

SCENE 1

INT. DIMENSIONAL SPACE. EVERY WHEN.  
RINGING CHIMES.

ABBIE: (D VO) Theodore Wesley...1937 to 1954.

WE CAN HEAR MUFFLED  
BIRDS CHIRPING THROUGH A WINDOW TO TELL  
US IT'S DAY. AND ALSO THE RINGING OF THE  
ALARM. AND ALSO WES'S BREATHING. IT IS  
RHYTHMIC BUT STRANGE WITH FAST INHALES  
AND EXHALES WITH LONGER SPACES IN  
BETWEEN.

EVELYN: (MUFFLED) (OFF) Theodore! Breakfast...

WES CONTINUES TO BREATHE

EVELYN: (MUFFLED) (OFF) Theodore!

WES LET'S OUT A LONG SIGH. HIS BREATHING  
IS NORMAL NOW.

THEODORE: (SHOUTS) COMING!

HE HITS THE ALARM CLOCK AND IT STOPS  
RINGING. WE HEAR HIM ROLL OVER AND SWING  
HIMSELF OUT OF BED.

SCENE 2.

INT. THE KITCHEN. MORNING.

FOOD IS SIZZLING ON THE STOVE.

THOMAS: Evelyn, did you hide the Spam again?

EVELYN: We're out.

THOMAS: You're going to make me use regular meat on these eggs,  
aren't you?

EVELYN: Wes can pick some up later.

THOMAS: A travesty.

FOOTSTEPS APPROACH DOWN A SET OF  
STAIRS.

THOMAS:                    There he is.

THEODORE:                Morning dad.

THOMAS:                    Eggs will be up in a minute.

THEODORE:                With Spam?

THOMAS:                    We were out.

THEODORE:                A travesty.

EVELYN:                    The real travesty is I'm stuck with a son and a husband who  
would rather eat processed tin meat than the real thing.

EGGS ARE SCOOPED ONTO A PLATE.

THOMAS:                    I knew it! You did this on purpose.

EVELYN: Someone in this family has to have standards.

A PLATE IS SLID ONTO THE TABLE.

THOMAS: Snob.

EVELYN: Philistine.

ANOTHER PLATE IS FILLED WITH EGGS.

THEODORE: How was work?

THOMAS: Same as ever. Every bottle of soda filled...

ALL: ...with celery and a smile. AHHHHHH!

THE PLATE IS SLID IN FRONT OF THEODORE.

THOMAS: One second.

A THIRD PLATE IS FILLED WITH EGGS. AS THIS  
HAPPENS. THEODORE'S BREATHING QUICKENS  
AGAIN IN THE SAME WAY AS BEFORE.

A CHAIR IS PULLED OUT AND THOMAS SITS  
WITH HIS FAMILY.

THOMAS: All right.

PAUSE. ONLY THEODORE'S BREATHING.

So...? (PAUSE) Theodore.

THEODORE'S BREATHING GOES BACK TO  
NORMAL.

THEODORE: Uh...yeah Dad?

THOMAS: The second murder...?

THEODORE: Right! So...

EATS A FORKFUL OF EGGS. THE THREE OF  
THEM EAT AS THE SCENE GOES ON.

THEODORE: (RADIO VOICE) Last night, on the Detective Farrow Radio  
Hour.

(THEODORE CONT'D/OVER)

THEODORE (CONT'D): (NORMAL VOICE) Detective Farrow races over to the scene of this new and puzzling murder. It's just the same as the first one. The victim, Conrad Montgomery, an engineer for jet engines, is shot dead in his study. Locked door, locked windows, no one seen going in or out. Dog didn't bark. Nothing. The police are stumped. But...

THOMAS: He had a dog?

THEODORE: Yeah.

THOMAS: The millionaire had dogs too, didn't he?

THEODORE: Oh come on!

THOMAS: I'm only asking.

THEODORE: Farrow didn't even figure that out until after the Bisquick ad.

THOMAS: Figure what out?

