

Act IScene 3

SETTING: The public library in Ewing, New Jersey. There is a table with several chairs. There is a pile of books on the table.

AT RISE: ALEXIS is sitting at the table with her laptop. After a few beats, ROBYN enters. She has a backpack and water bottle and is looking very anxious. Throughout this scene and the rest of the play, ROBYN drinks water when she is particularly nervous or overwhelmed by MILLIE.

ALEXIS

Finally! That bus is so slow. You know you're half an hour late? I had to have the librarian find all of these books...

(SHE gestures)

For us. I can't believe she's making us bring in the hard-copies. It's so dusty here! People really come here?

(SHE notices that ROBYN is looking around)

What's with you?

ROBYN

(hushed)

She's coming.

ALEXIS

Who's coming?

ROBYN

Millie.

ALEXIS

From Facebook? Your mom?

ROBYN

Shhh! She's not my...!

ALEXIS

Sorry. Your maybe real mother?

ROBYN
Birth mother. Yes.

ALEXIS
She's coming here?

ROBYN
Yes.

(IM beep. ALEXIS types)

ALEXIS
When is she coming?

ROBYN
(checks her phone)
In about ten minutes.

ALEXIS
Wait, what? You mean, here here! Here, the library here?

ROBYN
Yes.

ALEXIS
Are you crazy?

ROBYN
(glancing around)
Keep your voice down.

ALEXIS
I thought you meant New Jersey here. In a few weeks or something. I thought you didn't want to talk to her.

ROBYN
She's sick.

ALEXIS
She's sick? What kind of sick?

ROBYN
Lymphoma. She said she needs a bone marrow transplant.

ALEXIS

She's coming to New Jersey for the surgery? Don't they have bone marrow where she lives?

ROBYN

She thinks I could be a match.

ALEXIS

(beat)

So this woman, who you never met, is showing up, saying she's your mom and asking for bone marrow? And you thought, sure, why not?

ROBYN

I didn't say I was giving her any organs. I didn't even say I was going to get tested.

ALEXIS

What did you say?

ROBYN

I said I would meet her, that's all.

ALEXIS

And she just happens to be in New Jersey? This sounds a little stalker-y, don't you think?

ROBYN

Apparently, she moved to Pennsylvania a few years ago so she's not really too far.

(ALEXIS looks doubtful)

Look, I picked a public place, right?

(SHE gestures around)

We have to keep our voices down because it's a library so we can't do any screaming or anything. And you're here..

ALEXIS

Oh, I'm meeting her, too? I thought I was working.

(IM beep)

ROBYN

Yesterday you said that, if you really wanted to find your mom, you would go through Facebook. That it wasn't that creepy. Right? That she had written to me. Right?

ALEXIS

Yes, but...

ROBYN

Okay. So I thought about it. And I thought maybe you're right. Twenty five years ago, maybe she would have sent a letter or called but now there's Facebook.

ALEXIS

Yes, but you said you didn't want to meet her. You said you were fine with your family.

ROBYN

I am.

ALEXIS

So then, why are you...

ROBYN

She's sick! She needs a bone marrow transplant! I could be her only match.

(beat)

Look, I remember when Justin had to have his shoulder fixed a couple years ago? So I get that surgery is a big deal.

(beat)

But, I mean...if she really is sick and I really am the only person that can help her, shouldn't I? Wouldn't you give bone marrow to someone if you were the only person who could do it? Whether or not she was your birth mother.

ALEXIS

(beat)

Okay, fine.

(IM beep)

Ugh, sorry. My sister is making some kind of paper mache puppet and keeps asking me about where to find stuff at my dad's house.

ROBYN

You shouldn't even have the sound on for IM when you're here. I can't believe someone hasn't told you to turn it off.

ALEXIS

(SHE types)

Seriously?

(ROBYN nods)

Okay, fine! I'll turn it off.

(SHE does so)

So. Are you at all interested in the books I found or do you want to just look at them later?

ROBYN

I don't know. I guess I could use a distraction.

ALEXIS

(looking at her computer)

Come on. You can't find the paint yourself? Really? Hello! Check the garage!

(As ALEXIS types, MILLIE enters, carrying a motorcycle helmet and a brown bag. SHE looks around)

MILLIE

(to ROBYN)

Robyn?

