what I hear. (beat) Well, it's got to work out, eh?

ACUNA

Hope it does. This school is already marked for improvement by the state.

NOLAN

What's THAT mean?

ACUNA

They'll be bussing kids to other districts and paying for tutors like your son's if they're not careful.

NOLAN

Really. The school would have to pay for Kyle's tutor?

ACUNA

Honestly. I'd check to see if they're supposed to be doing that already.

(Nolan thinks.)

(beat) Well, I've got to get in. I'll see you around.

NOLAN

Yeah, thanks.

(Acuna exits into USL door.  
Nolan finishes with the  
poster. Erica and Riley enter  
from USR.)

ERICA

If you give these to every teacher, they'll give them to the other students. Cut your time down.

(She hands Riley a stack of  
campaign leaflets.)

RILEY

I'm going to be late, Mom.

ERICA

It'll only be a couple minutes. They'll understand.

(She sees Nolan. Riley takes  
the leaflets from her.)

RILEY

What about the rest of them?

ERICA

(beat) I'll tape them up myself.

(The SCHOOL BELL RINGS O.S.  
Riley exits into USL door.  
Nolan soon sees Erica.)

NOLAN

Holy crap.

ERICA

So, you're surprised.

NOLAN

No. If the ground suddenly opened up and swallowed this building, I'd be surprised. THIS is total shock.

(Erica sees poster.)

ERICA

Kyle's running for student government president, eh?



NOLAN

Yeah. He's got this crazy idea he could actually help the other kids with...whatever.

ERICA

My son Riley's running also.

NOLAN

Kyle told me.

(An awkward silence.)

(beat) Was watching "Lifetime" for some stupid reason the other night. Saw the commercial for your website.

ERICA

Which one?

NOLAN

W-W-W-dot-someone-love-me-dot-com.

ERICA

(suspicious) Oh, yeah.

NOLAN

Even logged on for a goof. I was the one with the fantasy of waking up to find the cat licking my erection.

ERICA

I'm not surprised. (beat) So you've got cable and Internet now. You must be moving up in the world. Did Rusty promote you to oil changes?

(Nolan is annoyed.)

NOLAN

Just managed to find a little more is all.

ERICA

Ah, so what IS the lottery up to now?

(Nolan looks at his watch.)

NOLAN

Under two minutes. A record.

ERICA

What?

NOLAN

Does anything ever come out of your mouth that ISN'T flat out mean?

ERICA

Don't start with me.

NOLAN

I didn't start anything. I was attempting to have a pleasant conversation. We had hello's. I patronized you, so you could brag about your business...

ERICA

I don't need this. My son needs me to put up these flyers.

NOLAN

Don't let me keep you for another second, please.

(Erica crosses USL. Principal MARGARET PAPP enters from the school.)

PAPP

Oh, lord. I'm sorry. I was just looking for stragglers. Didn't know anyone was out here. (beat) You're...Riley's mother, yes?

ERICA

Erica.

PAPP

Of course, Erica. We met at registration, I think.

ERICA

I'm sorry, I...can't place you.

NOLAN

Come on. You don't even recognize the principal of your son's own school?

PAPP

(Seeing Nolan.)

Hello, Mister Barnes. Didn't know you were out here either.

NOLAN

Hi, Margaret.

ERICA

Margaret Papp! Now, I remember. Sorry.

PAPP

That's fine. Once my Alzheimer kicks into full stride, I'll be asking YOU the same. (beat) I'd be lying if I said I wasn't surprised to see you here.

ERICA

I was going to put up a few leaflets for Riley's campaign. I hope it's all right. Didn't think to ask.

PAPP

No. Fine. (to Nolan) You must be doing the same.

NOLAN

Just a couple posters.

PAPP

Well, I am pleased to see both the boys so eager to help out their school. In fact, I'm rather pleased to see YOU, Mrs. Wooley. Sometimes, I get the feeling you deliberately stay out of Riley's life here.

(Nolan is amused.)

(to Nolan) We simply can't get rid of YOU, on the other hand. As much as you're here... I'd imagine you'd be able to run for school board.

NOLAN

I've thought about it.

PAPP

(to Erica) Plenty to do, so... I DO need you to make an appointment to meet about what the district needs to do to help Riley next year.

ERICA

(confused) All right.

PAPP

This week, if you don't mind.

ERICA

I'll try to squeeze in some time.

PAPP

Looking forward to it.

(She crosses to exit USL.)

Mister Barnes.

NOLAN

Thank you, Margaret.

(Papp exits USL.)

ERICA

Well, she's just enamored of YOU, isn't she?

NOLAN

Had her for sophomore English. I'm here a lot. So what?

ERICA

I think maybe you're just trying to hard to show you care about Kyle's well being.

NOLAN

Or maybe...I actually DO care. Kyle needs a lot of help to keep up, and I help as much as I possibly can.

ERICA

That's difficult to believe.

NOLAN

Imagine it IS for you.

ERICA

What are you saying?

NOLAN

Oh, come on, lady. Even the damn principal about had a heart attack when she actually saw you at the school. I don't even know why you're here NOW.

ERICA

I'm trying to help Riley with this election. He wants to do this, so I want it for him.

NOLAN

Wow. That's very heartfelt. Where'd you get it? The Doctor Phil show or one of your clients? (beat) Why are you really doing this? (beat) Is it ME?

ERICA

I'm bored with this discussion. I have to get these done, so I can...

NOLAN

It IS me. You're not all of a sudden Miss Proactive Parent. YOU can't stand Riley running against MY son.

ERICA

(long beat) Just cause Kyle wins doesn't mean you're a better parent than I am.

NOLAN

Wow. You are REALLY stuck on me and my boy.

ERICA

Not how you think.

NOLAN

You're wasting your time. Just go back to your Internet love therapy centers and let the kids learn on their own.

ERICA

I have every right to be involved.

NOLAN

You WERE involved. YOU left it for something better. If you weren't so damn shallow, maybe Douglas would come home more often.

ERICA

I can't believe you said that to me.

NOLAN

(beat) I'm sorry.

(Erica crosses and exits into the school. Lights bang out to black.)

**End of Scene Three.**

**"Tuesday...Later"**

(Lights up on the school yard.  
Kyle enters from behind the  
USC corner of the school.)

KYLE

(to O.S.) Friday, Benny. Vote for me, okay? (beat) I don't  
see YOU running, so why not?

(Riley enters from SL with  
campaign leaflets.)

RILEY

Sure you get to vote. Everyone does. (beat) Well, if you  
do, remember ME, all right? (beat) I have a flyer if you...  
(Kyle sees him. Riley looks  
at his flyers and tosses them  
into the SL trash can.)

Stupid.

(He sees Kyle.)

Hey.

KYLE

Hey. (beat) Tough, huh?

RILEY

What?

KYLE

Today. Posters, flyers.

RILEY

Yeah. (beat) Imagine all this is pretty easy for YOU.

KYLE

How?

RILEY

Everyone likes YOU. They barely even know ME. Didn't even  
remember I was running.

KYLE

I don't think any of them care. Not YOU, just the whole  
thing.

(Riley crosses USR to bench  
and sits. Kyle follows.)

RILEY

Yeah, but you've been around. You KNOW everyone. You can  
talk to them and make them LIKE you.

KYLE

It's nothing big. Just like talking is all.

RILEY

Even the girls like you.

KYLE

What? Yeah, right. Girls and me don't...

(Riley looks at him.)

RILEY

You're lying.

KYLE

Bout what?

RILEY

About girls.

KYLE

How would YOU know?

RILEY

Well, cause... Mean, last week I...

KYLE

What?

RILEY

I...saw you and Holli Masters kissing.

KYLE

(beat) When?

RILEY

Last week, behind the backstop. We had a ball foul over, and I went to get it. Saw you guys.

(Kyle is embarrassed.)

Is she your girlfriend?

(Kyle shrugs.)

KYLE

Don't know. She hasn't said much since.

RILEY

Maybe she's embarrassed.

KYLE

Maybe she just doesn't like me.

RILEY

Liked you enough to kiss you.

