

OLD FOLKS

By

Carter Christian

HONORS CAPSTONE

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Supervisor:

Jordan Morille

## ABSTRACT

When an LGBTQ+-based retirement home goes through financial turmoil, the folks decide to put on a talent show in order to save the Old Folk's Folks Home. By bridging the gap between the older and younger generations of queer people, they discover that their home is much more than the house they're trying to save.

This second complete draft of OLD FOLKS further encompasses the major theme of inter-generational tension within the LGBTQ+ community, as well as provides a demo of all of the songs on the current soundtrack.

OLD FOLKS

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A Comedy Musical  
By Carter October

Contact:  
Carter October  
7065404256  
Cmc34843@gmail.com

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

RICKY, 87, The Old Grump. A former tap dancer. Gay.

SANDRA, 84, The Mother of the House. A great vocalist. Lesbian.

SAMUEL, 88, The know-it-all Man. Transgender.

ISABELLA, 86, The Straight Woman. Extremely New Port.

EMIELE, 90, The Narrator. Possibly has no idea what's happening. Non-binary

CANARY, 17, The Piano player. Endless optimism. A sweet snowflake. Non-binary.

SPARKS, 19, The Guitar player. Juvenile, Rowdy, Punk. Barks and Bites. Transgender.

BRYAN, 34, The Ghost. Handsome, Overflowing Charisma. Too young to die. Gay.



## SETTINGS

The Old Folks' Folks Home:

- The Living Room
- The Kitchen
- The Steps Out Front

A Highway Underpass/An Alley Way

Sandra's Apartment

The City Park

## PRODUCTION NOTES

The OLD FOLKS' FOLKS HOME is a rickety two story home, featuring a staircase equipped with a chair lift, a living room, a kitchen, an office, and a front porch. The upstairs and the office do not need to be visible to the audience.

The scenes that take place outside of the home do not need to happen on the stage. The whole theater is your oyster. The catwalk is the limit.

The magic can be as realistic or as fake-looking as needed. Whatever is funnier for the production!

The music can be live or recorded, preferably a little of both!

The mentioned TIP JAR is real, and the proceeds do indeed go towards the local LGBTQ+ charities and organizations of the location in which this show is performed, the director's choice.

Please alter the script as needed to accommodate for the accessibility of the actors.

An // indicates overlapping or interrupting dialogue.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For my gay wife, Jolene. Here's to the future!



**ACT ONE**

SIGN OUT FRONT: THE OLD FOLKS' FOLKS HOME.

A rundown two-story-house-turned-retirement-home on the side of a bustling street in the big city. Thousands of people must walk by every day and don't spare it a passing glance.

The living room:

Cushy, dusty couches. Newspapers. Cards. Lacy table runners. Vases and knick-knacks that no one remembers buying. Photos of the Folks throughout the ages: bowling, drinking, laughing, at weddings, and at funerals.

A crisp GRAND PIANO lavishes in the corner, well-taken care of, and loved.

CANARY, androgynous and youthful, enters with a purpose, to silence or to roaring applause, like a maestro.

Elegance exudes as they sit properly at the BENCH of the grand piano. Purposefully, with heart, they tickle the melodious opening of "FOLKS HOME."

DASH. Light reveals EMIELE, 90, at the tip of the stairs in a chair lift. They slowly. SLOWLY. Make their way down the staircase.

The electric WHIRRING from the chair underlines the ever-growing intensity of the piano. Canary has to improvise a few more bars than they initially prepared.

The hope. The drama. The SUSPENSE!

Will Emiele make it to the bottom?  
What will they say when they finally get there?

CLICK.

Emiele at the bottom of the staircase. They hobble once. Twice. Three times, they're up.

Canary reaches a low, rumbling, anticipating roll, As Emiele, wobbling still, scoots to the middle of the stage. Then ...

EMIELE

"FOLKS HOME"

I'M OLD.

The other Folks poke their heads out from behind couches, corners, and doorways.

FOLKS

OOOOOOH-OOH-OOH

EMIELE

I'VE GOT WEIRD LOOKIN' MOLES ON MOST OF MY TOES.

The other Folks dance in pairs. RICKY with SANDRA, and SAMUEL with ISABELLA.

FOLKS

OOOOOOH-OOH-OOH  
WAAAAAAAAAAH-AHHHHH

EMIELE

AND I'M GAY!

FOLKS

OOOOOOH-OOH-OOH-OOH  
OOOOOOH

EMIELE

I DREAM OF BERRIES AND CREAM FOR MOST OF MY DAY.

FOLKS

OOOOOOH-OOH-OOH  
WAAAAAAAAAAH-AHHHHH

EMIELE

NOW-A-DAYS IT SEEMS, THERE'S  
NO PLACE FOR FOLKS LIKE ME,  
SO IF YOU FIND YOURSELF  
WONDERIN', WHERE ON EARTH AM  
I MEANT TO BE? ...

FOLKS (CONT'D)

DO-DO-DO, DO-DO  
DO-DO-DO, DO-DO  
WAAAAAAAAAAH-AHHHHH!

The Folks all scramble to their usual positions and bustle about.

FOLKS (CONT'D)  
THE OLD FOLKS' FOLKS HOME!

EMIELE  
IS A PLACE OF WILDEST DREAMS AND GOLDEN-EST HONEY!

FOLKS  
THE OLD FOLKS' FOLKS HOME!

A preoccupied Sandra walks by with  
a full pot of COFFEE and fills  
people's MUGS.

EMIELE  
Say, what'dya think of that one, Sandy?

SANDRA  
You're too funny.

FOLKS  
WHERE KIDS CAN GROW OLD AND REMAIN JUST THE SAME AS THEY WERE-  
ERRR!

EMIELE  
(to Sandra)  
Thanks to her!

SANDRA  
(aside)  
NO ONE HERE KNOWS,  
ABOUT THE TROUBLE THAT GROWS,  
CREEPING RIGHT UNDER YOUR NOSE,  
THOUGH IT'S CLOSE,  
IT'S MY BURDEN TO BEAR.

THE ONES I HOLD DEAR,  
PEOPLE RELY ON ME HERE!  
SO I'VE GOT TO TRY,  
HOLD THE PRESSURE IN I,  
I'VE BEEN THROUGH MUCH WORSE!

Sandra, working a mile a minute,  
barrels herself into OFFICE.

EMIELE  
What a hard working woman!  
(aside)  
When this house first started out, it was just  
her n' Ricky. They had the idea to start the  
home together. A home for old queers, that is.

RICKY looks down from his  
NEWSPAPER and shouts at Emiele  
from across the room.

RICKY

What'dya call me ya little// dainty fairy fruit  
cake?

EMIELE

//I didn't say nothin' to ya you musty old  
sock, go back to workin' on your crossword  
puzzle, you dumb bitch!

(aside)

That's my best friend. Lotsa people don't see  
him for who he really is. Probably because who  
he is, is a real pain in the ass.

RICKY

I DON'T ASK FOR NOTHIN',  
BUT SOME PEACE, AND SOME QUIET.  
IF THERE'S ANY WAY TO END THIS SUFFERIN',  
PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO TRY IT!

Isabella and Samuel approach  
Ricky's chair, linked arm and arm.

SAMUEL

Hey, good mornin', Ricky!

ISABELLA

Ya seen anything good in today's newspaypa?

Ricky holds the newspaper up to  
block Sam and Isa out.

RICKY

It's lookin' a lot better now.

EMIELE

(aside)

Samuel and Isabella showed up soon after the  
home started. Sam was a close friend of  
Sandra's back in high school, and after his  
transition late in life, they reconnected.

SAMUEL

Y'know, Ricky, if you're stuck on that  
crossword there, you could always take a look  
at my paper. I already finished today's puzzle.  
I did it after my daily morning walk through  
the park with my beautiful wife.

ISABELLA

Oh, honey, you're such a charm'a!

Isabella smooches Samuel on the  
cheek.

EMIELE

(aside)

And, even though Isabella's ...

The folks all peep out from their spots.

FOLKS

STRAIGHT.

EMIELE

(aside)

She was invited to live in the home with us. Our token straightie. An Honorary Queer even, maybe.

The piano stops. Emiele takes a hard look at Isabella. A gay person wouldn't be caught dead in that outfit.

Nah. Never mind.

The piano resumes.

So, last came me. As the only old non-binary person in this town, and, probably in the state, I had to do my part in bringing diversity to the group.

RICKY

(interjecting)

Please, the only diversity you bring is in stench!

EMIELE

Really? Did you all hear that? No? I thought a bitch who smells like Pepto Bismol just said something.

RICKY

They can't hear shit Emiele, they don't even have their ears turned on yet.

ISABELLA

What'd he say?

CANARY

(interjecting)

Emiele called Ricky a bitch who smells like Pepto.

ISABELLA

Pepto? Pepto Bismol? Hah! That's so, that's so true, ha ha! What a card!

EMIELE

(aside)

Oh yeah. And Canary. Canary's a great help around here. They do the grocery shopping for us and set up the Wi-Fi and all that. Plus they play a mean piano.

Canary plays an extra slick piano riff.

RICKY

I just don't understand what a kid like you's got business in here for anyways. It's not like Sandra pays ya any. Don't you have school to go to or somethin'?

CANARY

It's Saturday.

RICKY

Figures.

ISABELLA

Oh, stop that, Ricky. Canary's got just as much of a right to be in here as you do.

SAMUEL

Yeah, Canary does so much for us. Don't listen to him, kid. We love ya here.

RICKY

All I'm sayin' is that it's weird.

CANARY

ALL I REALLY CARE ABOUT IS SERVING MY COMMUNITY, EVERYONE DESERVES SOME HELP, AND A CHANCE TO FEEL SECURITY, AND I ALONE MIGHT NOT POSTPONE THE WORLD FROM A CALAMITY, BUT WHO'S TO SAY THAT I CAN'T EVEN TRY?

ISABELLA

Awwwww, what a sweetie.

Isabella trots over and pinches Canary on the cheek.

RICKY

Yeh. Uh-huh. Sure. A sweetie. You wanna know what *I* care about? Figuring out what the hell 12 across is supposed to be.

SAMUEL

Well, let's see, 12 across.

Samuel hovers over Ricky's shoulder.

RICKY

I don't remember asking for your help, you  
dusty slime ball!

SAMUEL

12 Across: "A person who is rude or insolent in  
speech or behavior; characterized by capricious  
or temporary ill humor," that word being P-E-T-  
U-L-A-

RICKY

I get it, I get it. Petulant. Smart ass.