(Both girls look up)

I'm Millie. I'm your mother.

ROBYN

(taken aback)

Um...no.

(SHE points to ALEXIS)

That's Robyn. I'm Alexis.

ALEXIS

What?

MILLIE

(doubtful)

Oh. Really? Sorry, I just assumed...

ROBYN

Yeah, well. That's Robyn.

MILLIE

(to ALEXIS)

Robyn. It's real nice to finally meet you.

(SHE puts out her hand to ALEXIS who stares first at MILLIE, then at ROBYN, who is staring at MILLIE also.)

Awkward pause. MILLIE
withdraws her hand)

That's okay. I guess I'm not really what you'd expected. I mean, who expects their mom to be riding a motorcycle, right?

(SHE laughs nervously)

I mean, my mother rode a motorcycle but you never met her. Probably wouldn't have liked her anyhow. I didn't even like her that much. But she raised all four of us by herself so I guess she did something right, right?

ALEXIS

I...guess.

MILLIE

Wow. This is just so...

(SHE looks back and forth
between the girls)

It's really so great to meet you...both. I mean, I can't believe it. You're all grown and everything. Last time I saw you you were this little bitty nothing in the hospital. All mad and yelling about coming into the world. And now you're...you're a teenager! That is just...

(SHE gathers herself)

Look at me getting all blubbery. I didn't think I'd do that.

ALEXIS

That's okay.

MILLIE

(offers the bag to ALEXIS)

I, um, I got you some coffee. I had about three cups at the gas station on the turnpike but I thought you might like some. Do you...? Do you want some coffee?

ALEXIS

(taking the bag)

Um, well. I don't really drink coffee, but thanks for the thought.

MILLIE

Yeah. I didn't know, you know. So I just thought I would get you some and...I have some doughnuts, too. They're out on the bike. Do you want some doughnuts?

ALEXIS

Oh, no thanks.

MILLIE

(to ROBYN)

Do you? I didn't know she was going to have a friend here. Alexis, was it?

(ROBYN nods)

You're the one in the picture on her screen page, aren't you? On the Facebook.

ROBYN

Oh. Yes. Right.

ALEXIS

We're very close. Like sisters.

MILLIE

Aw, that's nice. I'm not close to my sister so much anymore. It's nice that you have one.

(to ROBYN)

So, did you want one? A doughnut, I mean? Or coffee?

ROBYN

No, thank you. I've got my water.

MILLIE

(disappointed)

Oh. Okay.

ALEXIS

Maybe we'll have some on the way out.

MILLIE

(brightening)

Okay. I mean, you don't have to.

ALEXIS

We'll see.

MILLIE

Yeah.

(beat. To ALEXIS)

This is pretty crazy, huh? I mean, all these years.

ALEXIS

Yeah. All these years.

MILLIE

So. I mean, tell me something about your life. I've missed pretty much everything.

ALEXIS

(glancing at ROBYN)

Oh. I don't know.

MILLIE

It doesn't have to be deep or something. We don't have to cover your whole life. Just anything.

ALEXIS

Okay. Well...I'm a runner. I do track.

MILLIE

Like marathons or something?

ROBYN

Sprints.

(beat. Awkwardly)

She does competitive sprints.

MILLIE

(lost)

Uh-huh. What else?

ALEXIS

Um...I'm trying to help make the school more eco-friendly. You know, recycling, composting, getting CFL lightbulbs put in and everything.

MILLIE

Oh, composting, sure. I do that when I can.

ROBYN

You do?

MILLIE

Good for the soil.

ROBYN

Right.

(beat)

You really ride a motorcycle?

MILLIE

What? Oh, yeah.

(SHE pats her helmet)

Blackbird. My daddy got me my very first bicycle when I was three. Not a tricycle, like the others had. A real bicycle. "Tricycles are for pussies." he said.

(Long beat as the girls stare at MILLIE. Uncomfortable, SHE starts nervously babbling)

It's not like my daddy was around a lot, you know. He was a total drunk, always gambling and sleeping around with these whores. And he didn't even teach me to ride, the bastard. My mother had to do that, too.

(Awkward pause. To ALEXIS)

Do you...do you ride?