(Kyle shrugs.)

KYLE

You nervous about Friday?

RILEY

Not really. Don't much care if I win or lose. Just kind of think it'd be fun. Everyone listening to what you have to say and all. Except, I'm not sure I'd have the time, with my extra homework and all.

KYLE

Yeah, me too. Mrs. Lundy might not like the idea of me being president.

RILEY

Mrs. Lundy?

KYLE

She's my tutor. She comes to my house.

RILEY

(beat) Mister Furtado thinks I should be in with the slow kids.

KYLE

Really? (beat) That sucks. At least you'll be hanging with Sean again.

RILEY

Sean's been in there since the third grade. Some of the kids are saying he may get held back STILL. (beat) I'd hate that.

KYLE

Maybe Mrs. Lundy could help YOU out?

RILEY

My mom might not go for it. She doesn't like spending extra money.

KYLE

Neither does my dad, but he comes up with it. He wants me to do well. (beat) Almost embarrassing.

RILEY

My mom stays out of it. She's real busy most of the time.



KYLE

I saw her putting up your flyers earlier.

RILEY

Don't know why. She hasn't made it to anything I wanted her to. Now she's gotten all weird on this Friday thing.

KYLE

Maybe she's just trying to do more.

(Riley shrugs.)

You shouldn't beef though. Should be glad. (beat) I'd trade places with you for even a day.

RILEY

The whole thing is weird. (beat) Just want Friday to be here and get it over.

KYLE

Believe it or not...me too.

(Lights bang out to black.)

**End of Scene Four.**

**"Wednesday"**

(Lights up on DSL. Erica is  
at computer desk working.  
Riley enters from SL with a  
"Vote for Riley" candy bar.)

RILEY

Here. I had it left over.

ERICA

(Looks.)

Left over? We made enough for every kid at your school.

RILEY

Charlie Mutton is hypo glyceric.

ERICA

Ah. (beat) So, how did it go over?

RILEY

What...over?

ERICA

The candy, talking to everyone. Where do you think we  
stand?

RILEY

Don't know.

ERICA

Come on. You have to have some idea.

RILEY

(beat) The other kids really seem to like Kyle. He's cool.  
He makes them laugh, gives them T-Shirts.

ERICA

T-Shirts?

RILEY

With his face on them.

ERICA

Shit. Not good.

RILEY

Why?

ERICA

I'm sure kids remember images better than words or names.  
Nolan probably knows that too.

RILEY

Who's Nolan?

ERICA

Kyle's father.

RILEY

Oh. (beat) You know...it's okay. If Kyle wins, I mean.  
He's a pretty cool guy.

ERICA

(beat, stern) What are you saying? You're giving up?

RILEY

No, I'm just...

ERICA

There's no way in hell you're bowing out now, Riley. We've  
got too much going for you now. Sure they have shirts. So  
what? We'll just have to beat them a different way.

RILEY

Different way how?

ERICA

(Thinks.)

By making it so when other kids see Kyle's face, they don't  
think of him as president. Fact, they'd think he'd make a  
horrible one.

RILEY

I don't know.

ERICA

Sure. It's done in politics all the time. Opponents are  
always exploiting each others short comings. Your teacher  
will tell you.

RILEY

What's EXPLOITING mean?

ERICA

(to herself) Nolan won't know what to do with that. There's  
only one more day until the election anyway. What could he  
do?

RILEY

What's EXPLOITING mean, Mom?

ERICA

How much do you know about Kyle?

RILEY

Like what?

ERICA

Like how is he in school?

RILEY

He's good at sports.

ERICA

No. In the classroom. Does he act up in class? Is he held after school a lot?

RILEY

(Thinks.)

No. If he's held after school it's cause he's got a tutor.

(Erica shows interest.)

ERICA

A tutor? He's...behind his class.

(Riley nods.)

See. That's important. Nobody wants a president who isn't smart enough to do a good job.

RILEY

But, I don't...

ERICA

Riley, think a second. Would YOU, who also has a vote in Friday's election, want a president who has to go to class with the slow kids?

(Riley pauses, hurt, nervous.

He shakes his head "no.")

Then that's something we'll have to convince the other kids of too. Now, I know enough about his father to examine where Kyle comes from. What about students who DON'T like him?

RILEY

There isn't any. Everyone thinks he's funny. The girls too.

ERICA

The girls.

RILEY

Well...ONE girl, actually.

ERICA

(interest) Really.

(Lights crossfade to DSR Nolan at an ironing board in front of the recliner. He is making campaign shirts. Kyle enters from SR.)

KYLE

MORE shirts?

NOLAN

Can't let up now, can we? Not while you're in the running.  
(Kyle lingers, thinking.)

What?

KYLE

What?

NOLAN

What's wrong?

KYLE

(beat) Would you be angry if I decided to change my mind?  
About being president.

(Nolan stops.)

NOLAN

(confused) Why? Why?

KYLE

I kind of...feel bad for Riley. He's really a cool guy.  
Everyone seems to like him enough.

NOLAN

(beat) Well... Think I'd be a bit disappointed, but...I'd  
get over it. What's more important... Do YOU think Riley  
should be president?

KYLE

It's not like it's a tough job. You help decorate the gym  
for special events. Organize tickets to the chili supper.  
Nothing really to it.

NOLAN

But...

KYLE

I think he could use it. Mean, it may be better for HIM. He's kind of behind in class. They want to put him in with the slow kids. I don't know. Thought this could maybe help him.

NOLAN

(beat) Glad you care for the other kids. That you want to help. I AM proud of you. Sure you know that. (beat) But don't you think, that maybe...if YOU were president, you'd be in a better position to get Riley the real help he needs. Even Riley has campaigned on that point. Now that I think of it, probably trying to say, "Someone help ME."

(Kyle ponders.)

YOU could do that. YOU could organize the other kids who do well in class to buddy up with those who don't. I could help you do THAT.

KYLE

Yeah, but...can't I do that even if I wasn't president?

NOLAN

Don't know, but I think being Student Government President, you'd have EVERYONE looking to help you do it.

(Kyle thinks.)

Look, why don't you just stick it out until Friday, and if you win and you still want to change your mind, you could hand the presidency over to Riley.

(A moment passes.)

KYLE

All right.

NOLAN

(Smiles.)

Where's your reading?

(Kyle exits SR. Nolan finishes ironing and looks at the shirt.)

Nice try, Erica. THAT was a real good try.

(Lights fade out.)

**End of Scene Five.**

**"Thursday"**

(Lights up on school yard.  
Erica hangs a Wooley poster  
near Kyle's, which states Kyle  
may be "too slow for  
president." The SCHOOL BELL  
RINGS O.S. Erica finishes and  
Principal PAPP enters from the  
USL school door. She sees  
Erica.)

PAPP

Mrs. Wooley.

ERICA

Hello...Margaret.

PAPP

I'm sorry. Did we have an appointment for today?

ERICA

No. (beat) Oh, crap. I was supposed to make one, wasn't I?

PAPP

Indeed. It's quite needed that we speak with you about  
Riley. Determine which direction you would like to go.

ERICA

Right. Right.

PAPP

(beat) You have no clue what I'm speaking of, do you?

ERICA

No. Sorry.

PAPP

Hmm. Do you ever look at the work your son brings home,  
Mrs. Wooley?

ERICA

(beat) I...used to, but since my business kind of took off,  
it's been difficult.

PAPP

Did you run over ANY of the workbooks Deidre sent home with  
your son after first quarter for the two of you to go over  
at home?

ERICA

I looked at them.

PAPP

But did you and Riley go OVER them?

ERICA

(Thinks.)

I don't think so.

PAPP

Ah. (beat) Mrs. Wooley, it was our understanding at the end of that quarter your son would remain in his class in good faith that he and his parents would work with him on his remedial curriculum.

ERICA

I don't know what to tell you. My company flourished over these past months. If I didn't give to it, it may have never gotten the notice it has. Up until four A-M some nights, crashing every chat room out there, just to get people to visit mine and get my name out there.