ISABELLA

You'd think he'd know that one.

Sandra barrels back out of her  
office, multitasking 3 or so  
different chores, FEATHER DUSTER,  
STACKS OF PAPER, and COFFEE POT in  
hand.

The other FOLKS don't seem to see  
her struggling.

SANDRA

NO ONE HERE KNOWS

A LETTER pops in through the flap  
on the front door.

EMIELE

Ooooh, a letter!

SANDRA

THE TROUBLE THAT GROWS!

ISABELLA

It's mail day already?!

Emiele jaunts over to the letter  
on the floor.

SANDRA

MAYBE SOME DAY, I WILL SAY,  
BUT NOW'S NOT THE TIME!

RICKY

Ey! Get'cher grubby little paws off that! I've  
been expecting something to come in.

SANDRA

FOR, CAN'T YOU SEE,

SAMUEL

Oh, we've been expecting something, too!

SANDRA  
THEY'RE ALL DEPENDING ON ME!

ISABELLA  
That's right honey! My daughta's s'posed to be  
writin' me!

SANDRA  
SO I'LL SWALLOW MY PRIDE, AND KEEP SAYING,  
THAT I'M DOING FINE!

SAMUEL  
Well, who's the letter for, then?

Emiele reads the fine print on the  
letter.

EMIELE  
It's for ... Miss Sandra Bullard!

Emiele flips the letter around to  
show the big bold letters that say  
EVICTION NOTICE.

EMIELE (CONT'D)  
And look at that! Sent by priority express  
mail! Must be important!

FOLKS  
An eviction notice?!

The piano stops. Everyone gathers  
around to see it with their own  
eyes.

SAMUEL  
Well this surely has got to be some kind of  
mistake. Maybe they meant to send this to that  
party house down the street. Here, I'll go  
deliver it to them myself.

ISABELLA  
No, no, Sam, it ... it WAS sent to the right  
house. Look at the address on the envelope. And  
who else on this street could possibly have the  
same name as Sandra?

SAMUEL  
But that's preposterous! It doesn't make any  
sense! How could we be the ones getting  
evicted? We don't even make any noise!

RICKY  
Sandra... what's going on?



SANDRA

... It's true. We're getting evicted. At the end of the month.

ISABELLA

What??? Why??

SANDRA

I... I just haven't been able to make the rent. I'm sorry.

RICKY

The rent?!

EMIELE

Hoo, I love that movie.

RICKY

W-Why can't you make the rent? Did it go up while we weren't lookin'?

SANDRA

The checks in the mail just aren't as big as they used to be, I'm afraid.

SAMUEL

Well, why didn't you tell anybody? We might be able to help! Isa and I've got a few dollars saved up.

SANDRA

I'd never ask that of you, any of you! You all are here because you're not in any position to have to take care of yourselves. It's my job. I've made it my responsibility to ensure your lives are full, and stress-free, and...

Sandra takes a seat. The other Folks comfort her.

I'm sorry, y'all, I never wanted it to turn out this way. I just thought that if I kept working harder that I'd be able to catch up. But, after losing government funding and all-

ISABELLA

We lost government funding, too?! Oh, heavens, this is terrible! What'd WE ever do to the government to deserve all this?

SANDRA

Well, from what I've gathered, it seems to be because of our... nature as a business.

EMIELE

What? Gay?

RICKY

Yes, gay! It's because of that new law that's just passed. The government's not s'posed ta be directly interfering with the L, G, B, T anymore, or something. I dunno. Don't any of you pay attention to the news?

SAMUEL

Well, Isa and I don't watch much TV anymore, you'll have to mind us.

RICKY

Oh, trust me, I've been trying not to mind you two all morning.

SANDRA

We'll find a way to make it through this, guys. Don't worry. Please, calm down and let's think about it.

SAMUEL

You said by the end of the month, Sandra. That's two days from now! You really think we could pull something together by then?

RICKY

Not just "something," nit-wit. Thousands of dollars. Thousands and thousands of dollars, God, Sandra, we're in it now! I knew it. I knew this would all fall apart the moment we started it.

ISABELLA

Don't say that, Ricky.

RICKY

It's true. No matter how much we sanction ourselves off- this country's never gonna leave us be. As long as we're alive. There's no way out of this hell, Sandra, that's just the nature of being queer. Always has been.

CANARY

What if I could help?

RICKY

Oh, great, and what are you gonna do? Play us another song?

SANDRA

Ricky! Enough!

CANARY

I mean it. I can help. I organize fundraisers for my school all the time.

RICKY

So, what? You n' all your fruity little classmates are gonna come... bring in some soup cans? Some box tops?

ISABELLA

I think it's a //sweet gest'cha.

RICKY

//A can of refried beans, maybe?

EMIELE

Oh, I love refried beans!

RICKY

Yeah, well, I don't see how a can of refried beans is gonna house all five of us Emiele. Maybe just you.

SANDRA

Let's listen to Canary, please. I wanna hear what they have to say.

RICKY

Hrmph.

Ricky opens his newspaper.

CANARY

Last year, I hosted a talent show for the fine arts program in my school.

ISABELLA

Awww, a talent show, honey!

SAMUEL

Mm-hmm.

RICKY

(muttering)

That figures.

CANARY

We were able to raise \$4,000 in tickets and donations due to the amount of community outreach we made.

EMIELE

//Whew!!

SANDRA

//Gracious!

CANARY

So, I was thinking that maybe we could do the same for you guys!

(MORE)

CANARY (CONT'D)

Let's put on a talent show here tomorrow night and maybe we'll be able to scrounge up enough money to save the house!

ISABELLA

Wow, a talent show!! That sounds like a great idea, right honey? You're so talented!

SAMUEL

Oh, shucks, darlin'! I don't even know what I'd do.

Emiele stands up.

EMIELE

I know what I'd do!

Emiele farts. Everyone winces.

RICKY

God, Emiele! You're not cute anymore!

EMIELE

What do you mean? I'm adorable. Everyone'll love my little trick.

SAMUEL

Yes, I'm sure they'd all be blown away by that one.

SANDRA

Canary, this sounds like a wonderful, wonderful idea, but, are you sure that we could pull it off?

CANARY

What do you mean?

RICKY

What she means is that no one's gonna give enough of a shit about us to even show up.

ISABELLA

Gosh Ricky, you're being such a crab today!

RICKY

I'm being realistic. The reason we're in this shit to begin with is because people here don't want us around. They want our businesses to fail, right? They don't want their precious taxes to pay for our safety anymore. So then why would those same people willingly spend their Sunday night in a dingy shit-hole listening to Emiele fart live on stage?

EMIELE

Cause it's funny.

RICKY

What it is is delusional.

CANARY

I can make it happen.

RICKY

You don't get it. You can't get these people to care about us. They've shown us time and time again that they want us gone.

CANARY

If I can get everyone in my student body to care about the spring musical, then I can get the neighboring communities to care about you guys.

RICKY

And when you can't?

Ricky and Canary stare intensely at each other.

CANARY

I will.

SANDRA

Okay, we'll do it. We'll do the show.

RICKY

What? Sandra!

SANDRA

I trust them. They say they can do it, they can do it.

RICKY

This is a stupid, gullible idea and you know it.

SANDRA

At least it's a useful one. You on the other hand haven't had a single productive thing to say all day.

EMIELE

Yeah, what's your fundraising plan, Ricky? A bitchin' contest?

SAMUEL

It seems like his plan is to argue with kids all weekend. You think people would pay to see that?

SANDRA

Don't stoop to his level, y'all. Be kind.

SAMUEL

Why would we? Ricky doesn't know a thing about kind. Probably doesn't even know what that word means. Want me to spell out that one for you too, Ricky?

Ricky hobbles up out of his chair and into the KITCHEN.

Yeah. //Walk away.

SANDRA

//C'mon, y'all.

EMIELE

Could'ya get me somethin' while you're in there, Ricky?

The kitchen is just as cute and quaint as the living room, if not a little too small for the amount of people it feeds. The dishes are clean and put away. Everything is taken care of.

Ricky sits down at the empty kitchen table.

SAMUEL

What is the deal with him?

ISABELLA

He's probably just mad that he doesn't have any talent.

SANDRA

Hey, okay, let's not focus on him for now and instead focus on preparing for the show tomorrow. We're serious about doing this, right?

EMIELE

Of course we are! I already have my whole routine planned out.

Emiele pulls out and gracefully shuffles a deck of cards.

I've been practicing magic since I was eight!

ISABELLA

What's your talent gonna be, Sandra?

SANDRA

Well, I haven't thought about it much yet, but, I suppose I could sing.

ISABELLA

Oh, that'd be so lovely! You've got a great voice on ya, I hear ya in the shower all the time!

SAMUEL

Isa, don't embarrass her.

SANDRA

Oh, I'm not embarrassed! I love to sing! As long as you'd be willing to accompany me, Canary.

CANARY

Of course! I can play just about anything.

ISABELLA

Oh! Ooh! Canary, could you play for me and Sam then too? We're gonna dance!

SAMUEL

Says who?

SANDRA

You mean Sam, our Samuel, is gonna get up there and... and ... what was it that you said the other day, Canary? You crack me up. Shake around?

CANARY

Shake ass.

SANDRA

Shake ass! That's right. Shakin' ass. I don't know if I believe Sammy has that kinda capability. I don't think I've ever seen Sammy shake anything other than his head my whole life.

ISABELLA

Oh, yeah! Didn'tcha ever tell her, hun? We took a waltzin' class together back in college. You'd never know it cause he's so shy but Sammy can really bust a move!

SAMUEL

More like bust a hip.

SANDRA

Exactly. I won't believe it till I see it.

ISABELLA

Then let's show 'em! C'mon, big guy, come dance with me!

SAMUEL

Alright, alright, anything for my sweet.

Isabella and Samuel stand and move into waltzing position.

ISABELLA

Play us somethin' fun, huh, Canary?

CANARY

Sure!

Canary trots over to the piano bench and plunks out a stylish waltz.

Isabella and Samuel sway gracefully and playfully around the space, dodging tables and couches.

SANDRA

Wow, would you look at y'all. I can't believe it.

ISABELLA

I told ya! He's a natural!

Samuel pulls away from Isabella, twirls her with his hand, pulls her into his arms again and dips her.

SANDRA

Wow! That looked professional.

SAMUEL

This is just as easy as I remember!

Ricky takes notice of the excitement and watches them dance from the kitchen.

EMIELE

Now, pick her up!