THEODORE: (SIGH) It was the dog breeder. He had raised and trained the dogs, that's why they didn't make a sound. And he'd stolen sets of keys on his visits to check on the dogs, then made copies of them so he could come and go as he pleased.

THOMAS: Makes sense.

THEODORE: At least this one stumped you for the entire first episode.

EVELYN: Do you want to tell him?

THEODORE: Tell me what?

EVELYN: He figured it out last week.

THEODORE: Dad?!

THOMAS: I can't help being brilliant.

THEODORE: One day they're going to write a mystery you can't solve.

THOMAS: I look forward to the day. (YAWN.)

THOMAS PUSHES OUT HIS CHAIR.

THOMAS: Finish off my eggs will you Teddy.

THEODORE: Sure Dad. Goodnight.

THOMAS: And you have a good day.

HE PATS THEODORE ON THE SHOULDER AND  
WALKS UP THE STAIRS. EVELYN STANDS.

EVELYN: Don't be late for school, okay?

THEODORE: Okay Mom.

SHE FOLLOWS UP THE STAIRS. WE HEAR THEIR  
FOOTSTEPS UPSTAIRS. AFTER A MOMENT,  
THEODORE PUSHES OUT HIS CHAIR AND WALKS  
OVER IN THE DIRECTION THEY WENT. WE CAN  
HEAR EVELYN AND THOMAS'S VOICES MUFFLED  
BUT CLEAR AS THEODORE LISTENS IN.

EVELYN: (OFF) You should have asked.



THOMAS: (OFF) I couldn't.

EVELYN: (OFF) This night shift is killing you.

THOMAS: (OFF) I'm fine.

EVELYN: (OFF) You are not fine. And neither am I. And neither is Theodore. He needs his father.

THOMAS: (OFF) And what good will I be to either of you if I get myself fired for making a fuss.

EVELYN: (OFF) Asking is not making a fuss.

THOMAS: (OFF) They let Hank Morgan go.

PAUSE.

EVELYN: (OFF) When?

THOMAS: (OFF) Two days ago. John Kipner's kid needed a job so... Evie, you know how lucky we are that they've kept me on at all since the white folks came back from the war.

EVELYN: (OFF) We can go other places if we need to. Cleveland's not so far.

THOMAS: (OFF) I know. Let's just...give it a little longer. Teddy's only got one more year left. I don't want to uproot him if we don't have to.

EVELYN: (OFF) Just promise me if that old Mr. Oglby tries to make you work on his graduation...

THOMAS: (OFF) I will let old Mr. Oglby know there is an open position for John Kipner's daughter on the night shift whenever she wants it.

EVELYN: (OFF) I love you Thomas Wesley.

THOMAS: (OFF) I love you Evelyn Reed Wesley. Put on some music, will you?

AN OLD JAZZ RECORD IS PUT ON.

EVELYN: (OFF) (SHOUTING) Theodore? You better not still be eating or you're going to be late.

WE HEAR THEODORE MOVE AWAY FROM THE STAIRS.

THEODORE:                      Going!

HE GRABS HIS BAG AND HEADS OUT THE DOOR.

SCENE 3.

INT. MOUNT ABSALOM HIGH SCHOOL.

AFTERNOON.

SCHOOL BELL RINGS. THE SHUFFLE OF STUDENTS STANDING AND GRABBING THEIR THINGS.

MRS. EPSTEIN                      And remember, it's not summer yet. Your three written pages are due on Monday and next Friday I expect you to be able to chat with me in a café on the Champs d'Élysées entirely in French.

STUDENTS TALK TO EACH OTHER AS THEY WALK OUT THE DOOR. WE HEAR THE SAME STRANGE, STILTED BREATHING FROM THEODORE.

MRS. EPSTEIN: Theodore? (PAUSE) Theodore?

THEODORE: Hmm. What?

MRS. EPSTEIN: Theodore Wesley. Always daydreaming.

THEODORE: I'm sorry Mrs. Epstein.

HE HURRIEDLY PICKS UP HIS THINGS.