PAPP

I understand that, and I'm not suggesting you take attention away from you professional affairs. However, if Riley doesn't get the same attention...he may end up here NEXT year, while everyone else moves on to junior high. (beat) Riley's teacher feels he needs to move into the remedial class room for the rest of the quarter.

ERICA

Come on, the slow class? He doesn't need that.

PAPP

Mrs. Wooley, with all due respect, I don't think you are in a position to determine what Riley needs right now. HE may seem fine at home. His problems only appear on paper. HE's not behind socially. He's simply behind in the basics. He may even have a learning disability.

ERICA

I think I know what he needs just fine. I'm his mother, and the slow class is NOT for him.

PAPP

Mrs. Wooley, we have state accountability to think of. Every child has to improve. We can get penalized for those we promote without testing at the proper levels.



PAPP (cont)

I think this school has done more than it's share of allowing you to get Riley up to the line, but... We may have to place him in remedials whether you approve or not, barring alternatives.

ERICA

I don't believe this. I did NOT raise a stupid kid.  
(They are silent a moment.)  
What alternatives are you talking about?

PAPP

There are tutors here after school. Home preps. Even on-line programs Riley could use. (beat) That's what Kyle's father has been doing since HIS son started having problems. A tutor comes to his home, rather than...

ERICA

Mister Barnes knows nothing about how to educate a child. HE didn't even finish high school.

PAPP

If I remember right, YOU were the reason for that.

ERICA

(long beat, angry) I'm going to try and forget you actually said that to me. What would YOU know about that anyway?

PAPP

I had both of you in high school at one time.

ERICA

I never took English from YOU.

PAPP

I was your class sponsor.

ERICA

(beat) That was YOU.

PAPP

(Nods.)

What I'm trying to get you to focus on is you and your son. Not Nolan Barnes and his. My only point was he cared enough to get his son the extra...

ERICA

Nolan is an ass kissing con artist who has every intention of making himself out to be better than everyone else, while not making any attempt to actually BETTER himself!

PAPP

Unlike a mother who doesn't even realize her son needs the same help? Or maybe she does and refuses to admit it. Maybe she thinks it'll tell others that she's some kind of failure as a parent.

ERICA

This all sounds like some load of bull Nolan probably put in your head just to get to ME.

PAPP

I don't think Mister Barnes concerns himself with you, Mrs. Wooley.

ERICA

You don't know him like I do. He doesn't care. It's an act.

PAPP

I'd believe you. Except, Nolan is in there reading to the third graders right now.

(Erica is embarrassed.)

He does it every Thursday morning. Has for the past two years.

(Erica stews.)

Look. A decision needs to be made. If you come up with something better for Riley, let me know. I'll give you until Monday. Otherwise, he'll start remedials next week.

(She exits into USL door.

Erica thinks and removes her son's negative campaign poster from the wall. She tosses it into the SL trash can.

Quickly, she crosses for USL door. Nolan enters from behind the USC corner of the wall. He sees Erica.)

NOLAN

HEY!

(Erica stops. He carries one of Riley's similar posters.)

(angry) What the fuck is this?!

ERICA

A mistake. I'm heading in to take them down.

NOLAN

Damn right you are. What kind of shit are you trying to pull with this?

NOLAN (cont)

Kid can't win on his own, so YOU have to attack mine just cause he needs a little home study to keep up?

ERICA

I said I'm taking them down.

NOLAN

You have no room to beef a child's learning. Not with Riley the way HE is.

ERICA

What would YOU know of Riley?

NOLAN

Plenty. I volunteer here all the time.

ERICA

If YOU'RE thinking of using that against him then...

NOLAN

I'M not like YOU. If I were to knock him at all, it'd be for what he comes from, not for what he IS.

ERICA

What of it?

NOLAN

A mother who doesn't care about him. A father he never gets to see...

ERICA

Riley's father is none of your business.

NOLAN

When was the last time YOU even saw him, spoke to him?

ERICA

I said drop it!

(Nolan calms.)

NOLAN

The kids don't deserve this, Erica. (beat) Don't use them just cause you're, for some reason, still disgusted with ME.

ERICA

This has nothing to do with you.

NOLAN

THIS... What YOU'RE doing, has EVERYTHING to do with ME. You can't stand to see me succeed at anything, can you? Even as a parent. Yeah, I'm just a mechanic. I didn't start my own on-line therapy center, but...I DID manage to do what I had to for my kid's best interest.

ERICA

Do you know how much a home tutor costs?

NOLAN

Of course I do! Have you been listening to ANYBODY but yourself? Swear Erica, you are SO protective of money, and anything with dollar value, you probably take off your rings when you go to wipe your ass just so you don't lose them. You don't even deserve to be a parent if you can't do what's absolutely needed to make your child succeed in life.

(beat) Maybe you just should've stopped with the first one.

(Erica looks at him carefully.

Nolan feels bad.)

ERICA

I will not accept this from YOU. You know THAT child was... (long beat, anger) I AM a good mother. I don't need YOU, or Papp, to tell me I am. My kid is going to win tomorrow, and when he's president, everyone will see what kind of a parent I am. Everyone will see exactly how smart Riley actually IS as president. He is going to knock everybody on their ass.

NOLAN

(beat) For HIS sake, I hope you're right. (beat) But if this is the way you think he's going to do it, with this smearing shit, then it's not going to be pretty. Not going to let Kyle stand around and let you knock him around just for working harder to be a good student.

ERICA

I'm not...but maybe people would be interested to know what kind of father he actually has, instead of this "Super Dad" front you've walled up around yourself.

NOLAN

(Thinks.)

All right. If that's the way this is going to happen, then I'm with you. We'll put everything out there for the kids to decide what's important and what's not.

ERICA

How?

NOLAN

(beat) A debate. In front of all the other students. Right here. Tomorrow morning, before the kids vote at lunch. Kids can ask them questions, teachers too. THEN we'll see whose son is able to be president.

(Erica thinks a moment.)

Or do you think Riley is too slow to handle that?

ERICA

No. I look forward to it.

NOLAN

Great! I'll go set it up with Margaret now. No shit, Erica. You better not back out or we'll really break out the dirty stuff.

(Nolan exits into USL door. Erica stews, nervously. She looks at the trash can, crosses and pulls out her son's tossed poster. Erica cleans it and attempts to put it back on the wall. Lights slowly fade to black.)

**End of Act One.**

ACT TWO

**"Thursday...Later"**

(Lights up on the school yard. Kyle sits on USR bench, while Riley paces. Negative campaign poster against Kyle hangs on the school wall.)

RILEY

A debate? For what?

KYLE

People ask us questions about stuff and we say what we think about it.

RILEY

No. No. No. I can't, I... I'm not good in front of people.

KYLE

Me neither.

RILEY

Then why?

KYLE

(Shrugs.)

It was our folks' idea.

(Riley stews.)

RILEY

(pause) I'm getting the feeling that all my mom cares about is me winning, not me being president.

KYLE

Pop is kind of the same way.

RILEY

(Thinks.)

Can I ask you something?

(Kyle shrugs.)

What happened to YOUR mother?

KYLE

(pause) Don't have one.

RILEY

How?

KYLE

My pop tells me I'm adopted.

RILEY

(embarrassed) Oh, I'm... I didn't mean... That's cool.

KYLE

It's not a big deal. He told me just before I started school here.

RILEY

Did your dad ever have a wife?

KYLE

No. There was Becky. She lived with us for a long time, but they never got married.

RILEY

Why not?

KYLE

(Shrugs.)

Pop said something about wanting the same things. Or not the same, or... I don't know. (pause) She's YOUR real mom though, right?

RILEY

Yeah.

KYLE

What about your dad?

RILEY

My dad? He's around. He's...away a lot. He's a manager or something for a sheep ranch outside Foster. He's usually living out there during the grazing and shaving seasons. We hardly get to see him.

(He becomes sad.)

(pause) I don't want to do this thing tomorrow.

KYLE

Like to skip it all together.

RILEY

(beat) So why don't we? Refuse to do it.

KYLE

You want to tell YOUR mom you're skipping the debate SHE set up?

(Riley says nothing.)