Samuel picks Isabella up by the waist ... she doesn't get too far off the ground before Samuel has to put her back down. Delighted laughter erupts from them both.



ISABELLA

We'll have to work on that one a little more  
before tomorrow, huh?

SAMUEL

Mm-hmm.

The focus is entirely on them. The  
pace of the song slows down to a  
more classic, romantic waltz.  
Isabella and Samuel hold each  
other close.

Ricky is fixated on them from  
afar. He turns away as Samuel and  
Isabella continue to dance. Canary  
transitions into playing WALTZ OF  
EASE.

RICKY

EASY. IT'S SO EASY. IT COMES NATURAL TO ME.

HOLDING MY LOVER SO CLOSE, SO DEAR,

TELL ME WHY, WHY DID YOU LEAVE?

IT'S EASY, IT COMES EASY,

LIKE BREATHING, LOVING YOU,

WAS EASY, IT CAME NATURALLY,

NATURALLY TO ME.

THERE'S A SPACE, DEAR, IN MY HEART, HERE,

I'VE KEPT EMPTY.

WHILE I'M WAITING,

WAITING FOR YOU,

FOR YOU TO BE,

MY EASE.

...

1,2,3 1,2,3

Ricky waltzes with himself. He  
sways as he moves around the  
kitchen, mirroring the movements  
of Samuel and Isabella in the  
adjacent room.

Ricky hums to himself as he lovingly and effortlessly leads his invisible partner across the kitchen.

RICKY (CONT'D)

HMMMMM,

HMMMMMMMM,

IT'S LIKE BREATHING,

LOVING YOU.

SHOULD BE EASY,

SO EASY,

MY 1,2,3, 1,2,3,

1,2,3, 1,2,3...

Sandra notices Ricky shuffling around. She carefully treads over to the kitchen's doorway to watch him.

Ricky peacefully sways back and forth as the waltz continues to march. It's only as he melodically turns to face her that they lock eyes.

SANDRA

(light-hearted)

See, I knew you were crazy.

RICKY

What, are you here to rub it in?

SANDRA

I'm here to see what the matter is. And I think I've found my answer.

RICKY

Good. Now leave me alone. Those bitches in there want me in exile, remember?

SANDRA

Ricky, no one here is out to get you. So why were you out here acting all defensive?

RICKY

Because some kid is in my home trying to tell me that the community's gonna help my gay ass. Solve all my damn problems.

(MORE)

RICKY (CONT'D)

Making me look like a damn fool when I'm the one that knows from experience what the people really want.

SANDRA

You listen here, Canary is a sweet, smart, talented individual. And they want to use that talent to help out a bunch of sour old fruits like you. In fact, they remind me a lot of a certain someone I used to know.

RICKY

Yeah. I don't know who you're talking about.

Back in the living room, the waltz comes to an end. Isabella and Samuel bow to each other as Canary and Emiele applaud for them in adoration.

SANDRA

All I'm saying is, it might benefit you to listen to others every once and a while.

RICKY

Why should I? They don't know what I've been through.

SANDRA

Because you don't talk about it with anyone.

RICKY

Why is it my job to tell some snot-nosed brat all about my trauma? They should be learning that shit in school.

SANDRA

And what school in this district do you think would teach them about the life of Bryan O'-

RICKY

DON'T say his name in this house.

Ricky slams his hand down on the kitchen table. The dishes clatter loudly in response.

The folks in the living room crowd around the kitchen door.

I pray every day that his spirit lives in ignorance. That's the only way I know he's resting in peace. If he were ever to see this mess-

SANDRA

This "mess?"

RICKY

Yes. This mess of a house. This mess of a dream that used to be ours. It was his dream first, Sandra. And look where it ended up. So please, don't say his name in here. I don't want him to see it. I just want him to forget it all ever existed.

SANDRA

...  
This isn't just about Bryan, is it? It's about Isa. And Sam.

RICKY

What about 'em.

SANDRA

You just hate to see them in a happy relationship.

RICKY

And you don't think it's strange that the only straight people here gets to live full, happy lives with each other? Who am I kidding, it makes perfect sense. Of course the straights get to dance with each other! They get their happy ending, while folks like you and me get to watch them from the sidelines. Just the same as its always been.

SANDRA

Listen, Ricky, just because something bad happened to you doesn't mean that you get to make everyone else miserable too.

RICKY

Easy for you to say. At least you might be able to dance with her again someday!

Sandra is shocked to silence. Before she knows it, tears are streaming down her face, tears that she doesn't want anyone to see.

She turns around too see the rest of the Folks crowding the doorway behind her. She pushes past them to get to the front door.

ISABELLA

Sandy, wait-

Before she leaves, she turns around to rip into Ricky one more time.

SANDRA

Look, all I'm gonna say is: you need to think long and hard about why it would shame you so much for him to see you now. Cause it's certainly not me, or anyone else here, that's embarrassing you.

She exits.

CANARY

Miss Sandra!

Canary watches her walk away from the front window.

Ricky, in a fit, turns away from everyone and tries to disengage into the kitchen again.

What is the matter with you? I've never met anyone so... so heartless! You made Miss Sandra cry! She was already having a hard day, and, you're supposed to be her friend!

RICKY

(blowing up)

You! don't! even! live here!  
Get lost already, kid! All of you! Get lost!  
Go mind your own business, and stay the hell outta mine!

The Folks all part ways, either up the stairs or out the front door. They've done this before.

Canary bores into Ricky with demise, before grabbing their backpack and following through the front door.

Ricky takes a seat at the empty kitchen table and buries himself in his hands. The emptiness of the house swallows him.

Now that they're alone, BRYAN makes himself visible. He walks over to Ricky.

BRYAN

You are as dramatic as ever.

Ricky has just seen a ghost. He has the gayest and most ridiculous reaction that an old man could ever muster.

BRYAN (CONT'D)

You done?

RICKY

Bryan?! You?!

BRYAN

In the flesh! What's gotten into you, acting like you've never seen a ghost before.

RICKY

But not like- It's just that- you... I mean, what are you... did Sandra actually? When she-

BRYAN

No, no, no one's "summoned" me, love, unless you mean the call to action!

Believe it or not, I've always been around!

Y'know, watchin' you.

RICKY

You ... have?

BRYAN

Mm-hmm. That was a cute little dance you just did, by the way.

RICKY

Great. I may as well have had an entire audience watching me sing and dance by myself.

BRYAN

Who says you were by yourself? I could've been dancing with you for all you know.

Bryan grabs Ricky by the hand and twirls him.

RICKY

No, I know you. You love to see me make a fool of myself.

BRYAN

Yeah, that's true.

RICKY

That's why you haven't butted in until just now, isn't it?

(MORE)

RICKY (CONT'D)

Fifty whole years of watching me fall on my ass again and again, cause you think it's so funny.

BRYAN

Hey, it's not that, I just didn't wanna tell you how to live your life! Give you a chance to move on on your own.

(aside)

Which you never did.

RICKY

Then what are you doing here?

BRYAN

I'm here to tell you how to live your life. You're embarrassing me.

RICKY

Wha- ME? Embarrassing?!

Bryan strides into the LIVING ROOM and slides onto the piano bench. Ricky tails behind him. Bryan keys the intro of DANCING ALONE.

You of all people should know that I'm not in the wrong here! Everyone in this house is acting delusional!

BRYAN

YOU AREN'T THE RICKY I KNOW.

AND I'M NOT THE BRYAN YOU KNEW.

YOU THINK THAT I'D HATE THIS PLACE?

HONEY, YOUR MIND'S FAILING YOU.

RICKY

Memory loss isn't something to joke about, Bryan.

BRYAN

YOU'RE MY PRIDE AND JOY, DEAR

BUT LOVE IS NOT A THING TO OUTGROW.

YOU'VE FORGOTTEN WHO YOU ARE

THAT'S WHY YOU'RE IN HERE DANCING ALONE~

BRYAN (CONT'D)

You're sitting here acting all high and mighty when in reality, you're out here being a jackass to our friends in my name.

(MORE)

BRYAN (CONT'D)

You think you know what I want? You really think I wanted to forget about all of this?

RICKY

YOUR LIFE'S DREAM WAS JUST SO MUCH BIGGER THAN WHAT THIS ALL TURNED OUT TO BE.

I THOUGHT YOU WOULD SLEEP EASIER IF YOU FORGOT ABOUT IT ALL, FORGOT ABOUT ME.

BRYAN

No, stupid!

IF YOU WERE THE RICKY I KNOW,  
YOU WOULDN'T BE ACTING SO BLUE.  
HE WOULD JUMP ON ANY TRAIN,  
THAT MEANT HELPING A FRIEND OR TWO.

RICKY

I *am* helping them! They're going to get themselves hurt-

BRYAN

YOU'RE STUCK IN THE PAST, DEAR,  
SO QUICK TO ALWAYS BITCH AND MOAN.  
YOU'RE AFRAID OF GETTING HURT,  
THAT'S WHY YOU'RE IN HERE DANCING ALONE~

RICKY

I'm not afraid of anything. Never have been, never will.

BRYAN

Well, the symptoms are all there.

RICKY

Symptoms of what?

BRYAN

Being a little bitch.

WE USED TO DO ALL SORTS OF SCARY SHIT,  
PROTESTS, ARRESTED, AND THAT'S NOT THE HALF OF IT,  
SO NOW THAT YOU'VE BEEN ASKED TO DO A LITTLE SHOW,  
SUDDENLY, IT'S TOO SCARY TO GO?



Ricky stops responding. Brian gets up off the piano to speak with him face to face.

RICKY

Look, when I lost you, it really set in how fragile our lives are. You're right. I am afraid. I am afraid that I, or someone else I love, will be hurt again. Or worse.

How am I supposed to put my trust back into humanity when it's taken so much from me? So much from you?

BRYAN

You're forgetting something very important. As queer people, we have devoted our lives to living the way that we want to. Loving who we want to. Without shame, or fear. When you proposed to me, we promised that we would spend our lives doing what we loved.

You used to love serving your community. Our love was built on helping those in need. Where did that fire go?

RICKY

It died when you did.

BRYAN

But I'm still here. I always have been.

They embrace.

RICKY

Then, how can I fix this? Is it even possible for me to help my friends now?

BRYAN

Yes. Obviously.

RICKY

Are you really sure I can- I mean, what am I supposed to do?

BRYAN

Here, I've got something for you.

Bryan pulls out a SHOEBOX and hands it to Ricky.

I think these'll come in handy.

Ricky opens the shoebox and pulls out an old pair of TAP SHOES.

