

Act I:

Scene 2:

SETTING:

The livingroom. A table is laden with fruit baskets and food. A photograph of a middle-aged woman is on the table as well as several photo albums. There is a door leading to PENNY's room, another for the front door and an exit to the hallway for the rest of the bedrooms.

AT RISE:

CARA is cleaning up the dishes.  
PENNY is on the phone on the couch.

PENNY

I don't know. It's weird. Yeah, Cara and Stanley say I have to go. Why? Was the test hard? I'll figure it out. I don't KNOW, Georgia, I said I'd figure it out! Yeah. No, I'm sorry. I just...yeah. Thanks for going with me today. I know...it's just...well, thank your mom for me. Yeah, okay. G'night.

(SHE hangs up the phone)

CARA

Why were you yelling at Georgia?

PENNY

I wasn't yelling. Mind your own business. God, if that phone rings one more time, I think I'll die, too.

CARA

Penny, don't say things like that.

(beat)

I didn't know that Ginny and Ted had come in.

PENNY

I don't even remember them. Who are they again?

CARA

Mom's first cousin's kids. There's a picture of them in one of these albums.

(CARA opens an album. She  
points to a picture)  
See? That was taken at Ginny's wedding.

PENNY  
Who's that kid in the picture?

CARA  
That's me.

PENNY  
I never got to go to anyone's wedding. I don't remember any  
of these people. How come I don't remember them?

CARA  
A lot of them are distant family that we didn't really see  
after we moved here.

(points to a picture)  
That's Grandma and her sister, Elizabeth. That's who Mom  
was named after. Elizabeth died in a car accident when she  
was a teenager.

PENNY  
I didn't know that. I mean, I knew Grandma had a sister but  
she didn't talk about her much. That's really sad. I can't  
imagine losing your sister like that. They look a  
lot alike. It's kinda creepy. I don't remember much about  
Grandma. I wish we hadn't moved away from her.

CARA  
Well, you know we had to move when we did.

PENNY  
Yeah.  
(beat)  
Do I have to go home with you when you go?

CARA  
Well, I'm not letting Stanley get custody of you and Mom  
wants you to stay with me.

(SHE starts putting the  
albums away)

PENNY  
But I don't know anybody in Arlington! What about my  
friends here?

CARA

Well, they'll come visit. You guys can have sleepovers and stay up all night, stuff your faces with hot chocolate and marshmallows, and watch scary movies.

PENNY

I don't do that.

CARA

Do what?

PENNY

Everything you just said; watch scary movies and have hot chocolate with marshmallows.

CARA

Really? Why not?

PENNY

I don't like scary movies.

CARA

Well, whatever you watch. I'm just saying, they'll come visit.

PENNY

Yeah, sure. It's two whole hours away. And Arlington's so boring. It's just all people that do government jobs. Nobody's going to want to come visit.

CARA

Your friends will visit. They'll think it's cool to go somewhere else to see you. Besides, they'll be getting licenses soon. They'll want to drive places, right?

PENNY

They won't want to drive there. They'll think it sucks that I'm not at school with them. And they'll think Arlington is boring. There's nothing to do. And you need a car to drive everywhere. You think it's cool because you have a car and all of your friends from college are there and whatever. But me? What am I going to do until I get my driver's license and a car? I'm never going to have a life, Cara!

CARA

All right, Penny, first of all, there's plenty of busses to get around. In fact, it's probably easier to get around there than it is here. You're just used to Chestertown.

PENNY

It IS easy to get around here. I have my bike.

CARA

Okay, so you'll have your bike. Did you think you were going to leave it here?

PENNY

It's not like there's anywhere to bike TO in Arlington.

CARA

Yes, there is! There's plenty of strip malls where you can go hang out and shop and go to the movies.

PENNY

Is that what you think I do?

CARA

That's what I did.

PENNY

Yeah, but you also went to college and almost dropped out, like, three times and went to live that drummer guy...

CARA

Hey, you liked Brett!

PENNY

He had a nose ring!

CARA

So?

PENNY

So, that's gross!

CARA

Well, whatever, I'm not living with Brett anymore and I have a job so you don't have to worry about nose rings, okay?

PENNY

For now.

CARA

All right, fine, you want to be a brat? You just sit at home for the rest of your life and sulk. Waste away. What do I care?

PENNY

You don't care.

CARA

Yeah, I'm a big old fat meanie and I don't care.

PENNY

You don't.

(beat)

Do I, at least, get my own room?

CARA

No. We're going to have to share for a while.

PENNY

Aw, man! So does that mean I have to hear you having sex?

CARA

Penny!

PENNY

What? It's not like I don't know about sex.

CARA

I am NOT talking about this with you.

PENNY

Mom talks to me about sex.

CARA

Well, I'm not Mom.

PENNY

You're not kidding.

(beat)

I don't eat that vegetarian stuff you eat, you know. I need meat.

CARA  
Penny, would you just shut up?

PENNY  
Where do I have to go to school?

CARA  
Oh, my God! What are you, deaf? I said stop it! I don't want to talk about it.

PENNY  
(picks up picture of woman)  
It feels weird to have Mom gone.

CARA  
(uncomfortable)  
Yeah. I know.

PENNY  
I miss her.

CARA  
I know. At least you got to say goodbye to her.

PENNY  
Yeah. I'm really sorry you missed the funeral.  
(beat)  
Mom always says...said...it was good to talk about things when you're upset.  
(beat)  
I saw Mom in the coffin. She looked...waxy. Like in that museum.

CARA  
(suddenly)  
I'm going out.

PENNY  
But it's eleven o'clock.

CARA  
You're not my mom.  
(PENNY sticks her tongue out)  
I just need to get some air.  
(SHE gets her coat. Starts for the door and then purposefully turns around)

Do the dishes before you go to bed, okay?

PENNY

Can't we leave them till morning?

CARA

No. Mom says this apartment has mice.

PENNY

We haven't had mice in three years!

CARA

Do the dishes.

PENNY

(mimicking CARA)

You're not my mom.

(CARA looks at her sternly)

Fine.

(CARA exits)

Stupid dishes.