MRS. EPSTEIN: Do not worry about it. I wanted to talk to you anyway.

THEODORE: I have to get to wood shop.

MRS. EPSTEIN: I will write you a hall pass. Sit.

THE DOOR SHUTS.

Mr. Connors has been meeting with your class. To talk about your senior year.

THEODORE: Okay.

MRS. EPSTEIN: But he has not talked to you, has he?

THEODORE: No.

MRS. EPSTEIN: I thought not. I thought not. Well, I talk to you. So...what do you think?

THEODORE: About my senior year?

MRS. EPSTEIN: Mmmhmmm.

THEODORE: (DEEP EXHALE) It'll be tough?

MRS. EPSTEIN: Excited to be done with school?

THEODORE: I guess?

MRS. EPSTEIN: Do you know what you want to do after?

THEODORE: Get a job?

MRS. EPSTEIN: You have a job, yes? At the market?

THEODORE: Get a better job?

MRS. EPSTEIN: Like...?

THEODORE: I don't know.

MRS. EPSTEIN: And that is what a guidance counselor is for. But you do not have him. You have me. So we make do.

PIECE OF PAPER BEING PASSED.

I am giving you an extra assignment. For the summer, I want you to write an essay...

THEODORE: (GROANS)

MRS. EPSTEIN: (CONTINUING) ...on what it is you want to do. Your goals. What you like. What you would like to achieve. And why. And how you might go about them.

THEODORE: In French?

MRS. EPSTEIN: (LAUGHS) This once you can write in English.

THE DOOR STARTS TO OPEN AND WE HEAR THE  
CLASS START TO ENTER.

MRS. EPSTEIN: (CALLING OUT) One moment Jonathan. Out.

THE DOOR CLOSES.

This is very important. I want you to give it real thought.

THEODORE: Did you know you wanted to be a teacher when you were my age?

MRS. EPSTEIN: A teacher? Ha! I was going to be the prima soprano of the Polish National Opera.

THEODORE: Really?

MRS. EPSTEIN: Yes. Unfortunately, Mother Nature blessed me with the voice of an alto. But I spent many years with music teachers like your mother trying to correct nature's mistake.

THEODORE: And did you ever get to sing for the opera?

MRS. EPSTEIN: No. We...had to leave. But we got out before the war and that's something. And those singing lessons taught me Italian and French and English. And I'm here and I need a job, so I ask if I can teach English. And they say "No way" because of how I speak. So I ask if I can teach Italian or French. And they say yes. So I teach you how to speak Italian and French with a Polish accent.

What I wanted led me to where I am. The important thing is knowing what you want and focusing on it. Even if you do not get to where you planned to go, what you learn along the way can take you on new journeys.

BELL RINGS. DOOR CREAKS OPEN.

MRS. EPSTEIN: Yes, yes. Come in.

THE NEXT CLASS ENTERS, LOUD AND CHATTING. MRS. EPSTEIN STANDS.

Write that essay. Turn it in in the fall and...we'll go from there. Here, your pass.

THEODORE: Thanks, Mrs. Epstein.

MRS. EPSTEIN: Nie ma za co, kochanie. (You're welcome dear.)



FOOTSTEPS AS THEODORE LEAVES. CHALK ON  
A CHALKBOARD. ABRUPT TRANSITION.

SCENE 4.

INT. GROCERY STORE. AFTERNOON.

CLANG AND RING OF AN OLD CASH REGISTER.  
THE RUSTLE OF PAPER BAGS.

THEODORE:                   Here you are Mrs. Stanley.

THEODORE HANDS OVER A PAPER BAG.

MRS. STANLEY:           (CALLING OUT) Thanks Gary.

MR. CARPENTER:         You're welcome Gladys.

MRS. STANLEY EXITS.

Wesley, I've got a delivery for you.

THEODORE:               Mr. Morgan's insulin?

MR. CARPENTER: What? No. He canceled that.

SOUND OF MR. CARPENTER PACKING A PAPER  
BAG.

MR. CARPENTER: Need you to run these groceries down to the Fenwood House, quick as you please.