RICKY

How did you-? Where did you find these?

BRYAN

I've been keeping them with me ever since  
*someone* tried to throw them out.

RICKY

Bryan... I don't know if I can-

BRYAN

Try them on! I'll be damned if your feet've  
gotten even bigger!

Ricky takes off his SLIPPERS and  
puts the tap shoes on his feet.  
They fit nicely.

The piano picks back up again,  
playing itself.

FOR THE LONGEST TIME I HAVEN'T SEEN YOUR SPARK,  
BUT NOW I KNOW THAT YOU CAN STILL SHINE!  
YOUR SPIRIT HASN'T DIED, NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU'VE TRIED  
TO SNUFF IT OUT.  
DEEP DOWN, YOU'RE STILL THE MAN I KNOW.  
AND THE MAN I KNOW STILL HAS THE HEART TO GROW!

What's your heart telling you now?

RICKY

My heart is singing again. It's telling me to  
dance.

BRYAN

Then let's dance.

Bryan and Ricky tap dance in duet.  
Their connection is just as strong  
and playful as it used to be 50  
years prior.

As the dance progresses, the song  
transitions into Waltz of Ease  
(Reprise).

RICKY

IT'S EASY.

BRYAN

SO EASY.

RICKY AND BRYAN  
IT'S A BREEZE, DEAR, LOVING YOU!

RICKY  
AND IT'S CLEAR NOW,  
NOW MY HEART KNOWS WHAT TO DO!

Rick grabs a HAT and COAT off the  
coat rack by the door.

BRYAN  
Go on and get 'em baby!

RICKY  
YES IT'S CLEAR NOW,  
NOW MY HEART KNOWS, THANKS TO YOU!

They kiss.

I'm gonna go change the world.

BRYAN  
I know you will.

Ricky clicks his heels together  
and strides through the front  
door, his heart on a mission.

BLACKOUT.

END ACT ONE.

ACT TWO

SOMEWHERE OUTSIDE THE HOME

In a secluded nearby area, like underneath an overpass, or in an alleyway. This is Canary's home.

Clothes and other valuables are stored in shopping carts and tote bags. Sleeping bags, sleeping mats, and blankets lay on the ground.

SPARKS squats down in a pile of blankets, tuning her ELECTRIC GUITAR. She strums it once. It sounds just about right! She fiddles with the tuning a little more, anyways.

CANARY strolls in, eyes to the ground.

THUD. Canary's BACKPACK falls to the ground. Sparks' head perks up at the sound.

SPARKS

Oh, hey bird! You're home early.

Sparks swings her guitar around her shoulder and embraces Canary. Canary stands still with a heavy heart.

SPARKS (CONT'D)

What's up?

CANARY

(Grim)

The folks are gonna do a talent show.

SPARKS

What? That's a little random. But, cool! When are y'all gonna do it?

Canary wells up with tears and squeezes Sparks back, crying into her shoulder.

SPARKS (CONT'D)

Th-That's good news, right? The talent show?

Sparks pulls them away to look at their face.

SPARKS (CONT'D)

Hey, you gotta tell me what's wrong, Canary.

Canary wipes their tears, and sniffles.

CANARY

Um, do you remember when I talked about Ricky?

SPARKS

The crabby one? With the recliner?

CANARY

Yeah, him. He, well, he was extra strung up all day today and then, he took it out on Miss Sandra.

SPARKS

Oh, no! Is she okay?

CANARY

I don't know, she ran out the door before I was able to check on her, but, then, when she was gone, Ricky started yelling at me instead.

I'M GONNA BEAT UP THAT OLD MAN starts.

SPARKS

(stone cold)

He what?

CANARY

He told me to get out of the house, and get out of his business. It's the first time he's really blown up on me like that. It really hurt.

SPARKS

I'M GONNA BEAT UP THAT OLD MAN.

CANARY

I feel belittled, and, I feel like I'm not being taken seriously, just because I'm younger than the rest of them.

SPARKS

I'M GONNA SMASH THAT CHAIR AGAINST THE WALL.

CANARY

He's always trying to tell me that I don't belong in there. When I know I do, I really do!

SPARKS

GONNA MAKE HIM WONDER IF I CAN.

CANARY

All of the other folks like me just fine, but ...

SPARKS

DRIBBLE WITH HIS HEAD LIKE A BASKETBALL.

CANARY

Sometimes, with Ricky, I wonder if I'm doing the right thing after all.

SPARKS

MAKE HIM LEARN WHAT'S RIGHT,

CANARY

Am I really improving their lives by being a helping hand, or, am I intruding on a space I don't belong in?

SPARKS

BRING HIM TOWARDS THE LIGHT!

CANARY

What if he's right. Do you think I should go back to the house? Do I really belong over there?

SPARKS

Of course you do, honey. They're more than lucky to have such a sweet, sensitive soul helping them out. You're doing the right thing.

They embrace again.

CANARY

Thanks for letting me vent, Sparky. I feel better. I think I'm gonna go try to catch Miss Sandra now, and make sure she's ok.

SPARKS

Ok, birdy.

They kiss. Canary picks up their backpack.

CANARY

I love you!

SPARKS

I love you too. Get there safe.

Canary briskly walks back towards the house.

Sparks shreds on her guitar.

I'M GONNA BEAT UP THAT OLD! MAN!

As Canary travels, Sparks, the carts, and the blankets all fade into the distance.

They walk up to the

FRONT OF THE OLD FOLKS' FOLKS HOME

And stop at the door.

They hesitate at the handle, and instead swerve to the window to peep through the glass.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

EMIELE, SAMUEL, and ISABELLA are sitting around gluing, cutting, and drawing hand-made POSTERS for the talent show.

Emiele holds up a poster board decorated with glitter and paint that says "come see my magic butt tonight!"

EMIELE

Look at this! "Come see my magic butt tonight!"  
Heh heh heh.

SAMUEL

How original.

ISABELLA

That's not appropriate, Emiele. People aren't gonna wanna bring their kids if the sight of your behind is a looming threat.

EMIELE

My ass is always a threat, Isa, there's no getting around it. If I'm gonna be there my ass is gonna be there too.

SANDRA enters from her office,  
holding a large stack of paper  
FLYERS.

SANDRA

All right, y'all. We're gonna need a team of troopers to go out and tape these flyers to every pole, fence post, and passerby they can find. Our advertising is gonna need to be killer in order to get the funds we need to save this home.

At the sound, Canary bursts  
through the front doors of the  
Home.

CANARY

I'll do it!

SANDRA

Wow! Thank you, Canary. You must have the ears of a hawk.

EMIELE

Ooh! I wanna do that too!

SANDRA

Nuh-uh, not until I see a COMPLETED poster from you, Emiele

EMIELE

It is complete!

SANDRA

We'll work on it. Anyone else want to go?

SAMUEL

You need a team of troopers, eh? If only Ricky was here, I'm sure he'd be leaping at the opportunity to be useful.

ISABELLA

Yep, sounds just like 'em.

SANDRA

Y'all can't even stop bickering with Ricky when he's not here.

SAMUEL

Maybe I just know he's out there being a bitch somewhere else.

CANARY

He has been gone for a really long time... what if he-



SANDRA

Just forget about him for now! Please! I know he's fine. He's just throwing a tantrum because no one wants to mope around with him in hopelessnessville. He doesn't wanna help us? That's his choice. We're doing the show with or without his help.

RICKY

I'm here to help!!!

RICKY bursts through the front door, heroically. He's wearing a new BACKPACK.

SANDRA

Speak of the devil.

ISABELLA

Ricky! You're back!

SAMUEL

Where have you been?!

EMIELE

Since when did you own a pair of tap shoes?

RICKY

Well, I was thinking, in order to get the funds that we need to save the house, our advertising for the show tomorrow night's got to be killer!

SANDRA

Uh-huh ...?

Ricky takes off his backpack and dumps it onto the floor, revealing loads of PARTY DECORATIONS and CRAFTING SUPPLIES.

RICKY

So, I picked up a shift at the dollar store down the street!

SAMUEL

...  
For 17 hours?!

ISABELLA

And ya came back looking this happy?

RICKY

(dreamily)

Well, I spent most of the time re-exploring the city, and reminiscing... It's been so long since I've walked the streets of my home town.

CANARY

This is so weird.

RICKY

And I spent the rest of that time at the public library, printing out THESE!

Ricky pulls out a stack of flashy, glossy flyers advertising the talent show.

All of the Folks, exempt Sandra, *oohs* and *aahs*.

I've found a passion for graphical design!

SANDRA

So that's it, huh? You had a nice little walk, a change of heart, and now you're ready to steer this show pony?

RICKY

Look, I know I was acting like a huge cunt earlier, but I finally remembered what's most important to me! The reason we started this house in the first place.

(to Sandra)

I realized what Bryan has been asking me to do.

ISABELLA

Bryan asked ya ta get a job at the dollar store?

RICKY

No!

MUSIC OF YOUR HEART starts playing.

IT'S LIKE A SPIRIT,

A SPIRIT'S HAUNTIN' ME TO DO

THINGS THAT I'VE NEVER DONE BEFORE.

ISABELLA

Oh, gosh, Bryan's haunting Ricky?

SAMUEL

I think it's just a simile, dear.

RICKY

I HEAR THIS MUSIC,

RICKY (CONT'D)  
THIS MUSIC SINGIN' IN MY HEART,  
AND I REMEMBER EVERY CHORD.  
IT GOES LIKE WAAAAAAH!  
WOAAAAAAH!  
SO PICK UP YOUR DRAGGIN' FEET,  
AND THEN GET ON OUT THAT DOOR!  
IT'S TIME TO JUMP, JUMP, JUMP  
TO THE MUSIC!  
IT'S TIME TO SWING, SWING, SWING  
TO THE SONG!  
IT'S TIME TO LEARN, LEARN, LEARN,  
WHAT YOUR HEART'S BEEN TELLIN' YOU!  
WHAT IT'S BEEN BEGGIN', PLEADIN', ASKIN' ALL ALONG!

SAMUEL

Your heart?

EMIELE

Yeah. I think he's on, like, a spiritual  
journey or somethin'.

ISABELLA

Ooooh, I love a character arc!

RICKY

I WAS SO SCARED, ONCE,  
SO SCARED OF LOSING THE CONTROL  
OF THINGS I HAD NO RIGHT TO LOSE.

FOLKS

O000-00,

000-00,

O00000!

RICKY

BUT I CAN SEE NOW,

RICKY (CONT'D)  
CAN SEE THAT NOTHING'S GONNA CHANGE  
IF I DON'T PUT HOLES IN MY SHOES!