ALEXIS

What, a motorcycle? Me? No! My mom would never...

(SHE looks at ROBYN)

ROBYN

She's just getting her driver's license. State law.

(MILLIE looks confused)

Robyn's only sixteen.

MILLIE

Well, I know that. She just had a birthday.

(to ROBYN)

Happy Birthday.

ROBYN

Not me. Her.

MILLIE

(clearly not believing, to ALEXIS)

Right. Happy Birthday.

ALEXIS

Thanks.

ROBYN

So New Jersey state law says you have to be sixteen to have a driver's permit.

MILLIE

Sixteen?! Damn! I was driving when I was fourteen in Arkansas!

ALEXIS

(suddenly)

What were you doing when you were sixteen?

MILLIE

Well, when I was sixteen, I was...

(SHE stops)

Well, you know what I was doing when I was sixteen, don't you?

ALEXIS

Not exactly. Was it when you were sixteen?

MILLIE

Yes. I was sixteen, I'd left school...

ROBYN

You...what?

MILLIE

In my town, if you made it to 10th grade, you were doing pretty good. I made it to 11th. But, you know, then I was done with that.

(beat)

Are you sure you want to hear about this? I mean, we just...

ALEXIS

Yes. Absolutely.

MILLIE

If you're sure.

(beat)

Well, my mom owned Blackbird Perch, the local campground, so I was over there a lot. A lot of interesting people coming through there. And sometimes people would let me come hang out with them at their campfires or sometimes I'd run errands for people to the store. And I had my share of boyfriends or boys I thought might be boyfriends or boys I just happened to get in the sack with.

ROBYN

At sixteen?!

MILLIE

What? You guys are sixteen. Aren't you guys doing it?

ROBYN

(gritted teeth)

No. We aren't.

MILLIE

But you are dating, aren't you? I mean, you're not like nuns or something.

ALEXIS

We're not nuns.

MILLIE

Good. Well, I got my women's when I was ten. My boobs shot right out of me. First one in my class.

(SHE looks at ROBYN then very
deliberately looks at ALEXIS)

Didn't that happen to you, too?

ALEXIS

(self-consciously covering
shirt)

Um, no.

MILLIE

Huh.

(Beat)

Anyhow, by sixteen, I had been having sex for a buncha years and...

ROBYN

Unbelievable.

MILLIE

You got a problem?

ALEXIS

(quickly)

No, she doesn't. Go on.

MILLIE

(to ROBYN)

If you've got something to say, Alexis, go ahead.

ALEXIS

No. No. It's fine.

(to ROBYN)

Right?

ROBYN

(after a beat)

Right. Please go on.

MILLIE

I don't need you to sit there and judge me, you know?

ALEXIS

We need to keep our voices down.

MILLIE

(lowering her voice)

You're the ones that wanted to know. We could just skip all of this and talk about the transplant test but I thought it might be nice to meet each other, too!

ALEXIS

It is. She's done. It's fine.

MILLIE

(long beat)

Okay. Fine. So, where was I?

ALEXIS

You had boyfriends.

MILLIE

Right. Boyfriends. Right. So one night, at the campground, this guy comes through. And he's really wild. And he just had this energy...you just wanted to be with him all the time, you know? And, out of everyone there, he wanted to be with me. He stayed at Blackbird Perch for a good week or so. And I stayed with him every single night. And he was a fantastic lover.

(beat)

That's probably not the stuff I should be telling you about your dad. You probably don't want to be hearing that kind of stuff.

ROBYN

(under her breath)

Oh, God.

MILLIE

Anyhow, he was wild and dreamy. I really thought this was it. I thought "Wow. This is it. This is what it's really like to be in love." Or whatever that means. At sixteen, can you imagine? And, there he was, just talking to me, spending every waking minute with me, looking up at the stars with me every night. It was like a dream. Really. I thought I'd died right there and gone to heaven. But.

(beat)

One morning, he was out in the woods, looking for some berries or something. And, you know, he just must have lost track of where he was and wandered way off into another part of the forest where people are really not supposed to go. I mean, he had a pretty good sense of direction so you had to think he knew something but he wandered right into the hunting area. And, wouldn't you know it?

