

THIS RANDOM WORLD

Tim's Small Apartment. February. Rain.

Tim sits on the ground, noodling around on his laptop. He is dressed for a lazy day inside.

Beth, his older sister, is nicely dressed. She reads from a document.

BETH. (Gravely). "...Elizabeth Ward—known to all as Beth—was a loving sister and a caring friend. Though she will be missed by many, her laughter, her warmth, and her passion for living will continue to echo within our hearts. Memorial services will be held at ⁽²⁾ _____ (Brightly lowering the paper, to Tim).—and here you'll just insert whichever places you have the service for me. I've included two options in my End Of Life papers. All that info is in the same folder as my will, which you know is in my safe deposit box. You've got the key to my safe deposit box I gave you, right? ⁽²⁾ Tim?

TIM Oh, to your little box at the bank—

BETH. Safe deposit box.

TTM. (*Overlapping.*) —yes, right, of course. Got it. Safe and sound.

BETH. Where is it?

TIM. I know where it is.

BETH. Tell me. Say it out loud.

TIM. Beth, you are not dying!

BETH. No—but when the day comes, I am counting on you.

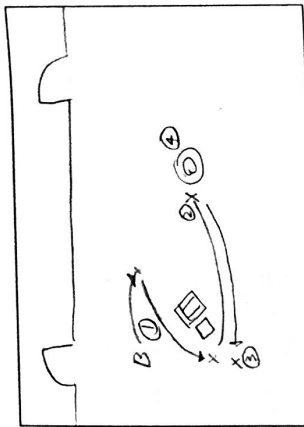
TTM. You just stop living. I'll take care of everything else.

BETH. There's no backup plan for us, you know. With Dad gone and Scottie ready to follow him, now it's just us. Just you and me.

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① pre-start

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IN CUE

Page -

Date _____

TIM. It's weird that you call Mom "Scottie." When did you start doing that?

BETH. That's what everyone's always called her.

TIM. Still—it's weird.

BETH. What do you call her?

TIM. (Incredulous.) I call her... "Mom"...! And I think she's doing okay.

BETH. How would you know that? Have you talked to her? Of course you haven't talked to her. Why don't you talk to her? You're Scottie's favorite.

TIM. No, I am not her—

BETH. Oh my god! You are the golden boy on top of the shining chariot!

TIM. Don't do that. Don't put that "you are the perfect son" pressure on me. No one should have to live up to that.

BETH. Oh, please—

TIM. I've wanted to talk to her—I've been meaning to talk to her.

BETH. But communication is so hard in these days of the telegraph and the Pony Express. —①

TIM. Forget it.

BETH. You can call her aide. If you can't reach Mom, sometimes it's good to call her aide.

TIM. Mom has an aide? —②

BETH. Bernadette. You know this. And Bernie says Mom only gets out once a day. To look at the sunrise.

TIM. The sunrise—why? —③

BETH. I don't know but that's it. That's all she does. She has no friends, from what I can tell—no activities she's interested in—even though the senior center has bridge and bingo and an a cappella group that does those old-timey songs—

TIM. Mom would hate that!

BETH. —yes, okay—but she's got to do something! I thought sure she'd want to travel. They have those package tours for seniors. Remember all the books she had about India, China, Japan?

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IN CUE _____
Page _____
Date _____

① It's maddening.
Do you have any tissues? Anywhere? — ②
TIM. No. Sorry.
Are you crying? — ③
BETH. She's our mom, Tim.
Pause. ④
TIM. But she can't travel. What if something happened?
BETH. Like she met someone? Or had a conversation? Or saw more of the world than the three-mile radius she's lived in for the last fifty years?
TIM. But what if she's not—
BETH. Her health is not great—okay—we know that—but her doctor told me if she really wanted to travel she could travel.
TIM. And you'd do nothing but worry about her—call to check up on her—
BETH. That's not true.
That's true.
Does she let you in?
TIM. What?
BETH. She doesn't let me in. Doesn't tell me things. She never calls. And she doesn't seem to want me to call her.
TIM. She doesn't want you to worry.
BETH. I worry because she doesn't want me to call!
TIM. And what would you say if you did? Hey, Mom: Go on a trip so I'll feel better, but don't go on a trip because I'll worry about you.
Pause.
BETH. Yes. That's exactly what I'd say.
TIM. Maybe she just wants to stay home and piss off the Travel Nazis.
(Off Beth's look.) You know those people! The ones who travel just to shame other people for *not* traveling: "Oh my god—you haven't been to Such-and-Such?! How can you NOT have been to Such-and-Such?! You have to go. I mean, you HAVE to go." —
(Before Beth can respond.) — You just know they take those trips so

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IN CUE _____
Page _____
Date _____

A Park. February. Dawn.