FOLKS  
OOO-OO-OOOOO!

RICKY  
AND IT GOES LIKE  
WAAAAAAH!

WOAAAAAAAH!  
PICK UP THOSE DRAGGIN' FEET,  
AND THEN JUST GET ON OUT THAT DOOR!

FOLKS  
IT'S TIME TO JUMP, JUMP, JUMP!  
TO THE MUSIC!  
IT'S TIME TO SWING, SWING, SWING!  
TO THE SONG!

IT'S TIME TO LEARN, LEARN, LEARN,  
WHAT YOUR HEART'S BEEN TELLIN' YOU!

RICKY  
TIME TO DO WHAT IT'S BEEN ASKIN' ALL ALONG!

C'mon y'all! Let's spiff this place  
up! No one's gonna want to have a  
party in this dinge hole!

FOLKS  
Woo!!

The folks all prepare the home for  
the talent show.

Emiele \*magically\* puts out some  
juice and party cups.

Sandra puts out snacks and snack  
bowls.

Canary stands on a chair as they  
hang up party banners.

Samuel and Isabella move the  
couches and chairs around to make  
an audience.

Ricky spins around on the newly  
made "stage."

RICKY

WAAAAAH!

WOAAAAAH!

SO PICK UP YOUR DRAGGIN' FEET,

AND GET ON OUT THAT DOOR!

IT'S TIME TO

FOLKS

JUMP, JUMP, JUMP

INTO ACTION!

IT'S TIME TO SWING, SWING, SWING

'CROSS THE FLOOR!

IT'S TIME TO MOVE, MOVE, MOVE

TO THE MUSIC OF YOUR HEART!

RICKY

CAUSE I DON'T THINK I CAN TAKE IT ANYMORE!

Let's move!

DANCE BREAK

The folks flood off of the stage  
and into the audience. They pass  
out as many flyers to as many  
audience members as possible.

FOLKS

JUMP, JUMP, JUMP!

Jump, jump, jump, jump.

SWING, SWING, SWING!

Swing, swing, swing, swing.

MOVE, MOVE, MOVE,

FOLKS (CONT'D)  
TO THE MUSIC OF YOUR HEART!

BECAUSE WE DON'T WANNA TAKE IT ANYMORE!

RICKY  
NO, NO, WE DON'T WANNA TAKE IT ANYMORE!

End of MUSIC OF YOUR HEART.

Then, the exhaustion catches up to them. - being winded is an understatement.

They crawl back to the house, tired, yet chipper.

ISABELLA  
(panting)  
Wow, we passed out so many flyers!

SAMUEL  
I know! And did you see that news truck? We might've even been on TV!

SANDRA  
This is it, y'all! We're makin' it big!

CANARY  
I'd say, if even half the people who took a flyer show up for the show tomorrow, the house is saved!

FOLKS  
Woo!!

ISABELLA  
We're so good at saying "woo" in unison you guys!

FOLKS  
Woo!!

RICKY  
Yeh. Maybe we do have some talent after all!

SAMUEL  
...  
You're saying that like we didn't just do a whole intricate dancin' //and singin' number.

RICKY  
//It was a joke ya little sensitive ass//  
fruity-lookin'-

SAMUEL

//Well it's hard to tell!!

SANDRA

To be fair, you were just saying shit like that genuinely not even a day ago.

RICKY

So I'm not allowed to make jokes anymore??

EMIELE

No, please, keep doing it. I wouldn't like you anymore if you stopped being funny.

A KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK at the door.

SAMUEL

Oh, our first guest!

ISABELLA

A little early, don't you think?

SANDRA

A lotta early.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK, again.

Canary gets the door.

CANARY

Oh my gosh, hi, babe!

FOLKS

Babe?!

SPARKS steps through the front door, looking especially punk, and intimidating. She has her GUITAR strapped to her back.

SPARKS

Hi, everyone!

CANARY

Guys, this is Sparks, my girlfriend!

SPARKS

Nice to finally meet you all! I've heard so much about you!

She glares at Ricky.

I've heard everything, actually.

SANDRA

Well, I wish we could say the same-

She elbows Canary.

But it certainly is such a pleasant surprise!  
Nice to meet you too, Sparks.

ISABELLA

Oh, yes, pleasant!

EMIELE

I'm a magician!

CANARY

(to Sparks)

What are you doing here?

SPARKS

I heard you guys were having a talent show, so,

She swings the guitar back over  
her shoulder.

I decided to bring the talent!

RICKY

Sorry, this isn't an open audition.

SAMUEL

There he goes again.

ISABELLA

And he was doing so good, too.

RICKY

It's nice to meet you, or whatever, but I  
really think you should leave.

SANDRA

And who made you in charge of talent  
recruitment, Ricky? No one else here thinks she  
should go, right?

ISABELLA

I like her, she's spikey!

SAMUEL

Maybe she'll add that *edge* to our show that  
we're looking for! One that'll draw in the  
youths and make them give us their money!

EMIELE

(sad)

I'm edgy, too.



RICKY

Well, if we keep her here, she's gonna scare our audience away, and there won't be a talent show!

SPARKS

I don't need to prove myself to you, old man.

She leaps over into the stage area and plugs her ELECTRIC GUITAR into the AMP.

SPARKS (CONT'D)

But just because I can, I'm gonna.

YOU WISH, I WISH! Starts.

Sparks strums her guitar into a roaring starting chord.

Ricky covers his ears at the unexpected noise.

Emiele giggles in anticipation.

SPARKS (CONT'D)

C'mon bird!

Canary sits at the piano bench to accompany her.

SPARKS (CONT'D)

1, 2, 3, 4!

Ricky attempts to leave the house, but Sandra blocks the door.

SPARKS (CONT'D)

YOU PROBABLY THINK I'M DEAD, YEAH,

YOU THINK I'M DEAD, TO YOU,

YOU WON'T EVEN SAY MY NAME!

YOU LOOK ME IN THE EYE, AND,

YOU SAY I'M DEAD TO YOU!

SANDRA

Where do you think you're going?

RICKY

This racket's too damn loud!

SPARKS

WHAT'S WRONG WITH MY HEAD?

WELL WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR HEAD?

I CAN'T EVEN BEGIN TO IMAGINE,

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOUR HEAD,

YEAH, WHAT'S YOUR POINT OF VIEW?

SANDRA

I'm not gonna let you sabotage our show  
tonight, again!

RICKY

I don't know what you're talking about. They're  
the ones ruining our show!

SPARKS

YOU REALLY WISH I WAS DEAD, WELL,

I WISH YOU WERE DEAD, TOO!

HARD TO SAY WHICH ONE OF US WILL FALL!

YOU REALLY WISH I WOULD CHANGE, WELL,

I WISH YOU WOULD CHANGE TOO!

SANDRA

Look at how much fun they're having!

RICKY

I don't care! They can go do it somewhere else!

SPARKS

YOU REALLY WISH I WOULD CHANGE, WELL,

I WISH YOU WOULD CHANGE TOO!

SEEMS LIKE YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW YOURSELF!

YOU'RE THE REASON I'M THIS WAY,

I'M THE REASON YOU'RE CHANGING,

HARD TO SAY BUT YOU MISS ME,

AND I MISS YOU!

GUITAR SOLO

RICKY

These punk kids are ruining our one good chance of saving this house, and I'm the only one of us who seems to give a damn!

SANDRA

You're thinking selfishly, Ricky, look at the bigger picture! Canary and Sparks are taking strides in helping their community! Sound familiar? Ringing any bells?

RICKY

Oh, something's ringing alright.

Ricky makes another attempt to leave, blocked by Sandra.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Gah, it's too loud!

SANDRA

Open your eyes, Ricky. Look around! Listen! It's music from the heart! Just like yours!

Sparks slides down onto her knees, shredding into her guitar.

Emiele, Samuel, and Isabella hoop and holler in response!

SANDRA (CONT'D)

Right, well, it might sound different, but, you can't deny that it's passionate. These kids want to help us, Ricky. Why can't you see that?

RICKY

I. Don't. Want. Their. Help!

SANDRA

For what reason?!

RICKY

Because they're going to end up killed!

Sparks, overcome by the frustration, and the shouting, and the music, lifts up Ricky's RECLINER up off the ground,

and THROWS it in Ricky's direction!

CRASH!

It just barely avoids Ricky as it SMASHES through the front window, and onto the hard ground outside. Bits and pieces fly off on impact.

Everyone is silent as the combustion rumbles to a still.

Emiele gives them a standing ovation!

... Then stops when they see that no one else is clapping.

RICKY (CONT'D)

It's just not worth it, Sandra. Not again.

Ricky successfully pushes past Sandra, and exits.

SPARKS

... sorry.

CANARY

Wh-what the hell was that?!

SPARKS

I'm sorry! I don't know what came over me! Everyone was yelling, and, I got too into it.

CANARY

So you threw a chair at Ricky?!

SPARKS

He was being mean! I couldn't take it anymore!

CANARY

That could have killed him!

SPARKS

I wasn't trying to kill him!

SAMUEL

What do we do? Should we cancel the show?

SANDRA

No.

CANARY

Yes.

CANARY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, what?!

SANDRA

There's no way we can cancel the show now, not this close to the deadline.

ISABELLA

I don't know if you've noticed Sandy, but, Ricky's gone and there's a big hole in our wall!

SANDRA

We'll just do it without him, and- and we'll figure out a way to make it work. Maybe we could, uh, board it up really quick, or, have some of the audience seated outside and they can watch through it!

EMIELE

(genuine)

Great idea Sandy, and there's already one chair out there! Let's put out a few more.

Emiele gets to work picking up chairs and placing them outside, to the best of their ability.

CANARY

This is stupid! We can't do the show without Ricky!

SANDRA

Well that was our original plan, so Just imagine he never came back in the first place. And that now there's a new hole in the wall-

CANARY

No! Ricky brought this all together! We need to go find him, and make this right!

SPARKS

Hey, birdy, it's okay-

CANARY

I don't want to talk to you right now.

Canary heads out the door after Ricky.

SPARKS

Canary, wait!

Sparks heads out after Canary.

Sandra desperately starts picking pieces of debris up off the floor.

Isabella and Samuel stand around, twiddling thumbs.

ISABELLA

You know, Sandy, Kate, my daughter-in-law is supposed to be coming into town tonight. And, since we're probably not gonna end up doing the show, maybe you could come meet her! Have y'all already met before?