	KYLE
Yeah, me too.	
	(He glances OS and becomes nervous.)
Oh, crap. Here she comes.	
	RILEY
Who?	
	KYLE
Holli. She's coming.	
	RILEY
Where?	
	KYLE
Don't look at her!	
	RILEY
Why?	
	KYLE
Cause I don't want her to know we're talking about her.	
	RILEY
Why not?	
	KYLE
Cause then she'll know I like her.	
	RILEY
But you kissed her last week. Doesn't THAT tell her...	
	KYLE
NO.	
	RILEY
So what do I do?	
	KYLE
Just be cool.	
	RILEY
Right.	
	(The two pose in a humorous child's definition of "cool." HOLLI MASTERS enters from SR.)
	HOLLI
Hey, guys.	



KYLE  
 Hey.

RILEY  
 Hey.

HOLLI  
 You guys excited about tomorrow?  
 (The boys sulk.)

HOLLI  
 What?

RILEY  
 Both of us want to...  
 (Kyle "shushes" him.)

KYLE  
 Yeah, we're cool.

RILEY  
 (beat) Yeah, we're cool.

HOLLI  
 Okay. I called you last night, Kyle, but your dad said you were busy.

KYLE  
 Yeah. Was helping him work on the car.

HOLLI  
 Really?

KYLE  
 Yeah. I help him all the time.

HOLLI  
 Cool.  
 (An awkward silence. Riley becomes uncomfortable.)

RILEY  
 Kyle doesn't want you to know we've been talking about you.  
 (Kyle's jaw drops.)

HOLLI  
 Really?

RILEY  
 You shoulda' seen him when he saw you.

What?!

KYLE

HOLLI  
(Giggles.)  
Wow. Well...I'm going to miss my bus. Catch you guys tomorrow, eh?

RILEY

Okay.

HOLLI  
(Exiting SL.)  
Bye, Kyle.

KYLE  
(Holli exits.)  
Yeah...turtles.

RILEY  
Turtles?

KYLE  
What did you do?!

RILEY  
What?

KYLE  
She thinks I'm a fool now.

RILEY  
No she doesn't. Actually, think she likes you fine. She giggled.

KYLE  
She was laughing at me.

RILEY  
She giggled. That's all.

KYLE  
That's it. It's over.

RILEY  
What? She didn't...

KYLE  
I may as well forget about being president.

RILEY

(beat) Huh? Why would...

KYLE

She was one of the only reasons I ran.

RILEY

(confused) Why...would you run cause of Holli? Thought you wanted to help people.

KYLE

I do, I DO...honestly, but... (long pause) Last year, Holli had a thing for Ivar Sullivan.

RILEY

Last year's president?

KYLE

(Nods.)

Thought if I was president she'd...

RILEY

That is silly.

KYLE

I know it is, I just... (beat) I can't do this debate.

RILEY

I don't think Holli cares if...

KYLE

I'm not... I don't want... (beat) SHE's going to be there tomorrow.

RILEY

Does your dad know about you and Holli?

KYLE

No. Tried to tell him about her last week, but as soon as I even mentioned girls, he says, "You haven't even lost all your baby teeth." He won't understand.

RILEY

Then what're you going to tell him if you're not doing it? Won't he get angry?

KYLE

I don't know.

(He thinks a moment.)

Maybe...we could throw it.

RILEY

(Frowns.)

Throw it?

KYLE

You don't want to do this either. Let's just throw it.

RILEY

How?

(Kyle thinks and looks at the  
negative campaign poster  
against him.)

KYLE

Well... Your mom put up all these mean things. (beat)  
Let's give them the meanest they've ever seen. Let's make  
it SO bad, our folks will hate to even show their faces at  
school.

RILEY

(Thinks.)

How do we do that?

KYLE

Well... (beat) What kind of dirt can we throw?  
(Lights bang out to black.)

**End of Scene One.**

**"Friday"**

(Lights up on school yard. Kyle and Riley stand on the USR bench, while Papp stands near USL door, awaiting the debate. Nolan enters from USC behind the school, seeing Papp.)

NOLAN

Margaret.

PAPP

Nolan.

NOLAN

Thanks again for putting this together so quickly. Thought it'd be fun for the boys.

(Papp sees the children. They are obviously nervous.)

PAPP

They look like they're having fun all right.

(Nolan notices.)

NOLAN

Probably just nerves.

PAPP

Hmm. Well, if you care to watch, you can sit with the others.

NOLAN

Thanks.

(He approaches Kyle.)

(to Kyle) Relax, huh? You look like you're about to shit yourself.

KYLE

I wish.

(Nolan snaps his fingers and points at his son sternly. He steps into the house audience, serving as the debate's assembly. Acuna enters from SL.)

PAPP

Ah, Deidre. I was hoping to catch you before the weekend.

PAPP (cont)

I spoke with superintendent Carillo and the board won't be able to add you to its agenda Tuesday. There's just too much to cover that night.

ACUNA

Then...what about a special session?

PAPP

(humored) That's not exactly practical.

ACUNA

Why not? Transferring me to Madison isn't practical, but it didn't stop Carillo from proposing it. Why aren't they even going to discuss it?

PAPP

Don't be ridiculous.

ACUNA

(beat) Did you even fight for me?

PAPP

What?

ACUNA

Every school got a chance to work out their own allocations. Was I even Carillo's idea...or yours?

PAPP

You know I care more about the quality of my staff than anything.

ACUNA

...But you didn't exactly fight for me, did you.

(Papp doesn't respond.)

(beat) This is wrong, Margaret. You know this. And you just let it happen. (beat) I'm not going to go away. Someone's going to care about what the board has done. Media loves education stories like THIS.

(Papp looks at her sternly.)

Heard THAT, didn't you?

(Acuna takes a seat in the audience.)

RILEY

(whisper to Kyle) Are you sure we should do this?

KYLE

I'm not sure of anything.

RILEY

My mom said she was coming too.

KYLE

Good. They're the ones getting mean with this whole thing. Let them watch.

RILEY

There she is.

(Erica enters from back of house, searching for a place to sit. She passes Nolan.)

ERICA

What stinks like an oil change?

NOLAN

(quietly) Fuck you, Oprah.

(She takes a seat. Papp addresses the assembly from DSC.)

PAPP

All right. We don't have too much time, but we felt this would be a good way for students to see other aspects of campaigning for public service. We're going to try and keep things casual, but we are also going to follow a format so we don't run too long. We'll begin with general introductions and move into a question and answer period, after which our presidential candidates will go through a Q and A period with each other. Students will get to cast their votes going into the cafeteria for lunch hours, and we'll announce the results this afternoon. We've got a few parents with us today, which I feel your interest in things like this is very exciting. It's important young people take an active interest in their children's education. (beat) So, let's get to it. Our first candidate for Student Body President is Kyle Barnes.

(She crosses SL, as Kyle steps off the bench to DSC.)

KYLE

Hi, I'm Kyle Barnes. I'm running for Student Body President, cause I like helping the people in my class, and I'd like to help everyone in the school now. My dad's name is Nolan Barnes, who helps out here a lot. (beat) I have a tutor who helps me with my class work, that my dad spends all our money on. Thank you.

(He steps aside. Nolan is uncomfortable, confused.)

Papp steps forward.)

PAPP

(beat) All right. Our second candidate is Riley Wooley.  
(Riley nervously steps DSC.)

RILEY

Hell...o, Hi. I'm Riley Wooley. I'm also running for Student Government President, cause I'd like to help my fellow students and help make going to school fun. I am the son of Ethan and Erica Wooley. (beat) My mother owns a website for lonely people, and my dad is hardly around.  
(He steps SR, next to Kyle.  
Papp steps forward again.  
Erica sits up, shooting a glare at Nolan.)

PAPP

Well...that's nice. Okay. We'll move into our question and answer period now. Boys?

(Kyle and Riley take places on opposite ends of DS.)

(to house) What we'll do is, anyone can ask a question of either candidate, of which he will have two minutes for a response. After which, the second candidate will have two minutes to answer the same question. We'll take questions for the next ten minutes.

