

Act II:

Scene 2:

SETTING: The bedroom from Scene 1.

AT RISE: CARA is angrily throwing clothing into a bag. She is crying. There is a knock on the door.

CARA

Go away!

STANLEY (OS)

Cara, I want to talk to you.

CARA

Not interested.

STANLEY (OS)

Listen, there's some stuff that I need to talk to you about.

CARA

Did you hear me? I don't want to talk. I'm packing.

STANLEY (OS)

I want to explain some things to you about some decisions your mom made.

CARA

Fine.

(STANLEY enters)

Close the door behind you. I don't want anyone else coming in.

STANLEY

I know you were really worried about Penny when she didn't come home.

CARA

I wasn't worried. I had better things to do with my night than look for her.

STANLEY

So, I guess you're pretty upset with her, then.

CARA

Just say what you need to say and get out. I'm leaving this house as soon as I'm packed.

STANLEY

You have to be here for the will reading tomorrow morning.

CARA

Fine. I'll leave after that. I'll leave straight from the lawyers' office.

STANLEY

Penny didn't mean what she said, Cara.

CARA

Yes, she did. She meant to say exactly that.

(Long beat)

Well, are you going to talk to me or just stare?

STANLEY

What if Penny stayed with me?

CARA

We talked about this already. Is that what you wanted to talk about? You could have saved yourself the trip down the hall.

STANLEY

Look, Cara, I am not in this for the satisfaction of taking Penny away from you.

CARA

Are you going to sit there and tell me that you weren't absolutely delighted by what Penny just said?

STANLEY

No, I'm not. I think that's a really crappy thing to say to your sister. Cara, I'm not trying to hurt you. There are just some things that your mom wanted done and...

CARA

How can you stand there and tell me that? How can you do it? This isn't about my mother; this is about you and your greed!

STANLEY

My what? My greed? Cara, do you realize that my best friend, my fiancée, is gone? I haven't been sleeping or eating or...I don't even know what I'm going to do without her. She was going to be my wife! Greed. Is it greedy to want to complete your fiancée's dying wish for her daughters?

CARA

Aren't you being just a little dramatic? I'm sure my mother was not thinking about this when she was dying.

(STANLEY takes out the papers)

STANLEY

Actually, she was.

(CARA looks at the papers)

CARA

What's this?

STANLEY

These are the papers to change Penny's guardianship to me. The only reason your mother didn't complete this paperwork was because she wanted to tell your father and he never returned her calls. But, now, I need...

CARA

Mom called DAD? Of all the fucking people in the world, she called DAD? Why the hell would she do that?

(realization)

She was the one who told him she was dying, wasn't she? That's why he knew to come to her funeral.

STANLEY

No. They never spoke.

CARA

Then what the hell is he doing here?

STANLEY

He's saying goodbye.

CARA

He did that fifteen years ago.

STANLEY

A college friend of ours told him that she died. That's why he came.

(beat)

Cara, your mom and I never wanted you to become Penny's guardian under any false pretenses. We never wanted it to get to that point. That's why she was trying to finish the paperwork. But now, the only way that the custody can be changed in the will is with your signature.

CARA

(long beat)

She was such a fucking sucker for him.

STANLEY

What?

CARA

Mom. She was such a fucking sucker.

(SHE reaches under her bed  
and pulls out the box)

Look at this! Letters upon letters! Love letters from when they were dating and then...this is what really fucking gets me! Look at this!

*(SHE pulls out a stack of letters)*

She wrote him Father's Day cards every single year after he left!

STANLEY

What?!

(HE takes the stack and  
starts looking through it)

Where did you find this?

CARA

In some box. I had already found the love letters and the divorce papers and then I came across this...and, man! I was sick to my stomach.

STANLEY

Why didn't you tell me?

CARA

I always knew she had this fantasy about him coming back; I just didn't realize it was a crazy fantasy.

(beat)

Yeah, there's a stamp on each one, too. Just no addresses.

STANLEY

I can't believe that she did this. I mean, I knew about the birthday cards...but I can't believe she did this.

CARA

What birthday cards?

STANLEY

Oh, right, I guess you wouldn't know. I mean, it makes sense now. She always wanted to buy father/daughter birthday cards when we were shopping for you guys.

CARA

Oh, my God.

STANLEY

Yeah. I convinced her not to buy them. I mean, I certainly wasn't going to give you guys cards that said "Daddy's little girl". But I never knew about these. Wow, she even had one from this year.

CARA

Yeah, well, I never had that delusion. I knew he was gone long ago and that he wasn't coming back.

(beat)

I guess that kinda sucked for you, her thinking he was gonna come back.

(Beat. CARA picks up the papers again)

So Mom didn't trust me.

STANLEY

I don't think that's true.

CARA

Stanley, she still hoped Dad would come back to be our dad, even after fifteen years. And she knew, if I was in charge of Penny, that would never have happened, would it?

STANLEY

Cara, it's not going to happen if I have custody of her, either. I promise.

(beat)

Look, the lawyers prepared all the papers to change the custody over. They need to have you sign by tomorrow, though.

(beat)

Are you okay?

CARA

Well, my sister hates me, my dead mother didn't trust me and she was insane and before she died she called the father that I hate. And you want me to sign over custody of my sister...the one who hates me. How do you think I am?

STANLEY

Is there anything I can do to help?

CARA

Just leave me alone. I want to be alone.

STANLEY

Okay. I'll leave the papers here.

(HE puts the papers down.

Beat)

Will you, at least, stay and help me get everything straightened out? I need your help with some of the estate stuff. And I know that once Penny gets over being angry, she's really going to need you.

CARA

I'll think about it.

(STANLEY exits. CARA picks up the Father's Day cards and custody papers. She curls up in a corner of the bed and rocks back and forth, starting to cry. Whispers)

I need huggies.

(BLACKOUT)