SANDRA

Yes, I remember Kate. Tell her I said hi. I have ... a lot of work to do tonight.

ISABELLA

Right, okay.

SAMUEL

You need some help?

SANDRA

I appreciate the offer, but, I think I'm just gonna pack everything up tonight myself. Gives me something to do.

SAMUEL

Uhm, okay, well, we'll call you later then, alright? And we'll be back in the morning to ... uh, help. Alright? ... Sandy?

Sandra is too focused on picking up the mess to answer.

Samuel and Isabella shuffle past the BROKEN GLASS and out the door.

Shortly after, Emiele reenters, after the next chair.

SANDRA

Emiele! You're still here.

EMIELE

Oh, I'm never gone for long.

SANDRA

Do you think you could help me to pack up-

EMIELE

Hold on just one minute!

Emiele checks their watch.

It's planting day! I nearly forgot! I need to get home quicker than a moose on a mountain trail! My garden's on the line!

SANDRA

What? Get home? Garden?!

A TRUCK pulls up in front of the home. Emiele wordlessly puts their ALREADY PACKED SUITCASES into the truck bed, gets in, and drives away.

She follows them out the door and shouts after them as they drive away.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

Emiele?! EMIELE!

She's all alone.

She walks back inside, picks up a broom, and starts sweeping up the broken glass.

BROKEN HOME starts.

That's fine. This whole thing, this is nothing more than a big mess to clean.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

I PICK UP THE PIECES,

JUST LIKE I ALWAYS HAVE.

IF THEY JUST THINK I'LL FIX IT, AGAIN,

THEY'LL FIND SOLACE IN THAT.

THERE ARE MANY THINGS THAT PEOPLE LEARN

FROM HEARTBREAK AND DESPAIR,

A BROKEN HOME, ONCE BROKEN,

CAN NEVER BE REPAIRED.

A THOUSAND CITY LIGHTS AGLOW,

AND ONE IS BURNING DIM.

I'VE LIVED THROUGH DARKNESS ONCE BEFORE,

MAYBE I'LL LIVE AGAIN.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

A HOME WITH NO FOUNDATION IS SURELY BUILT TO FALL,  
SO EVEN WITH A BROKEN HOME, I'LL KEEP ON STANDING TALL.  
EVEN WITH A BROKEN HOME, I'LL KEEP ON STANDING-

Sandra falls to her knees, and  
cries.

The lights go out.

BLACKOUT.

**END ACT TWO.**



ACT THREE

EARLY IN THE MORNING, OUT IN FRONT OF THE OLD FOLKS' FOLKS HOME.

In the yard, there's a stack of CARDBOARD MOVING BOXES, all labelled with different names, RICKY'S STUFF, ISA'S STUFF, SAM'S STUFF. The recliner is not longer out there.

It's dark inside. The blinds are closed. The hole in the wall is taped off with a banner from the night before, it reads, "GIVE US MONEY PLEASE!"

SANDRA locks up the front door.

A small cardboard box in hand, she strolls down the steps, and takes down the OLD FOLKS' FOLKS HOME sign in the yard.

JUST ME starts.

SANDRA  
BACK TO MY ROOTS,  
THE WAY ITS MEANT TO BE.  
NO OTHER WAY TO HIDE FROM REALITY.  
THERE'S A BIG WORLD AROUND ME,  
BUT I FEEL SO SMALL.  
NONE OF MY PEOPLE AROUND ME,  
NO ONE AT ALL.  
NO ONE AT ALL.

SOMEWHERE OUTSIDE THE HOME

Ricky walks alone on the street. He sees glimpses of BRYAN out of the corner of his eye.

RICKY  
IT WAS NO ONE AT ALL,  
NOT EVEN A MOUSE.

RICKY (CONT'D)  
AND YET, I FEEL SOMETHING'S PULL,  
BACK TOWARDS THAT OLD HOUSE!  
BRYAN! IF IT'S YOU OUT THERE,  
JUST LEAVE ME ALONE!  
I DON'T DESERVE A SECOND CHANCE,  
I DON'T DESERVE A HOME.

RICKY AND SANDRA  
THERE'S NO ONE AT ALL,  
NO ONE AT ALL.  
JUST ME,  
AND NO WHERE LEFT TO GO.

Sandra fades into the distance as,

Ricky stumbles into CANARY'S HOME.  
No one is there. Ricky picks up a  
couple of blankets, looking for  
something, when ANGRY VOICES are  
heard coming close.

RICKY ducks behind a SHOPPING  
CART.

CANARY marches through, followed  
by SPARKS.

SPARKS  
I wanted to help you, birdy! Give him a wake up  
call! I couldn't just let him keep treating you  
and Sandra that way.

CANARY  
It doesn't suddenly make everything better just  
because you hurt someone for me.

SPARKS  
I didn't hurt him!

CANARY  
You hurt everyone, you hurt me!

SPARKS  
I said I was sorry!

CANARY

It's bigger than sorry, Sparks! We're supposed to be helping them, and, now, they're out of a home! How are they ever supposed to trust either one of us ever again?

SPARKS

If they trusted us to begin with, I wouldn't have showed up last night and made a scene!

CANARY

Ricky was right. None of this would have happened if I just stayed out of it.

SPARKS

Are you even listening to me? What I'm saying is that Ricky had this coming, none of this was your fault!

CANARY

No, but this will be.

Canary picks Sparks' SLEEPING BAG up off the ground, wads it up, and throws it at her.

Get out. Get out of my life. I don't want to see you ever again.

SPARKS

Birdy ...

Canary faces the wall.

Sparks takes her sleeping bag, and hurries away, tears falling from her cheeks.

Once Canary's all alone, Ricky pops out of hiding.

RICKY

Well, what'dya do that for?

CANARY

AHH!

RICKY

Oh, relax, would you? I'm just an old homeless guy.

CANARY

Ricky! You're okay!

Canary joins him at his hiding spot.

CANARY (CONT'D)

What are you doing here? I spent all night looking for you!

RICKY

Well, I didn't want to be found yet!

Ricky pushes the cart out of the way.

Listen, kid. I think you're making a mistake.

CANARY

I'm not. She almost got you hurt, Ricky. She cost everyone the house. I can't forgive her for that.

RICKY

So you dumped your girlfriend over the feelings of a bunch of old farts?

CANARY

(emotional)

You guys are my friends!

They hug.

RICKY

Listen, kid. The reason I'm so hard on you, on the both of you, is because you and Sparks remind me a lot of my husband and I when we were young. A little reckless, a little stupid, but full of fire, and compassion. You'll never guess which one of you was more like me.

CANARY

(wiping tears)

Yeah, Sparks can be a little mean sometimes.

RICKY

No, Canary, I'm like you. You think you're so tough that you can carry it all on your shoulders. Then when you buckle, and fall, or when things fall apart, you feel like there's no recovering from it. The world stops, because of your one mistake.

You remind me so much of the person I used to be, that, it scared me.

(MORE)

RICKY (CONT'D)

I was so afraid that you were gonna make the same mistakes that I made, that I lost track of the here and now, and it all happened anyways.

CANARY

I'm responsible for my own decisions, and Sparks is too. That's why I can't forgive her. She chose to meet you with violence.

RICKY

Two wrongs may not make a right, but neither do three.

You already know this, Canary, but love is rare between people like us. It's also faster, and harder, and so, gay people do stupid things for the sake of love. Trust me, I would know.

She wanted to talk about it with you. The option to forgive her is there! And since you haven't granted it to yourself already, I'm granting it to you now.

IT'S NOT EASY (WALTZ OF EASE REPRISE) starts.

LOVE'S NOT EASY,

IT'S NOT EASY,

BUT IT'S FREELY,

GIVEN TO, YOU!

So choose love.

When you can, do.

They hug again.

Now, go find her. Talk to her.

CANARY

Wait, but what are you gonna do? I'll talk about it with Sparks, of course, but, you're more than welcome to stay here with us in the meantime. Unless, that'd be weird...

RICKY

Wouldn't be the first time I lived with an obnoxious couple. I appreciate that, Canary. I'll think about it. There's someone I need to see, first. I'll meet up with you.

Canary runs off after Sparks.

Ricky hobbles up and over to the pile of blankets once more.

He scooches some aside, and finds it!

A BRICK imbedded into the wall. It reads B + R.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Well, there you are, honey! Found you!

You haven't left from this spot now, have you?

Hmm... Well, that doesn't look too good for me.

STILL TURNIN' Pt. 1 starts.

I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT I WAS CRAZY, DELUSIONAL,  
BUT I DIDN'T KNOW IT HAD GOTTEN THIS BAD.  
SOME PEOPLE SAY THAT YOU SHOULDN'T STAY COMFORTABLE,  
CAUSE YOU CAN'T QUITE TELL WHAT YOU'VE LOST TILL YOU HAVE!

As Ricky marches on, Canary's home fades away.

He picks FLOWERS from bushes, trees, the grass, neighbor's gardens...

WELL I'M HERE TO SAY THAT THAT'S BULLSHIT!  
I SPENT EIGHTY YEARS A FUCK-UP, AND THE WORLD'S STILL TURN-IN'!  
SO, EVERYONE STOP THE HORSE, N' HOLD YOUR PRESSES,  
CAUSE I'M NOT TAKING THIS ALL SITTING DOWN!

Full BOUQUET OF FLOWERS in hand, Ricky walks away, revealing:

The inside of SANDRA'S APARTMENT. The bright colorful interior is dulled by the pale light creeping in through sheer curtains.

WALTZ OF EASE plays on an old gramophone.

There are lovely hand-painted CERAMICS and knick-knacks on the shelves that desperately need dusting.

Various photographs of Sandra and Mazie haunt the room in intricate picture frames.

A very, very dead bouquet of flowers sits untouched on the kitchen table.

SANDRA sits unmoving at the kitchen table, watching it. Old tears threaten to drip off of her chin.

A knock at the door.

Sandra jolts awake from her trance. She wipes her face as she dazedly walks over to the gramophone. She stops the music.

Another knock.

SANDRA  
I'm coming, I'm coming.

She opens the door. A pause. A delighted surprise.

RICKY  
Hey, Sandy.

RICKY steps inside. He holds out a NEW BOUQUET of flowers.  
I gotcha somethin'.

Sandra chuckles and wipes her eyes again. She takes the bouquet.

SANDRA  
Thank you, Ricky.

She places it on the table.

It's quiet. A clock ticks. Dust can be seen moving through the air.

RICKY  
... How long has it been since you've been here?

SANDRA

Not since-

She chokes.