(Papp steps SL. A YOUNG GIRL stands from the house, raising her hand.)

Go ahead.

YOUNG GIRL

Uh...Kyle. There isn't a whole lot to do at school that's extra. Like clubs and stuff. Like at the junior high. How would you make coming to school more fun?

KYLE

(Thinks.)

Well, when we were kids, we used to have these "Show Its" on Fridays. That could be fun to bring back. Or maybe, we can get some kind of sports going. We could make basketball teams from the different classes, and play each other a couple times a week.

PAPP

All right then. Riley?



RILEY

O...K. I...uh...was thinking about some after school clubs in the middle of the week. We can hit up parents to come in and show how to do different stuff like surfing the Internet or learning games like--what is it--backgammon or chess. Clubs like that.

PAPP

Wonderful. (beat) Next question.

(Erica looks at Nolan and stands.)

ERICA

I have one. (beat) This is for Kyle. You don't come from very healthy means, do you?

KYLE

What?

ERICA

Your father doesn't make a whole lot of money, does he?

KYLE

I don't know.

ERICA

He's a mechanic?

KYLE

He fixes cars.

ERICA

That would be the definition. And mechanics don't make a whole lot of money, so...

(Nolan is unsettled.)

How do you figure after school sports would get paid for? It's assumable that parents of participating students would have to fit the bill. Do you tink you're father would be able to pay for YOU to take part in after school sports?

KYLE

Uh...no?

PAPP

All right. (annoyed) I don't think Riley has to respond to that... Any other questions, we're running shy on...

NOLAN

I have one for Riley.

(Riley becomes nervous, as  
Nolan stands.)

NOLAN

You'd like to get parents more involved by holding after school clubs, but why could you assume your fellow students' parents are able to volunteer their time?

RILEY

Huh?

NOLAN

Would you say YOUR mother has the kind of time to sponsor a club after school?

(Erica glares at him.)

RILEY

Uh...no?

NOLAN

In fact, how many times has your mother come to the school since school started?

ERICA

(Stands.)

That's two questions. Besides, Kyle has to answer the first one. How about it, Kyle? Does YOUR mother have the time to take part in after school clubs?

KYLE

I'm adopted. I don't know who my mother is.

NOLAN

Kyle!

PAPP

ALL RIGHT. I think that's it for our question answer from the audience.

(She glares at both Erica and  
Nolan.)

PAPP

Let's move onto the candidate Q and A. (beat) Kyle will begin by asking Riley a question, and Riley will have a minute for a response. Riley will then get to ask a question of Kyle. We'll go back and forth until we're out of time, all right?

(The boys nod.)

Kyle.

(She steps aside.)

KYLE

Well. (pause) First, I'd like to ask Riley why he feels HE'D make a good president for our school?

RILEY

(beat) I enjoy coming here and most everyone seems to enjoy coming here. I'd like to help keep this place fun to...come to?

KYLE

I see.

PAPP

Now, Riley.

RILEY

Uh... Why do you feel you'd make a good president?

KYLE

I think I'm honest and work real hard. I think the rest of the students here could use that in a president.

(Riley is apprehensive. Kyle nods, encouraging.)

RILEY

Honesty is big with you?

KYLE

Very.

RILEY

(long beat) Than can you tell me why you ran off school grounds last week during recess? If honesty is such a big deal to you, I'm sure you wouldn't mind telling everyone why you ran behind the backstop last week with Holli Masters.

NOLAN

What?

KYLE

I...

(He looks at his father.)

We were kissing.

(Murmurs are heard.)

I like her a lot.

RILEY

Would you say the only reason you ran for president was to impress Holli?

KYLE

(beat) Yeah.

(Riley nods to Kyle.)

Let me ask YOU, Riley. Do you think having loving parents is important to guys like me and you?

RILEY

Of course.

KYLE

How often IS your father around, Riley?

RILEY

I...don't...

KYLE

Truth is, you haven't seen your dad in months, have you?

RILEY

No. Not since last March, I think. (beat) But I could ask the same of you. You said you have no mother, and your father doesn't have anyone to help him provide for you.

KYLE

There was one lady.

(Both parents are uncomfortable.)

But there hasn't been anyone since.

RILEY

Why do you think that is?

KYLE

I don't know. Someone once told me he might like other guys.

NOLAN

Kyle?!

KYLE

Since we're talking about it, would you say your mom gives anyone the kind of attention they need? Or isn't THAT why your dad REFUSES to come back home?

RILEY

He works. We can't... He doesn't...

(He leans closer to Kyle.)

(whisper) What is that? THAT wasn't part of it.

KYLE

(whisper) They love it.

RILEY

(whisper) I don't.

KYLE

(to crowd) Your father can't stand your mom, and that's why he won't come home.

ERICA

(Stands.)

You little son-of-a...!

RILEY

(annoyed) What makes YOU so special, Kyle? Look at you. You don't even have a shirt or jeans without a hole in it? That's cause you dad spends all his money on lottery tickets.

NOLAN

Damn it, Erica!

KYLE

(annoyed) I have a tutor. She costs a lot of money!

RILEY

If you're not smart enough to keep up without a tutor, then you must be too dumb to BE president!

NOLAN

You watch your mouth!

ERICA

Stop this!

PAPP

Boys!

KYLE

At least I'm not the one they're going to throw in the retard class cause he's too slow!

RILEY

SHUT UP, ASS HEAD!

PAPP

ALL RIGHT, THAT'S ENOUGH! What is wrong with you two?! You should be ashamed of yourselves, acting like this in front of everyone.

PAPP (cont)

(beat) The debate is over. You boys go wait for me in my office.

(Slowly, the boys exit USL.  
Papp crosses DSC.)

The bell is going to ring any minute. Teachers, why don't you take your classes, third graders first, back to your rooms.

(Both Nolan and Erica stand,  
fuming.)

And YOU TWO! I wouldn't be going very far if I were EITHER of you.

(Lights bang out to black, as  
the SCHOOL BELL RINGS O.S.)

**End of Scene Two.**

**"Friday...Later"**

(Nolan and Erica are heard on stage in black, repeating lines from the top of show.)

NOLAN

Just can't stand me THAT much, you have to ruin this for the kids? Having Riley fire off all this nonsense about Kyle's life at home and how he was raised.

ERICA

So then why did Kyle start up about Riley's father?

NOLAN

I didn't put him up to that.

ERICA

You had nothing to do with it?

NOLAN

I'm not like YOU. You wanted to wreck anything positive I could share with my kid. It drives you nuts, doesn't it?

ERICA

Why would it?

NOLAN

Stop pretending you don't know!

(Lights up. Nolan and Erica are DS.)

You are such a shallow woman.

ERICA

Save me your brand of bullshit.

NOLAN

I cannot believe you ruined this for the kids. You think they needed this? Or you just wanted my kid to lose this thing just to spite ME?

ERICA

Oh, so what? That so hard to figure out? What kind of problem do you have with Riley?

NOLAN

Not Riley. YOU. You piss me off so much. You have all this...money and future, but I give more hugs. Together we could've...

ERICA

Oh, shit. (beat) This is all... YOU'RE still upset that I left you for Ethan.

NOLAN

(long beat) You couldn't possibly know. I doubt you've cared enough about anyone to feel what I...AT ONE TIME...felt.

(Papp storms out of USL door.)

PAPP

What do either of you think happened today?

(They are quiet.)

Honestly.

NOLAN

It's obvious. (beat) She's trying to smear this whole thing.

ERICA

ME.

NOLAN

You still won't admit...

PAPP

Both of you cool it.

(They do.)

Do either of you realize what you've turned this whole thing into? Do you think ANY of the children out here this morning learned ANYTHING about the democratic process?

ERICA

I...

PAPP

I don't need an answer. (beat) What is wrong with the two of you? Things so bad between you that you use your kids and their school as a way to stab at each other?

NOLAN

None of this started until...

PAPP

It doesn't matter. You've both been manipulating these kids.

ERICA

Oh, how could YOU know what's...