THEODORE: Yes sir, Mr. Carpenter.

THEODORE PICKS UP THE BAG AND EXITS OUT  
THE STORE DOOR. WE HEAR HIM SET THE BAG  
IN A BICYCLE BASKET AND TAKE OFF ON HIS  
BIKE. THE SOUND FADES OUT AND WE  
TRANSITION TO NEAR THE FENWOOD HOUSE.  
BIKE TIRES SKID ACROSS A FAMILIAR GRAVEL  
DRIVEWAY.

THEODORE: (HUMMING THE TUNE THAT WILL BE  
WES'S CELERY JINGLE.)

No. No.

(HUMS A BIT OVER AGAIN AND MAKES A  
CHANGE.)

HE PICKS THE BAG OUT OF HIS BICYCLE BASKET AND WALKS UP THE STAIRS AND KNOCKS ON THE DOOR. SOMEWHERE IN THE BACKGROUND WE HEAR FAINTLY A VOICE TALKING.

THERE IS NO ANSWER AT THE DOOR. THEODORE KNOCKS AGAIN.

THEODORE: Delivery from Carpenter's Market. Hello? Mr. Fenwood?

THEODORE BECOMES AWARE OF A DISTANT VOICE. HE WALKS DOWN THE STAIRS AND THROUGH THE CEMETERY GATE.

(LOW RADIO VOICE) Detective Lee Farrow enters the cemetery where so many of his cases begin and even more of them end.

WE START TO HEAR THE VOICE OF COLIN FENWOOD AS THEODORE MOVES TOWARD HIM.

COLIN: (OFF) He's a good boy but I'd hate to stick him with this all by himself. You always said, if you hadn't had papa...I mean, me...I wanted this. Never wanted anything else but to work right here with you. But he might want something else. Lord knows his sister did.

THEODORE: (CLEARS THROAT) Mr. Fenwood?

COLIN: Yes.

THEODORE: Delivery from Carpenter's Market.

COLIN: You're...Wesley, right?

THEODORE: Theodore Wesley.

COLIN: That's a shame. Mama always said, "You can't trust anyone with two first names." Then again, she might have just meant the Warrens. Well...don't just stand there. Come over and pay your respects.

THEODORE HESITANTLY WALKS OVER.

May I present the esteemed late Mrs. Eliza Fenwood. Mama, this is Theodore Wesley. I know. Try not to let the name upset you. (PAUSE) You can say hi, Theodore.

THEODORE: Um...

COLIN: You can just speak to the headstone. She doesn't mind.

THEODORE: Hello...Mrs. Fenwood.

COLIN: Did you ever meet my mother?

THEODORE: I don't think so.

COLIN: She was...something. You know, she illegally voted in every election until women were allowed to vote in 1919. She voted after that, she just stopped wearing a handlebar mustache to the polls. Mama Fenwood. Always knew what she was about. Always knew just what to do.

THEODORE: She sounds...uh...I have your groceries.

COLIN: All right. All right. I know I'm just woolgathering. Let me see.

RUSTLE OF THE PAPER BAG.

(SIGH) Broccoli. Canned spinach. Canned carrots.  
Oatmeal. Celery, of course. My "favorite."

A SMALL TIN IS LIFTED OUT AND RATTLES AS HE  
SHAKES IT.

COLIN: And here are my new after dinner mints. Probably shouldn't shake them. Don't want them to go BOOM! How much do I owe you?

THEODORE: Three dollars.

MONEY BEING PASSED.

COLIN: I don't suppose a couple of steaks could fall into this bag the next time you stop by? Maybe a few strips of bacon? I would pay for them obviously. And that's so much extra weight, I'd really have to compensate you with a larger tip. For the wear and tear of your bike.

THEODORE: I...I don't know.

THE JINGLE OF TWO EXTRA COINS BEING  
PASSED.

COLIN: Why don't you and these two quarters think on it? Oh do you mind taking this in to the kitchen? I've got a few things left to discuss with mama.

THEODORE: Sure.