Not since Mazie-

The emotion boils over.

RICKY

Oh, God, Sandra, I had no idea-

Ricky holds her.

...

I just assumed she was still at the hospital-  
Sandra, I am so, so sorry.

SANDRA

It's fine, it was months ago. I just- I haven't  
been back here since.

RICKY

She passed that long ago? Why didn't you tell  
us?

SANDRA

Living at the house with you all has been  
keeping me together. You've been supporting me  
by just keeping me company when I needed it.  
Thank you.

RICKY

I should say the same for you. The home  
wouldn't be the same without you, Sandra.

SANDRA

...

I thought I would be more okay, being here  
again.

I don't know what I was expecting but, it's all  
just as I left it.

...

It feels like I've just walked into her tomb.

They soak in the ghost of Mazie's  
life.

I don't know what I'm going to do with all of  
her lovely, lovely ceramics. I can't bear to  
look at them.

RICKY

Take it from me, you would regret throwing them  
out. I promise.

...

I could keep them for you, if you'd like. Until  
you're ready to see them again.



SANDRA

I would appreciate that. Thank you.

A moment. Sandra stops holding her breath.

A police siren drones past the window several stories below. They wait until silence fills the room again before they speak.

I know we kind of talked about it earlier, but, I'm still curious.

Has Bryan ever visited you before?

RICKY

No.

SANDRA

No?

RICKY

Well, I thought he did, once, but...

I think I was just so lonely that I imagined it.

SANDRA

Mmm.

RICKY

Like, a last-ditch effort for my brain to feel happy again. I don't know.

SANDRA

That makes sense. That's sad.

...

That's scary.

RICKY

It was nice, for me. Just to see him again. Even if it wasn't real.

...

I thought I had thrown out my old tap shoes, but, he found them for me.

SANDRA

What a nice hallucination.

They chuckle.

RICKY

Yeah. He told me to do the talent show.

SANDRA

I figured so.

RICKY

...

Isn't that sad? That I had to conjure up a hallucination of Bryan in order to convince myself to help my friends?

SANDRA

...

No. I don't think so.

Bryan was taken from you in such a violent, unnecessary way. I don't blame you for your grief. I never have.

I think what your brain was trying to tell you was that isolation isn't what you need to grieve anymore. What you need is connection.

RICKY

...

Sandra... I want to start up the house again.

SANDRA

(humorously)

No shit.

RICKY

Really, I do. I think we could do it. Without the house.

Canary and Sparks just -live- together. They're homeless, sure, but, they were happy. And they're getting by.

SANDRA

You really wanna be homeless with a bunch of geezers?

RICKY

No! No one wants to be homeless, Sandy. I just want to be able to support each other like they do. Just because we lost government funding for the house doesn't mean we all had to go our separate ways.

SANDRA

But it did. Isabella and Samuel -and Emiele, apparently- all had places they could go where they would have food to eat and a bed to sleep in. I couldn't offer that for them anymore.

RICKY

You won't have to. We've been relying on you for so long, what I'm saying is that we can support each other-

SANDRA

It's too hard to even take care of myself these days. I don't think I can take care of anyone else.

RICKY

Then we'll be here to support you until you can-

SANDRA

Just, listen to me! For one second, please.

...

I have been pushing myself for way too long. For everyone else's sake. I feel like my bones are crumbling, and my head and my heart are going to burst. Do you understand?

Christ, I haven't even held a proper funeral for her yet! Isn't that fucked? Mazie's been dead for months, and I've been too stubborn to even give her a day. An evening of my time-

RICKY

Sandy, no one's expecting you to-

SANDRA

Mazie's expecting me to. I'm the only one left who could!

...

I'm the only one left who could.

...

I'm tired, Ricky. And I need to be alone, now. I need to grieve for her.

RICKY

...

Okay.

I'll leave you to it, then.

...

Let me know when I should come get the ceramics, okay?

Ricky leaves the apartment.

Sandra sits at the table once again, now watching two bouquets of flowers wilt away.

The clock ticks.

STILL TURNIN' Part 2 starts.

Sandra feels the ceramic figures staring at her. She stares back.

SANDRA

I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN I WAS CRAZY, DELUSIONAL,

GUESS I DIDN'T KNOW IT HAD GOTTEN SO BAD.

WHO WOULD'VE GUESSED THAT TIME KEEPS A-MARCHING ON,

AFTER YOU HIDE EVERY CLOCK THAT YOU HAVE!

Sandra gets up, and starts putting the ceramic figures into a BAG.

WELL, I'VE GOT TO SAY THAT'S SOME BULLSHIT!

BUT JUST CAUSE LIFE STOPS DOESN'T MEAN THAT IT'S ENDED,

HAT and COAT back on, Sandra heads out the door with the bag in hand.

SO I'LL FIND A WAY TO ENSURE A NEW BEGINNING,

CAUSE I MIGHT BE OLD BUT NOT TOO OLD TO STOP LIVIN'!

Sandra slams the door behind her. The scene shifts to:

THE PARK. Neatly organized trees cast shade from the afternoon sun.

ISABELLA and SAMUEL walk together and sit together at a PARK BENCH. They are wearing their joggers.

They are not jogging.

ISABELLA

It's a much longer walk to get here from my daughter-in-law's house, isn't it?

SAMUEL

It is. We should take the bus next time.

ISABELLA

For shore. But it was such a lovely walk, wasn't it?

SAMUEL

It was.

ISABELLA

Maybe we shouldn't take the bus, then.

SAMUEL

But it's such a long walk back home.

ISABELLA

You're right.

...

We're so fit, honey!

SAMUEL

We are. Let's do it again tomorrow!

They kiss. As they pull apart,  
Isabella's attention is caught by  
something in the distance.

ISABELLA

Is that...?

Samuel turns to face where she's  
looking.

SAMUEL

Oh, no.

RICKY runs up to them.

Just as I'd thought we'd gotten rid of you.

RICKY

Whew! Thank goodness I caught up to you two.

ISABELLA

You're lucky ya found us, we're usually done  
with our jog by this time a day.

SAMUEL

What'dya want?

RICKY

I need to talk to you two. About the home.

SAMUEL

I don't wanna hear about it.

ISABELLA

Oh, so now ya suddenly interested in the home?

RICKY

Yes! Well, not in the home itself per se, but  
in you two.

I wanna live together again.

Samuel and Isabella exchange a look, "Really?"

RICKY (CONT'D)

I know it sounds weird, but I have a reason.

SAMUEL

A weird reason, it sounds like.

RICKY

No, not at all!

I wanna live together again so that we can support each other!

ISABELLA

...  
And that's not weird because...?

RICKY

Because... Well, because...  
(mumbling)  
I care about you two.

SAMUEL

Come again?

RICKY

Because, I care about you two. And, I really miss you guys. I don't think I can do this without you.

ISABELLA

Well, that's very sweet of you to say, Ricky, but, I just don't understand. You wanna live with us? Just us three? Altogether?

...  
With no house? On the street?

RICKY

Well, preferably with Sandra and Emiele too but Sandra isn't up for it yet and I haven't been able to contact Emiele, so-

SAMUEL

Wait, Sandra declined?

RICKY

For now! I was hoping that maybe, once I got more of us back together, she would change her mind...

ISABELLA

So, lemme get this straight,

Ba dum tss (Isabella's straight).

You want us three to just, live together, and "support each other," whatever that entails, until Sandra changes her mind?

SAMUEL

Then what? We're all just, homeless?

RICKY

We'd be together!! Isn't that all that matters?

SAMUEL

Listen, Ricky, as much as I'm loving this new "all-in-this-together" attitude of yours,

I'm gonna have to trust Sandra on this one.

ISABELLA

Yeah, if she wasn't willin' to rough it out with ya, then why should we?

RICKY

Well... because, you guys care about me too?

ISABELLA

Well, of course we do!

SAMUEL

Yeah, don't be daft, of course we care about you, Ricky.

ISABELLA

We're just not willin' to, y'know, sleep on the street with ya is all. Nothin' personal.

RICKY

Right. No, I understand that. I'm sorry.

SAMUEL

... You're sorry?

RICKY

Yeah, I shouldn't have asked such a big favor of you out of nowhere. I'm sorry.

ISABELLA

W-Well, it's no problem at all. No need to apologize.

RICKY

I just-  
I just have a lot to think about right now.

SAMUEL

Of course.

And if you ever need anything, we will be happy to help you out.

A meal, a place to stay, anything you need. We will help you.

ISABELLA

Yeah! I'm sure my daughter wouldn't mind sparing up an extra room!

SAMUEL

(hushed)

I dunno babe, I think she might.

ISABELLA

(hushed)

Don't say that! Can't you see he's upset?

RICKY

Thank you two. I really appreciate it.

STILL TURNIN' Pt. 3 starts

SAMUEL

... You what?

RICKY

I will be out of your way now. Enjoy the rest of your afternoon.

Ricky walks away.

Isabella and Samuel share a concerned look.

ISABELLA

Have you ever heard him... apologize before?

SAMUEL

...  
Beats me!

Samuel and Isabella join arms and walk off slowly... very slowly... as the song plays out and the scene transforms back into:

The FRONT OF THE OLD FOLKS FOLKS HOME. It is evening, now. The lights are still off inside. The blinds are still drawn.

The song ends.



RICKY sits alone on the front step, eyes boring into the ground.

Several passersby walk right past him. Walking home from work.

CANARY enters, walks up to him, and takes a seat next to him on the front step.

CANARY

You know... when I was a kid.

Ricky looks up at them.

My mom signed me up for tap dancing classes.

RICKY

(Surprised laughter)

Wh- what?

CANARY

Yeah! She thought it would make me more coordinated, or something, I dunno.

But, when you said you were gonna do a tap dance for the show, I was like, wow!

You're a really cool old man.

RICKY

Hey, watch it.

CANARY

No, seriously! I could never figure it out. I think all my coordination went to my hands.

It's seriously amazing to me that you can still do it, even at your age.

RICKY

Oh, it's not so hard, y'know.

CANARY

Yeah?

RICKY

Yeah! You probably just had a shit teacher.

Ricky stands up and reaches to help Canary up, too.

You wanna know the secret to it? It's all in the ankles.

IN YOUR FACE starts to play.

Ricky taps his toes. Left, right,  
left, right.

Canary copies his movements.

Left, right, left, right, left,  
right.

And it's in the hips.

Ricky taps his heels. Left, right,  
left right.

Canary copies him. Left, right,  
left right, left, right.

And it's in the knees!

Shuffle, shuffle, shuffle,  
shuffle.