(SHE puts a finger to her head like a gun and makes gunshot noise. The girls gasp)

Just like that. Really quick, too. The hunter found him immediately and tried to get help but it was too late. A friend of my uncle's, actually. They used to hunt together all the time. And he just felt terrible. Never forgave himself. Even stopped hunting for a while.

ALEXIS

Only a while?

ROBYN

So...he's...dead?

MILLIE

Yeah. And, after his funeral, that's when I found out. I was pregnant with...

(SHE looks at ROBYN then at ALEXIS)

...you. I wanted to keep you but my mom wouldn't let me. She said that the baby was going to bring bad spirits on the family. She even closed Blackbird Perch after that. Sold it. She said it had bad juju. I never really believed that kind of stuff. But she marched me right to the clinic and signed me up to have you adopted. I never even got to hold you in the hospital. They took you right away. But I was always mad about it. So, when my mom died a few months ago, I made up my mind to try to find you.

ROBYN

(after a beat)

But. What about the bone marrow transplant?

MILLIE

Well, that just speeded things up. I got bone cancer a few months ago. They said it's...it's already spread and it doesn't look good. So I really started looking for you then and...

ALEXIS

So, it's true then. You really do need a bone marrow transplant?

MILLIE

(ROBYN sits down,
overwhelmed. ALEXIS hands
ROBYN her water which she
drinks. ALEXIS becomes
increasingly protective as
the scene goes on)

Of course it's true! I told you on the computer. I've got one week left to find a match before I have to go into this experimental thing and then it's out of my hands. You think I'd come all the way out here and lie to you?

ALEXIS

(aside to ROBYN)

You want me to end it?

MILLIE

(ROBYN drinks again)

So. You don't believe me. That's it.

(SHE is clearly trying not to
get upset. ROBYN shakes her
head at ALEXIS and starts
gathering herself)

You know, I don't enjoy going around talking about how this nasty stuff is eating away at my body.

(SHE cannot continue)

ROBYN

(finally to MILLIE)

I'm Robyn.

(beat)

I'm Robyn. She's Alexis.

ALEXIS

Hi.

MILLIE

Heh. You think I didn't figure that out? You're a crappy liar. And you look just like him. And you...

(SHE indicates ALEXIS)

Don't look like any of us.

(to ROBYN)

Besides, you're sitting there getting all mad at me...

ROBYN

It was very irresponsible!

ALEXIS

Shh!

MILLIE

Well, you hide your feelings about that real well.

(beat)

So. Anything else you want to tell me? You want to tell me how horrible I was for giving you up? Or how horrible my mother was for making me give you up? Because I'll agree with you there. I didn't speak to her for five years after that! Shut her right out of my life.

ROBYN

Five years? I can't imagine not talking to my mother for five years.

MILLIE

(beat)

Well. Good. Then things didn't turn out so bad for you, did they?

ROBYN

(beat)

No. They didn't.

(realizing)

No, I guess they really didn't.

ALEXIS

Her parents are still together.

MILLIE

See?

(beat)

And even that little brother of yours is pretty damn protective of you...

ROBYN

(truly surprised)

He is?

MILLIE

Oh, yeah. Told me he wouldn't tell me anything. Told me to contact you myself.

ROBYN

Oh.

MILLIE

But he spent a lot of time asking questions. He could be a detective, that one.

ROBYN

(smiling)

He's not really thirteen, you know. He's not even supposed to be on Facebook.

MILLIE

Oh, I don't know anything about the Facebook. I just opened an account to find you.

ROBYN

You...?

(SHE looks at ALEXIS and back
at MILLIE)

You what?

MILLIE

Well, I tried everything else. So my nephew showed me how to do it. Well, actually, he's your dad's nephew. But he's my nephew. He's been real worried about me not finding a match.

ALEXIS

So. You're still in touch with his family?

MILLIE

Oh, yeah. I even moved in with them for a while. His mom and dad are great. Well, were great. They both died a bunch of years ago. But I got real close to his brother, Stevie, and Stevie's wife, Shana. They were really excited when they heard that I found you.

ROBYN

Oh. So, they...want to meet me, too?

MILLIE

Well, sure. I mean, you were his only daughter.

(ROBYN drinks more water and looks overwhelmed)

ALEXIS

(aside to ROBYN)

You know, we can go whenever you want to.