PAPP

Cause THEY TOLD ME! They're not stupid. I just had them in my office for an hour. They sound like they're fifty with the amount of stress you've put on them this week. (beat) Only good thing appearing to come of this... They never cared to say two words to each other before. Now they seem the best of friends. (beat) What's happened to you two? You couldn't be closer when you were in high school. And I know young people fall in and out of relationships all the time, but...to just be so UGLY to each other...

(Kyle and Riley enter from  
USL.)

This is not healthy. For ANYONE.

ERICA

I don't think you understand the situation. He thinks his child deserves everything just cause he's without a mother.

PAPP

If you knew the half of it, you may take more of an interest, like Nolan does with YOUR son.

ERICA

What?

NOLAN

Margaret.

PAPP

You're never hear. We've seen you twice in the last two years.

NOLAN

Margaret, don't!

PAPP

SOMEONE has to look out for RILEY'S interests, and it may as well be HIM.

ERICA

WHY?

NOLAN

Margaret, don't you fucking tell her!

PAPP

He's the father of your son!

(Erica, Kyle and Riley are  
stunned, confused.)

NOLAN

Son-of-a-bitch!

(He turns away.)

ERICA

The hell are you talking about? Nolan isn't Riley's father. What's the matter with you?

PAPP

No, he's Kyle's. (beat) Kyle is YOUR son...also.

ERICA

This is...ridiculous. Where do you figure...

PAPP

You gave up your child together.

(Erica grow sullen.)

Up for adoption. (beat) It got the best of him.

(Erica looks at Nolan.)

NOLAN

I was still...in love with you.

ERICA

We AGREED to give it up.

NOLAN

IT's a HIM and no. That was YOUR decision, not mine. YOU'RE the one who wanted to go to college without having to worry over a baby. Get a degree. Take over the world.

(beat) I just wanted YOU. A family with you. It's all I ever wanted. Support a family. Career, no. No, interest.

(The boys are still confused.)

Sometime after you left me for...Ethan, I couldn't stop thinking about what we'd done, especially after I heard you were pregnant again a short time after. I guess HE was stronger than I was to stand up to you. (beat) I couldn't let it go. I wanted...that child, so... I came to Margaret to help me find out what I had to do to...adopt Kyle.

(beat) Without YOU knowing.

PAPP

A former student of mine opened a garage. Nolan was good with an engine. Seemed to enjoy working on them. So, he worked to get custody. I had to sign off for him with the state, but... He's been a FATHER ever since. There was nothing for me to help him with. (beat) Then when I heard your son, Riley, was about to begin school about the same time Kyle was... I told Nolan. He's been volunteering with the district ever since.

ERICA

Neither of you ever told me?

NOLAN

You wouldn't of taken the time to listen. You were too busy making yourself the Sally Jesse of the World Wide Web.

ERICA

I don't believe this.

PAPP

I wanted to tell you, honestly.

ERICA

(to Nolan) You... You better not... I hope you're not thinking that...just cause you're supposedly raising someone I gave birth to eleven years ago, and just happen to work myself into some form of success, that...you can just... If you think you deserve some sort of piece of what I've...

NOLAN

Oh for crap sake.

ERICA

I didn't know.

NOLAN

I didn't WANT you to! You think I want to use HIM to squeeze money out of you?! That ALL you care about?

ERICA

I provide stability. Don't lecture me on...

NOLAN

But you don't even KNOW you son. You didn't even know he was headed to the slow class 'til this week.

(Riley becomes nervous.)

ERICA

I refuse to believe he's doing THAT poorly. Not any son of mine.

PAPP

We've spoken about this, Erica. How can you not accept...

ERICA

I'm getting real tired of you.

PAPP

Are you.

ERICA

My son... My ONE son, isn't going anywhere.

PAPP

(beat) I'm exhausted fighting you, Mrs. Wooley. You've been disrespectful towards me, this situation and your son's needs. (beat) Come Monday, Riley will start class with the Mrs. Acuna.

RILEY

NO!

(Riley runs to Erica, clasping her. Kyle steps forward.)

NOLAN

Kyle.

RILEY

(weeping) No, mom. I don't want to go in with the retarded class. I'm not retarded. I'm NOT a retard! I don't want to go in there!

NOLAN

Kyle, how...

PAPP

Riley, please.

ERICA

I... Baby, I...

(She is lost.)

RILEY

Tell them I'm not a retard, mom!

PAPP

Riley, no one has said you're a...

RILEY

You're sending me to the retarded class though!

KYLE

Dad...

RILEY

I DON'T WANT TO BE A RETARD!

KYLE

Is Riley my brother?

NOLAN

(Looks at the others.)

Yes.

KYLE

How?

NOLAN

Well...It's complicated. (beat) Mrs. Wooley is the...woman who gave birth to you...and to Riley. Riley has a different father though.

RILEY

I want my dad. HE won't let me be in that class.

ERICA

Riley...

RILEY

He WOULDN'T... I want my dad. I WANT MY DAD!

ERICA

Your father... Riley...

RILEY

(anger) WHERE IS HE?!

ERICA

Riley!

RILEY

YOU TELL ME WHERE HE IS!

PAPP

Riley, calm down.

ERICA

HE'S WORKING. YOU KNOW THAT...

RILEY

STOP LYING TO ME! (beat) YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW, DO YOU?!

ERICA

I...know...

RILEY

DON'T LIE! WHERE IS HE! I WANT HIM HERE! I WANT MY DAD!

PAPP

RILEY.

RILEY

I WANT MY DAD! I WANT MY DAD!

(He begins to hyper  
ventilate.)

PAPP

Calm down. Come on. Calm down.

(Kyle slips under Nolan's arm.  
Erica tries to keep from  
crying. Riley struggles to  
breathe, as the lights fade to  
black.)

**End of Scene Three.**

**"Friday...Even Later"**

(Lights up. Kyle and Nolan sit on the USR bench.)

NOLAN

You know I'm sorry.

KYLE

(Thinks.)

Yeah.

NOLAN

I would've told you, but... Thought maybe you'd tell Riley, and he'd tell his mom, and... (beat) That's just a heap of headache I was trying to avoid.

KYLE

Why did all this happen? Mean, me and Riley could of just ran for president and that's it. Why'd everything go to crap?

NOLAN

Well...sometimes people get wrapped up in what...they think is important?

KYLE

What was so important to YOU then? You took all the fun out of it, the way you were.

NOLAN

I KNOW. ALL RIGHT. I'm sorry. You're all I got and I get over excited sometimes. (beat) I just want us to be okay again. We finished?

KYLE

(beat) Yeah. Guess so.

NOLAN

(Smiles.)

Good. (beat) What about this Holli girl?

KYLE

(urgent) I'm gonna' check on the voting. I'll be inside, pop.

(He crosses USL.)

NOLAN

Get back here.

(Kyle returns.)

NOLAN

Who is she?

KYLE

Girl from my class is all.

NOLAN

You've been kissing her past the school yard?

KYLE

No. (beat) Just the one time.

NOLAN

Mmm. (beat) What did you think?

(Kyle shrugs.)

Did you like it?

KYLE

Like HER. Otherwise, it was just wet.

(Nolan keeps from laughing.)

You mad at me?

NOLAN

No. Don't know what an ELEVEN year old needs with a girlfriend.

KYLE

She's not my girlfriend.

NOLAN

(beat) Kyle, have you been told what sex IS?

(Kyle is embarrassed.)

You've heard of it.

(Kyle nods.)

Well...then we'll have to make a point to yap about it, eh?

(Kyle shrugs.)

(beat) I've been where you are, kid. When MY dad tried to tell me about sex, he just gave me twenty dollars and the address of a street corner in Providence. (beat) I met Riley's mom when I was only a couple years older than YOU.

(Kyle's expression changes.)

What?

KYLE

Do I call her MOM now?

NOLAN

No. Fact, I can guarantee you she wouldn't enjoy that a bit.



KYLE  
Than what do I call her?

NOLAN  
You don't have to call her anything.

KYLE  
What about Riley?

NOLAN  
Riley?

KYLE  
Do I call him my brother from now on?

NOLAN  
If you want. Just... (beat) Call him your friend. The rest'll work itself out later, eh?