THEODORE TAKES UP THE BAG. HE WALKS THROUGH THE CEMETARY TOWARD THE BACK OF THE HOUSE.

COLIN: (OFF) So what do you think mama? Think I should find the fountain of youth before it's too late?

THEODORE ENTERS THE BACK OF THE HOUSE AND SETS DOWN THE BAG. AS HE SETS DOWN THE BAG HIS BREATHING BECOMES SHARP AND QUICK AGAIN.

GRANT: Hey Kid.

THEODORE DOESN'T RESPOND.

GRANT: Kid? You okay?

THEODORE: (SNAPPING OUT OF IT) What?

KNOCKS OVER THE BAG.

THEODORE: Sorry.

THEODORE BENDS DOWN TO PICK UP THE  
ITEMS.

I am so sorry Mr. Fenwood.

GRANT: (LAUGHS) Mister? I'm like...five years older than you. What are you seventeen? Eighteen?

THEODORE: Sixteen.

GRANT: Okay, six years.

THE BAG IS LIFTED UP OFF THE FLOOR AND SET  
ON THE TABLE.

GRANT: Grant.

THEODORE: Theodore.

GRANT: Hey...uh...my dad. Did he...? He didn't say anything to you did he?



THEODORE: He introduced me to his mother.

GRANT: And told you the story about her skinny dipping in the creek, right?

THEODORE: Handlebar mustache.

GRANT: Lucky. Anything else?

THEODORE: Not really.

GRANT: God I wish I knew what he was up to. (TO HIMSELF)  
Far as he's concerned I'm still a three year old sticking my hand on the stove. Thanks anyway.

GRANT GOES TO LEAVE.

THEODORE: There was a tin.

GRANT STOPS AT THE SWINGING DOOR.

I didn't see the prescription...but I'm pretty sure it was nitro.  
Like for his heart.

GRANT: His heart. That...explains a lot. Jesus.

THEODORE: Are you okay?

GRANT: Yeah. Yeah. I just...I gotta a lot to think about. Thanks. For telling me.

THEODORE: You're welcome.

GRANT: See ya round, all right.

THEODORE: Bye.

GRANT LEAVES. ABRUPT TRANSITION TO

SCENE 5

EXT. OAK STREET. EVENING.

KNOCKS ON A DOOR.

HANK MORGAN: Theodore?

THEODORE: Hey Mr. Morgan. You...uh...forgot to pick up your insulin today so I thought I'd bring it over.

HANK MORGAN: I canceled this prescription.

THEODORE: I know. We already had this though so...

HANK MORGAN: Right. How much do I owe you?

THEODORE: It was already paid for.

HANK MORGAN: Uh-huh. Well thanks for bringing it over.

THEODORE: Don't mention it.

THEODORE STARTS TO LEAVE PUSHING HIS  
BIKE DOWN THE STREET.

HANK MORGAN: Oh and Theodore.

THE BIKE STOPS.

HANK MORGAN: I'll pay you back when I can.

THEODORE: Sure thing.

THE DOOR SHUTS. THEODORE WALKS/ROLLS  
ALONG WITH HIS BIKE A FEW HOUSES DOWN. A  
DISTANT DOOR OPENS.

SUZIE: (OFF) Thanks Mrs. Wesley.

FOOTSTEPS APPROACH THEODORE AND HIS  
BIKE.

THEODORE: Hey Suzie. How'd the lesson go?

SUZIE: I've mastered Beethoven. Which means I've got all three B's.  
Beethoven, Bach, and Debussy.

THEODORE: Debussy starts with a D.

SUZIE: It's French. And De in French is of...of Bussy. Which is a B.

THEODORE: Have a good night.

SUZIE SKIPS AWAY HUMING "ODE TO JOY."  
THEODORE OPENS THE DOOR AND WALKS HIS  
BIKE INSIDE.

Mom, I'm home.

EVELYN: (OFF) Come in here and give me a hand?