MILLIE

Danilo Flowers, that was your dad. I put his last name as mine on the birth certificate and it's been my name ever since.

ROBYN

Oh. That's...so then...what was your last name?

MILLIE

It doesn't even matter anymore. I haven't used it since I was sixteen.

ROBYN

Oh.

ALEXIS

(aside to ROBYN)

Robyn...?

ROBYN

(aside to ALEXIS)

I'm okay.

MILLIE

(indicating the private conversation)

Something going on here?

ROBYN

No. It's nothing.

MILLIE

I know it looks kinda weird, me showing up like this and asking you to get tested...but I really didn't have another choice.

(Beat. Pointing to the books)

These all yours?

ROBYN

They're for a history paper that we're doing.

MILLIE

You're going to college or something?

ROBYN

Not yet. But I'm going to take the SAT's in the spring and I'll start applying next year.

MILLIE

(relieved)

So you're pretty smart then.

ROBYN

Well, I don't know if...

ALEXIS

Yes, she's very smart. She always gets A's.

MILLIE

A's? Really?

ROBYN

Not always. I'm not as good in French.

ALEXIS

Okay, but you're really good in trig.

ROBYN

Right, but that's because Mom helps me...

(SHE trails off and then looks at MILLIE, who has stiffened)

MILLIE

Your...

(Beat. SHE takes a breath)

So...your...she's good at math?

ROBYN

(uncomfortable)

Yes. Very good. She's the chair of the math department at...

(breaks off self-consciously)

She's a math professor.

MILLIE

And...and your...

(SHE falters)

...your...what does he do?

ALEXIS

Her father works for a pharmaceutical company.

MILLIE

Oh. Like a doctor or something?

ROBYN

No. He does client management for a drug company.

(beat)

Prescription drugs. Like the ones you have to take...

MILLIE

(sharply cutting her off)

Do you know what your real father did?

ROBYN

(testily)

He is my real father.

MILLIE

Danilo wasn't just a nobody. He was a musician. When he wasn't playing, he was teaching music at a guitar store.

ALEXIS

So he wasn't in school either?

MILLIE

No. He was older. Twenty three or twenty six or something.

ROBYN

Wait. Wasn't that statutory rape? You were sixteen. I mean, you were too young to know if...

MILLIE

It was fine.

ALEXIS

(looking around)

Shhh.

MILLIE

I wasn't doing anything that I didn't want to. I have no regrets.

ROBYN

Really? None? Then what are you doing here?

MILLIE

You think I'm just some hick, don't you? Some stupid woman who got herself all knocked up when she was too young to know whether she should have been having sex. Is that right? Because I didn't follow the rules?

(Silence)

I figured it'd be like that.

(beat)

I mean, here you are in this fancy town, hanging out in a library, for Christ's sake! I mean, I think I actually saw a BMW dealer and a Mercedes dealer on the way here!

(beat)

And you're so mad. Are you like this with everyone or just me? Because I can take it. But I don't want to think I gave birth to an asshole or something.

ROBYN

(beat)

I'm sorry.

(Aside to ALEXIS as ALEXIS starts to say something)

Don't.

MILLIE

(beat. To ROBYN)

You play guitar?

ROBYN

Flute right now. I used play piano and clarinet. A friend of mine taught me a little guitar at camp once but I just learned one song.

MILLIE

What song?

ROBYN

Um...it's called "Everything Possible".

MILLIE

By Fred Small. Sure, that's a great song.

(sings)

"You can travel any country/where your heart leads/and know I will love you still..." I always thought part was about me.

ROBYN

(stunned)

You know that song? I've never met anyone who knows that song.

MILLIE

That's an old favorite of mine. It's on the tapes...I have some old tapes of Danilo's, songs that he played me at the campfire. The only real things I have left of him. That song is on them.

(beat. Shyly)

I didn't know what this was gonna be like, when we met, you know, but I thought, if we got to talking...well, anyhow, I brought them, just in case...

ROBYN

Oh...wow...that's...

MILLIE

I thought you might want to hear your dad play.

ROBYN

(suddenly uncomfortable)

Oh. My...right...my...