KYLE  
Okay.  
(Erica enters from the USL door.)

NOLAN  
Hey. Why don't you check on those results now.

KYLE  
Okay.  
(He crosses USL and pauses to look at Erica.)

ERICA  
Yes?

KYLE  
You have hazel eyes.

ERICA  
That's right.

KYLE  
Me too. Hmm.  
(He exits into USL door.)

NOLAN  
Messing with you. Doesn't even know what hazel is.  
(Erica smirks.)  
How's Riley?

ERICA

Fine. He's actually napping in the health aides office.

NOLAN

Ah.

ERICA

I don't know what I'm going to do about him. I feel so bad. He's gotten so... (beat) And without any help from...Ethan, I... I don't know what to do.

NOLAN

HELP HIM, ERICA. There IS no excuses. Do what you have to. Where IS Ethan? Why ISN'T he helping? Does he even know what's going on? Have you told him?

ERICA

(long beat) I...haven't seen him in over a year.  
(Nolan is confused.)

NOLAN

So...go to HIM then. If you need help...get him involved. Force him.

ERICA

I would. (beat) But he...divorced me nine months ago.

NOLAN

Oh, shit. What? How?

ERICA

Hadn't seen him for three months at first. His season was running long. He asked me to join him. (beat) My clientele had just tripled. I didn't have the time.

ERICA

(sigh) By then, he'd had it with me, I guess. I received the paperwork a week later. It was final last June.

NOLAN

(beat) Riley, doesn't even know, does he?  
(Erica shakes her head "no.")  
Why the hell have you kept THAT from him?

ERICA

I kept it from EVERYONE. I'm the Internet goddess of repairing and maintaining the perfect relationship. How fast you think I'd be out of business if my clients found out I can't even keep my OWN husband?

NOLAN

You think Riley is gonna' log onto the web and tell little-mary-can't-get-a-date that Daddy divorced Mommy?

ERICA

I will tell him, but...not now. That's all he needs to deal with at this point. (beat, to herself) The retarded class, son-of-a-bitch. Did you see the look on his face? Like someone just told him he was being put to sleep.

NOLAN

To a ten year old, remedials are just as bad.  
(Erica becomes distraught.)  
(long beat) You're making okay money right now?

ERICA

What?

NOLAN

Why doesn't Riley tutor with Kyle's aide? Our house. We SPLIT the cost. (beat) I can pick up Riley with Kyle. They'll spend a couple hours after school. Can swing him home after, but you have to put up half. (beat) Free up some of our cash. (sarcastic) Buy more scratch tickets that way.

ERICA

I...don't know what to...say. I... Papp.

NOLAN

Don't worry about her. Fact, she'd probably be more than FOR it. Keep him out of remedials a bit longer, at least to see how he does by the end of the year.

ERICA

What...do YOU get out of this?

NOLAN

Am I speaking German? Half the cost.

ERICA

This isn't some way for you to work back into my life even a small amount to see if there's still some...romantic possibility?

NOLAN

Half the cost. Take the credit, and be the greatest mom he'll ever know. Plus, he'll get a chance to know his own brother better.

(Erica is apprehensive.)

NOLAN

Trust SOMEBODY just once in your life.

ERICA

(long pause) All right. YOU work it out with Papp. I've had my fill of her this week. Had my fill of a lot of things this week.

NOLAN

I do have to ask you a question, though.

(Erica looks at him  
suspiciously.)

If YOU'RE so determined not to have me back in your life, why is it, YOU'RE the one who makes a point of saying it?

(Erica thinks, nervous.)

Who are you trying to convince WE will never happen again?

(Erica is speechless. Riley  
slowly enters from USL.)

NOLAN

Hello, Riley.

RILEY

Hey.

ERICA

Oh, hey...kid.

NOLAN

(beat) Well, I'm going inside to wash the denial off and see how the count is going.

(Nolan exits into the school  
USL.)

ERICA

(pause) You feeling all right?

RILEY

Yeah.

ERICA

(beat) They're almost done counting the votes, I think. You excited?

RILEY

(Shrugs.)

Don't know. What if I don't win?

ERICA

Then...you just go to school like you have been. Not be president.

(Riley crosses to her.)

RILEY

You'll be...upset, won't you?

ERICA

There are worse things. I know I must have not made it seem that way this week. (beat) It's been stupid grown up stuff, Riley.

RILEY

You're mad at me.

ERICA

No. I'm not. Okay?

RILEY

We tried to embarrass you.

ERICA

I know.

RILEY

You're mad at me.

ERICA

No, Riley. You're my special boy, right?  
(Kyle shrugs.)

ERICA

You are. (beat) I know... I know I don't say...THAT much, but...it IS true. (beat) If you can understand it... Even though it may seem my life doesn't revolve around you...doesn't mean I can't imagine it...WITHOUT you. Get me?

(Riley slowly nods.)

RILEY

What about...the retarded class?

ERICA

(sighs) We're working on it. Don't worry about that right now, okay?

(Riley nods. Erica stands.)

RILEY

Mom, how...? How is...Kyle my...brother?

ERICA

(long pause) Ah...right.

(Lights fade to black.)

**End of Scene Four.**

**"Presidency"**

(Lights up. Kyle paces DS.  
An ANNOUNCEMENT is heard over  
the school's address system by  
Papp.)

PAPP

(O.S.) Attention, please. All students who ride the number  
four bus home need to get on the number three today and  
today ONLY. Our results from student elections will be  
announced in a few minutes once we have verified a couple  
things. Thank you.

(Riley enters from USL door.)

RILEY

Hey.

KYLE

Hey.

RILEY

Anyone tell YOU?

KYLE

No.

RILEY

(beat) Your dad get mad at you?

KYLE

No. Your mom?

(Riley shakes "no.")

RILEY

What we did was stupid.

KYLE

I know..

RILEY

(beat) We're... We're brothers, you know.

KYLE

I know.

RILEY

Kind of weird.

KYLE

Yeah, but...it's kind of cool too. (beat) You're fun to hang out with.

(Riley smiles. Holli enters from behind the USC corner of the school.)

HOLLI

HEY. They've began looking for guys.

(Kyle is nervous.)

RILEY

Who?

HOLLI

The principal. Your folks. They sent me to look for you.

KYLE

(disappointed) Oh.

HOLLI

What?

(Moment of silence.)

RILEY

Think he was hoping YOU were looking for HIM.

HOLLI

I WAS looking for him.

RILEY

No. So you can talk.

HOLLI

About?

RILEY

How much you like each other.

KYLE

(Embarrassed.)

Man!

HOLLI

(beat) You like me?

KYLE

(surprise) Well...yeah.



HOLLI  
I though... You never...

KYLE  
What?

HOLLI  
You never said anything after we'd...you know. You kind of...wouldn't even talk to me, you know.

KYLE  
Yeah, no... I...guess I didn't.

HOLLI  
But you DO.

KYLE  
What?

HOLLI  
Like me.

KYLE  
(beat) Yeah.

RILEY  
A LOT!

KYLE  
SHHH!

RILEY  
You're all he's talked about all week!

KYLE  
Shut up!

HOLLI  
You were so into this election thing this week. Thought you just...didn't have... You weren't interested.

KYLE  
No. No, I am. Fact, I kind of decided I was going to run for president just...cause you'd...like me more.

HOLLI  
That doesn't make sense.

RILEY

I told him that.

HOLLI

Why would I like you more if you ran for president?

KYLE

Cause... Well, you...seemed to like Ivar last year, cause...he was...

HOLLI

Ivar was president?

KYLE

Well...yeah.

HOLLI

(Shrugs.)

Didn't even know. I thought Ivar was funny. (beat) You are too. I like hanging with you. You're funny.

RILEY

(beat) Well, that's cool, right?

(Kyle smiles, inanely.)

When Kyle returns from whatever planet he's on,..I'm sure he'll say thanks.

HOLLI

Okay, well...

RILEY

Maybe you two should kiss.

KYLE

RILEY.

RILEY

In the movies there's always a kiss.

(Holli rolls her eyes.)