THEODORE PUTS HIS BIKE AGAINST A WALL  
AND WALKS INTO THE ROOM. WE HEAR EVELYN  
TIGHTENING PARTS OF THE PIANO.

EVELYN: That girl. Never saw a key she didn't want to slam as hard as she can. Knocks my piano out of tune every week.

THEODORE: You should tell her piano means soft.

EVELYN: What's that? Did you say crescendo?

THEODORE: (LAUGHS)

EVELYN: Double crescendo? Triple quadruple extra crescendo?  
Give me middle C.

THEODORE PLAYS IT.

EVELYN: Octave up.

HE PLAYS IT.

C sharp.

HE PLAYS IT BUT ITS OFF.

Damn.

SHE GOES BACK TO TIGHTENING IT.

So. What exactly did you hear this morning, listening on the stairs?

THEODORE: How did you know?

EVELYN: I know my son. Quiet. Nosey. Always tucked away in some corner or another where you can't see him. Try it now.

THE NOTE PLAYS BETTER.

THEODORE: I don't need to graduate.

EVELYN: Bass clef. Play a G.

HE DOES.

THEODORE: You didn't. Dad didn't.

EVELYN: I didn't have a choice. I had to help Grandma Ruthie with your aunts and uncles. And your father was in a boys' home. Some of those nuns could give Joe Lewis a run for his money. Not a place you stay if you don't have to. But you have a chance. A real chance.

THEODORE: But Dad...

EVELYN: You let me worry about your father. You just worry about you and those books.

THERE IS A PAUSE. EVELYN SHUTS THE PIANO.

EVELYN: I couldn't stop you worrying if I tried. How about this: you worry about us. I'll worry about you and your father. He'll worry about both of us. We'll be one great big triangle family of worry. Agreed?

THEODORE: Agreed.

EVELYN: Now how about it? Want to go and get your banjeaurine and have a jam session?

THEODORE: In a bit. I have some homework I need to do.

EVELYN: All right then. After dinner. To help with our digestion.

THEODORE HEADS UPSTAIRS. EVELYN BEGINS PLAYING CHOPIN.

THEODORE GETS TO HIS ROOM AND SHUTS THE DOOR. HE THROWS HIS BAG DOWN AND OPENS IT. HE PULLS OUT A PIECE OF PAPER AND SITS AT HIS DESK WITH A PENCIL. HE WRITES.



THEODORE: (OVER) What I want. By Theodore Wesley.

HE STOPS. HE THUDS THE ERASER AGAINST  
THE DESK A FEW TIMES.

THEODORE: (OVER) I want...

HE STOPS. THE ERASER THUDS A FEW MORE  
TIMES. LEANS BACK IN HIS CHAIR.

(NORMAL) I just want to help.

HE STOPS. THE CHAIR FALLS FORWARD. HIS  
BREATHING GOES SHARP. THE PENCIL FALLS  
FROM HIS HAND. THE BREATHING GETS  
WORSE. HE FALLS TO THE FLOOR WITH A THUD  
AND THE CRACK OF A HEAD HITTING A CORNER  
TOO HARD. THE PIANO STOPS. AFTER A  
MOMENT  
THE SPASM GROW SHORTER AS HE SPASMS  
THOUGH THE SPASMS GROW SHORTER AND  
QUIETER. AS DOES THE BREATHING.

EVELYN: (OFF) Theodore? You all right up there.

THE SOUND GROWS DISTANT. THE SPASMS  
SLOW AND STOP. AS DOES THE BREATHING.  
ECHOING DISTANT FOOTSTEPS.

EVELYN: (OFF) (D) Theodore?

THE SOUND FADES AWAY WITH A CRY OF  
ANGUISH FROM EVELYN.

LILY: And that's it? He just...died.

ABBIE: From what I could tell. Probably epilepsy.

LILY: Yeah but wouldn't someone have noticed.

ABBIE: Not necessarily. He could have been having absence seizures. It would have just looked like he was staring off into space, not paying attention, day dreaming. Until the time it wasn't.

LILY: So that's it. Nothing supernatural. Nothing ghosty.