Scottie is standing behind her walker, wearing a coat. Starting front, into the distance. Her mood is serene.

(Note: Despite her walker [or cane], Scottie is not obviously frail in any way.)

Bernadette, her aide, is standing nearby. She holds Scottie's enormous and somewhat garish purse. She also stares front, into the distance.

① ② ③

SCOTTIE. Look at that sunrise. Isn't that something?

BERNADETTE. (Droll, but friendly.) It's a lot like yesterday.

Scottie turns to her.

And the day before.

SCOTTIE. When I interviewed you, Bernadette, I tried to make it clear that I was a kind but impulsive lady of a certain age, and that—

BERNADETTE. —and that you planned to see the sunrise every day.

SCOTTIE. Yes.

BERNADETTE. Every single day.

SCOTTIE. And hasn't it been lovely?

BERNADETTE. Four years and seven months.

SCOTTIE. (A friendly dig.) But who's counting, yes?

Bernadette smiles a bit, patiently.

They turn back and view the sunrise.

Do they really all look the same to you?

I bet I thought that, too. When I was younger.

They view the sunrise.

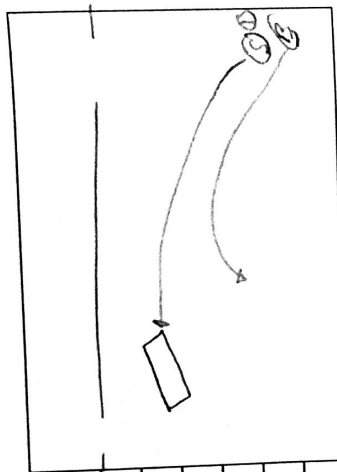
I heard your mother passed.

BERNADETTE. Yes.

SCOTTIE. I'm sorry.

You didn't mention it.

16



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Page

Date

BERNADETTE. No.
 SCOTTIE. Well, if there's anything I can do. — ①
Pause.
 SCOTTIE needs something from her purse. Before she even turns and asks, Bernadette has produced and handed it to Scottie.
 (Re: the cup.) Thank you. — ③
 It is a small, unadorned bronze cup—no handles, about the size of a small tumbler.
 SCOTTIE holds the cup in her hands. She is comforted by its feel, its weight.
 This cup is well-traveled, you know. It came with us last year to Iceland.
 BERNADETTE. Yes, it did.
 SCOTTIE. Iceland was so nice. I rode my first horse there, remember? In Iceland of all places! And you took all those pictures.
 BERNADETTE. I wanted to send some to Beth and Tim.
 SCOTTIE. Thank you again for not doing that. I appreciate your discretion.
 BERNADETTE. You told me to lie to them! — ④
 SCOTTIE. And you've done a wonderful job with that. Thank you.
 BERNADETTE. Why won't you tell your kids you take these trips?! — ⑤
Beat. Scottie stares at her.
 SCOTTIE. Have you heard of the Shimogamo shrine? It is in Kyoto, Japan. The path to the Shimogamo shrine goes through what is called "The Forest Where Lies Are Revealed." This forest has been left to grow wild. Never planted, never pruned. This I would love to see.
 I've planned a trip for us.
 You are very quiet.
 BERNADETTE. Could my sister go in my place? — ⑥
Scottie says nothing.
 My younger sister, Rhonda. I'd be so grateful if she could go instead of me—just this one time. Rhonda's never traveled. And things

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 Date _____

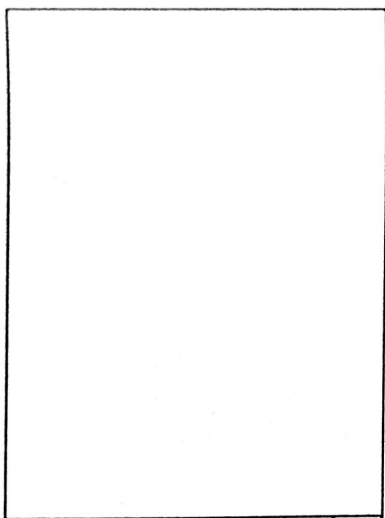
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⑬ pick up 

⑬ x ASL Ex



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IN CUE

Page

Date