HOLLI

Okay guys.

(Nolan, Erica and Papp enter from the USL door.)

NOLAN

HEY, Don Juan. We've been looking for you.

KYLE

We heard.

(Nolan looks at Papp.)

NOLAN

Well, results are in, but...

PAPP

There's kind of a problem. First off. Kyle, you had more votes.

(The boys look at each other.)

Riley was just a few votes shy of winning, so by right Kyle, you've been elected student body president.

RILEY

Oh.

PAPP

But...the students may still need you.

(Riley is interested.)

See, Mitchel Quick was running for Vice President, right?

KYLE

Yeah. Was the only one.

PAPP

Well, Jonathan Simpson won't be going to school here next year.

RILEY

Why..not?

PAPP

His parents are moving him over to Ponaganset. He's going to attend there.

RILEY

Oh.

ERICA

(beat) What she's saying, Riley, is the person elected Vice President can't take office. And there's no one to fill the spot.

NOLAN

It's not president, but you still get to help everyone if you're interested.

(Riley looks at Erica. She nods, encouraging.)

RILEY

I'd be VICE President?

PAPP

That's correct.

RILEY

Yeah. Okay.

(Adults are pleased.)

KYLE

That's not fair.

PAPP

What?

KYLE

It's not fair. He ran for president, not VICE president. I almost quit twice this week. He was almost president anyway. Why does HE have to take V-P?

NOLAN

Kyle, your fellow students have voiced what they want. That's democracy. They wanted YOU.

KYLE

Well, that's stupid. (beat) If the votes were THAT close then it sounds like they wanted BOTH of us, not JUST me.

PAPP

What are you saying, Kyle? What do you want to happen?

KYLE

(Thinks.)

Why can't there be two presidents? Wouldn't NEED a vice president if you have two presidents, right?

(Nolan looks at Erica and Papp.)

NOLAN

Fine by me.

ERICA

Riley?

RILEY

(beat) Yeah.

PAPP

We've never had two presidents before, but...doesn't mean we CAN'T, so... All right. TWO presidents we have.

(She smiles.)

I'll go announce it to the body.

(Papp turns.)

RILEY

WAIT. What... (quiet) What about if I...go into the...remedial class? Can I still be president?

PAPP

(to Nolan) You explain it?

(Nolan nods.)

NOLAN

Actually... (to Erica) YOU explain it, eh?

(Erica smiles, crosses to Riley and kneels.)

ERICA

I was talking with Mister Barnes and...you're going to start going over Kyle's house after school and sit with his tutor everyday. Like Kyle does.

RILEY

(skeptical) Okay.

ERICA

See. Mister Barnes worked it out with the principal that you can stay out of the remedial class if you study with Kyle's tutor for the rest of the quarter and the summer. Then, if Mrs. Papp thinks you've improved enough, we'll stick with the plan. We'll go report card to report card. And as long as there's improvement, you'll never see the...retarded classroom.

(Riley beams.)

KYLE

They can do that, Pop? It's all right with YOU?

NOLAN

He's your brother, Kyle. Need to help each other now. You BOTH have a whole school of students to depend on you next year.

(Kyle is pleased.)

RILEY

It's okay with YOU, Mom?

ERICA

Whatever YOU want is what I want. Of course, it's all right. I can maintain my business, and you'll get the extra help you need to get caught up. We're going to help Mister Barnes pay for it.

(Riley hugs her.)

NOLAN

Actually...the school district is going to pay for it.

PAPP

What?

NOLAN

I did a little research with central office yesterday. In an instance when a student at a Title One school is marked for special education by the administrator requiring outside help, the school district has to pay for it.

PAPP

I don't think so, Nolan. That's...only if the school REQUIRES him to receive outside assistance.

NOLAN

Well, I seem to remember a meeting you and I had on this very matter a year ago when you said exactly that about Kyle.

PAPP

I don't ever remember saying...

NOLAN

Mrs. Acuna was also there, if you recall, and she says the same.

PAPP

Deidre.

NOLAN

She was VERY helpful.

PAPP

(beat) This all has to be approved by the school board first.

NOLAN

It already WAS. According to the district secretary, the policy was approved at the beginning of the school year.

(Papp is confused.)

"No Child Left Behind." You gotta' love it. (beat) So, it looks like the school will be paying for BOTH boys' after school tutoring.

PAPP

I don't appreciate this, Nolan.

NOLAN

I know. I wouldn't either, but special education at this school, in this district, this state and probably this country is frightening when qualified teachers are getting this side of fired and replaced with younger and more cost effective educators. (beat) With all do respect, Margaret, I'd bet money this district spends more on YOUR salary then it does on textbooks.

(Papp, insulted, exit into USL door.)

(to boys) You guys better go get your things. Bell is going to ring pretty soon.

ERICA

(to Riley) Go.

(Excited, both boys exit to USL door. Nolan sees Holli is still there.)

NOLAN

You.

(Holli looks at him.)

You ever been to Providence?

HOLLI

Yeah.

NOLAN

You know the corner of Second Street and Vaughn?

(Holli shakes "no.")

Good. Go get your stuff.

(Holli exits USL.)

ERICA

Second and Vaughn. Isn't that where...

NOLAN

I'M JUST CHECKING.

(They chuckle. An ANNOUNCEMENT is heard of the address system.)

PAPP

(O.S.) Your attention, please. We have our results from today's election for Student Body Government. Elected to serve as secretary is Sara Barrett. Elected to treasurer is Andrew Richoux. Our only vice president candidate has been forced to recede, and serving as our co-presidents for next year will be Kyle Barnes and Riley Wooley.

PAPP (cont)

I'd like to thank the students, staff and parents for their participation.

(Nolan and Erica look at each other.)

Please, check with your bus driver and make sure you are on the correct bus home today, and of course, everyone have a pleasant weekend. Thank you.

ERICA

(long beat) Well...I'm going home. Have a client I haven't spoken to in four days. Last I heard she was in love with her boss.

NOLAN

That's not exactly rare.

ERICA

She works at the White House.

NOLAN

Ah...well. (beat) You don't need a ride.

ERICA

No.

NOLAN

You don't like coffee.

ERICA

No.

NOLAN

(beat) There's no chance I can get you alone for even a couple minutes, so we can have any exchange of kind words, for once.

ERICA

No. (beat) We're alone NOW, though.

NOLAN

(beat) And I don't know what to say.

ERICA

Hmm.

(She crosses SR to exit.)

NOLAN

What about Riley?



ERICA

Oh, I...thought he was going home with you and Kyle.

NOLAN

Kyle's tutor doesn't come on Fridays.

ERICA

Oh. They can't just...play?

NOLAN

(beat) Yeah. Yeah, that's okay, guess. He knows where he lives, right?

ERICA

Yes.

NOLAN

Fine, then.

ERICA

(beat) What I'm about to say...you know is extremely hard for me sometimes. (beat) Thank you.

NOLAN

I know.

(Erica smiles, trying to exit.)

I still think about you.

(Erica halts.)

There. I said it.

ERICA

(beat) Believe it or not... (beat) I think about me, TOO.  
(Nolan smiles.)

NOLAN

What has to happen to make us more than a "what if?"

ERICA

Nothing shy of an absolute miracle.

(Nolan looks at her, hopeless.)

I DO have to go. I'm sorry.

NOLAN

Yeah, course. Go.

(Erica exits SR. Nolan thinks a moment. Kyle enters from the USL door.)

KYLE

Pop, come on. Our class has a bunch of treats for the election. There's not going to be any cookies left.

(A CAR ENGINE is heard attempting to ignite O.S.)

NOLAN

That's right. Not after I get a hold of them. (beat) Be there in a sec.

(Kyle exits USL. Nolan looks at the school and smiles. He heads inside, until Erica enters slowly from SR. Nolan sees her.)

Hey.

ERICA

(Upset.)

Hi.

NOLAN

What's wrong?

ERICA

(long beat) My...car won't turn over.

NOLAN

No?

ERICA

I wondered...if you knew of a good mechanic.

(Nolan smiles at her. Lights slowly fade to black.)

**CURTAIN.**