MILLIE

They're out on the bike. We could go get them. Or we could go find a music store. You could play it on a guitar for me. I just knew you had music in your blood. Come on, let's go find a guitar.

ROBYN

(exchanges glances with
ALEXIS and then awkwardly)

I would but I...I think Alexis and I need to work on our
paper some more.

MILLIE

Can't you do that later?

ALEXIS

It's due in a couple days and we've barely started.

ROBYN

(sees MILLIE is hurt)

It's worth fifteen percent of our grade.

MILLIE

(beat)

Are you good in science, too?

ROBYN

I'm okay.

MILLIE

Do you know that bone cancer is a family thing?

(beat)

That was the other reason I came out here. I wanted you to
know that you could...you know...I mean, not now, but maybe
some day..

ROBYN

(long beat)

Oh.

MILLIE

I mean, it probably won't, right? But you never know. I
mean, look at me. I didn't know.

ROBYN

(dismayed)

Right.

ALEXIS

(quickly)

But lots of things run in family medical histories. I mean,
my cousin is the only one who had a hearing loss and my

grandmother is the only one with asthma. It doesn't have to hit everyone in the family.

MILLIE

Oh, sure. These kind of things could just happen sometimes, you know? No rhyme or reason. But I really need your help. Would you see if you're a match for me?

ROBYN

(beat)

Did your mother die of lymphoma?

MILLIE

(beat)

Yes. She couldn't find a match.

(Long beat. ROBYN takes out her phone)

ALEXIS

Robyn...

(ROBYN shakes HER off)

Robyn.

(ROBYN dials and walks to the side where SHE can't be heard. To MILLIE)

I'm sorry about your mom.

MILLIE

Yeah. Well, like I said, she and I didn't get along too well after she made me give up the baby. Even after I started talking to her again.

(beat as SHE looks after ROBYN)

Who do you think she's calling? I mean, she didn't say a word.

ALEXIS

I don't know.

MILLIE

You think she's coming back?

ALEXIS

Probably. Her bag is still here.

MILLIE

Hmm.

(abruptly)

So. You must have been friends a long time to be like sisters. My sister and I were never close. Never. We fought when we were kids. But she knew when to get out. She's out in South Dakota or something now and we don't even talk on the phone.

(beat)

But it's nice that Robyn has someone who's like a real sister. Not like the one I have.

(beat)

Why do you keep whispering stuff in her ear? You think I don't see that?

ALEXIS

Well, you come on a little strong, you know. And this is really overwhelming for her.

MILLIE

Hey, she's not the only one, you know?

(beat)

It's good she has you to check in on her. That's what sisters should do.

ALEXIS

Yeah.

(beat)

I'll be right back.

(SHE crosses to ROBYN who is hanging up the phone)

Hey, are you okay?

ROBYN

Yeah.

(beat. Sadly)

Alexis. She's not a senator.

ALEXIS

(comforting)

I know.

ROBYN

(beat. Crossing to MILLIE)

Okay. I've talked to my mom. I told her that you were here. She was a little..well, it doesn't matter. Anyway, she thought maybe we should have dinner.

Who?
MILLIE

You and us. My parents.
ROBYN

Really?
ALEXIS

I don't know. That seems kind of...I mean, I don't really have clothes to go to some nice restaurant or something, you know?
MILLIE

It doesn't have to be a nice restaurant.
ROBYN

Robyn. I don't know if you've seen this town but it's kind of...you know...on the
(SHE sort of whispers)
...rich...side of things. Every restaurant is nice.
MILLIE

What? No. There's...
ROBYN

(SHE thinks and then looks to
ALEXIS for help)

Pizza.
ALEXIS

Pizza! Yes, pizza.
ROBYN

Pizza?
MILLIE

Yeah. That's not too...rich...right?
ROBYN

(beat)
I guess not.
MILLIE

ALEXIS
You could go to Gino's.

ROBYN
Right. Yes, Gino's.

MILLIE
(beat)
Really? They want to meet me?

ROBYN
Well. If I'm going to get tested to see if we're a match,
you're going to have to.

MILLIE
(long beat)
You sure you want to do it?

ROBYN
(long beat)
It's just a test, right? We don't know anything for sure.

MILLIE
Sure. Right.

ROBYN
Right.

(END SCENE)