Shuffle, shuffle, shuffle,  
shuffle, shuffle, shuffle.

And it's in the arms, too!

Ricky does a single time step.

Canary tries to do a single time  
step.

But most importantly, kid? It's in your face!  
Smile! Have fun with it!

They dance. This is the first time  
in years that either of them have  
actually danced -let alone, tap  
danced- with another, real person.

People walk past them quickly,  
still avoiding looking directly at  
them. You're not supposed to look  
directly at these types of people.

Ricky keeps busting out new moves,  
and Canary keeps attempting to  
copy them. It's a blast.

It ends in a fantastic,  
extravagant final pose!

One stranger drops a dollar for  
them in passing, nothing said.

Ricky picks up the dollar and  
inspects it.

RICKY (CONT'D)

So, that's all it took, huh?

...

Ricky and Canary erupt with  
laughter.

Maybe you had the right idea wanting to do the  
talent show after all! We should've just done  
it out here on the street!

CANARY

Yeah, probably. That would've been the smarter  
move, huh?

They sit back down together on the  
steps.

Y'know. If street dancing doesn't work out for  
you, the invitation is still open. You're  
always welcome to stay with us.

I know you were more hoping to stay with  
everyone else again, but, I talked with Sparks  
about it earlier today, and she agreed.  
You're a part of our community too.

RICKY

That's really, really kind of you both. Thank  
you, Canary. I'll have to take you up on that  
offer.

They hug.

ISABELLA, SAMUEL, and SANDRA walk  
together up to the house.

Sandra is carrying a TOTE BAG.

ISABELLA

See, I told ya we'd find 'em here.

SAMUEL

You're always right, darling.

SANDRA

Howdy, strangers!

CANARY

Oh, hey!!!

Wow, it's so good to see you guys!

RICKY

What are you all-?

SANDRA

We talked about it. And, we think you're right. It might be better for us to stick together after all.

CANARY

Wow!! Really?

RICKY

Are you sure?

ISABELLA

Oh yea! We went up to visit Sandra right after you left and we ran into her on her way over here! She'd already made up her mind!

SAMUEL

We were thinkin', if you really were so strung up about stickin' together, then we shouldn't deny that for you.

ISABELLA

Yea!! We'd never seen ya so passionate before, Ricky. It was very moving!

RICKY

And you, Sandy...?

SANDRA

I realized soon after I was left alone that I shouldn't be. So, I brought Mazie up here with me.

Sandra grabs a hand-painted  
CERAMIC FIGURE out of her tote  
bag.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

I decided I can't live without her anymore. But, I don't want to live without you guys either. Wherever we end up going, from now on, I'm taking her with me.

RICKY

Wow. That's a beautiful idea, Sandy!

SAMUEL

Yes, I'm sure Mazie will love that!

SANDRA

I think so too.

...

Um, before we go, I would like to have a little bit of a ceremony for her here, in front of the house. If that's alright with everyone.

CANARY

Of course!

SAMUEL

Please, go ahead, Sandra.

Sandra places the ceramic figure onto the top step of the home. She takes a few steps back to rejoin the group before speaking to it.

SANDRA

Hey, Mazie.

...

I guess I've never really been able to properly introduce you to my friends, huh?

CANARY

Well, now's the perfect time! You should do it while most of us are here together.

SANDRA

Thank you, Canary. You're right! Um... So,

This is my friend from high school, Samuel, and his wife, Isabella.

Samuel waves politely.

SAMUEL

Hello!

ISABELLA

It's a pleasure to meet you, Mazie. You're just as beautiful as Sandra described you.

SANDRA

This is Ricky, the person who I started the home with.

RICKY

Hi!

SANDRA

And this, is Canary. They are the coolest person I know, aside from you, dear.

CANARY

It's so wonderful to meet you, Miss Mazie!

SANDRA

It's a shame that Emiele isn't here. You... you would have loved them so much.

They bring so much simple joy to my life, just like you do. Hopefully I'll be able to introduce you two sometime soon.

This place, where we're at right now, is the Old Folks' Folks Home! This is where I've been the whole time while I was gone. And this is where we were supposed to grow old together. Well, old-er.

Unfortunately, we're not allowed to go inside anymore. But, our heart's still in there.

You would have loved it here. It was so full of charm. And, knowing you, you would have made it even more charming. You have such a grandma way of decorating, love. It would have been perfect.

...

It was perfect. I have the perfect friends, dear. You've left me in such wonderful, caring hands. I hope you know that. I've been taken care of all this time.

A group hug.

Now, we're going to have to go someplace else. But, we're going together. All together. These guys are my family, now. And of course, you are too. I hope to never be separate from any of you ever again.

RICKY

We won't be, Sandra. I can promise both of you that.

Sandra picks Mazie up off of the top step and gives her a smooch (wow, that's dusty!) before putting her back in the tote bag.

CANARY

Well, I guess I'd better go tell Sparks that we're gonna have a lot more company now!

SAMUEL

No need to go alone! Why don't we all go down there together?

SANDRA

Yes! I would love to see her again. There's still so much we need to catch up about!

CANARY

Heck yeah! Then, let's go!

ISABELLA

Oooh, how exciting! It's like we're all goin' on a brand new advencha!

Just as they begin walking away,

HONK HONK

A TRUCK HOEN bleats at them from down the street.

EMIELE'S TRUCK pulls up in front of the house. The trunk bed is full of piles of CASH.

The folks all stare, agape in shock and awe.

EMIELE hops out of the truck. Their clothes are covered with thick, black goo.

EMIELE

Hey!!

They try to embrace their friends, who step back in repulsion.

...

What's the matter with you guys?

Did'ya all just go to a funeral or somethin'?

SANDRA

Emiele, what IS that?

EMIELE

Oh, yeah. This gunk.

RICKY

What the hell did you do?!

ISABELLA

Did you just rob a bank?!

EMIELE

Not this time!!

SAMUEL

Alright, who taught them how to use a printer?

SANDRA

Nuh-uh. No way we're gonna buy the house back  
with counterfeit money-

EMIELE

Relax, y'all!!  
All of THIS-

They pat the bed of the truck.

Is MY hard-earned cash!

CANARY

...  
Emiele, it's been less than 24 hours since the  
last time we saw you.

ISABELLA

What the hell happened?

EMIELE

I'll tell ya!

OIL SPILLS starts.

WHEN I GOT HOME TO MY FARM E-STATE,

I DID WHAT I ALWAYS DO,

CANARY

What's that?

EMIELE

I PUT ON MY OL' GARDENIN' GLOVES

TO TEND TO WHAT I GREW,

ISABELLA

You're a //gardener?

EMIELE

//BUT AS I BENT DOWN OVER TO DIG HOLES IN GROUND I'VE TILLED...

...  
OUT SHOT UP!

A BIG DARK GLUCK!

AND THOUSANDS,

AND THOUSANDS,

OF GALLONS OF OIL SPILLED!!



RICKY

...  
You struck OIL?!

SAMUEL

How is that even possible?!

EMIELE

Well, I'm not too sure! All I know is one moment I was diggin' away, trying to plant my petunias, then the next, I was covered in all this uck!

SANDRA

That's... disgusting.

CANARY

Then what happened?

EMIELE

BEFORE I EVEN KNEW IT,  
B'FORE I EVEN MADE A SOUND,  
A BUNCHA BIG TALL MEN IN SUITS  
HAD GATHERED ALL AROUND,

ISABELLA

Oh no.

EMIELE

THEY TOLD ME THAT THEY'D BUY OFF  
MY E-STATE, AND PAID IN BILLS...

...  
SO I PACKED MY STUFF,  
GOT IN MY TRUCK,  
AND THOUSANDS,

EMIELE (CONT'D)

AND THOUSANDS,  
OF GALLONS OF OIL SPILLED!

RICKY

You really sold your estate?

EMIELE

Yup!

SANDRA

And you came straight here, with an uncounted,  
brand-new-home-sized pile of cash?

EMIELE

Yup!

ISABELLA

Then what're ya doin here for?? You should be  
off in Maine or somewhere!

EMIELE

I HAVEN'T GOT NO USE FOR MAINE,  
NO USE FOR GLAM AND PEARLS,  
I'VE REALIZED I ONLY NEED ONE THING  
AS THIS LIFE O'MINE UNFURLS,  
A HOME TO LIVE WITH ALL YOU PRICKS,  
TO BE WITH YOU ALL STILL...

FOLKS

Awwwww!

EMIELE

...  
SO I PACKED MY STUFF,  
GOT IN MY TRUCK,  
AND THOUSANDS,  
AND THOUSANDS,  
OF GALLONS OF OIL SPILLED!

FOLKS

YOU PACKED YOUR STUFF,  
GOT IN YOUR TRUCK,  
AND THOUSANDS,  
AND THOUSANDS,  
OF GALLONS OF OIL SPILLED!

The folks briefly celebrate  
together, they swing together arm  
in arm.

Emiele approaches Sandra with the  
TRUCK KEYS.

EMIELE

Miss Sandra,

They offer her the keys. Maybe they're even down on one knee.

It would be an honor for you to have this truck of mine.

And everything inside of it. Of course.

SANDRA

Emiele...

She helps them back up to their feet.

You don't need to give me your whole truck, goofball.

ISABELLA

But you will take the cash, right?

SANDRA

Of course! I'm not stupid!

She grabs the keys.

We're getting the home back!!

FOLKS

Woo!!

Sandra, Samuel, Isabella, Ricky, and Canary all pile into the truck and drive away.

Emiele puts the OLD FOLKS' FOLKS HOME sign back up.

EMIELE

So, we got the ol' home back. But, with the extra cash, we decided to make some changes.

Sandra, Ricky, Samuel, and Isabella return with the truck. The trunk bed is now filled with BUILDING and CLEANING SUPPLIES.

Ricky, Samuel, and Isabella unload the truck while Sandra unlocks the home, and walks in.

Inside is a tad dusty and dark, and the once busy walls are now an empty canvas.

EMIELE (CONT'D)

It's not an easy job, but, with enough elbow grease, and other types of grease, we're able to flip this ol' dust bag into a real, thriving, bustling community center!

Ricky uses a FEATHER DUSTER and a VACUUM to tidy the place up.

Isabella wipes down the surfaces with a CLOTH.

Samuel rearranges the remaining furniture to how it should be.

With a new perspective on how to run the place, it seemed fitting to switch up some of the decoration, too!

Sandra brings in Ricky's NEW BOUQUET in a VASE.

She places it down on the freshly wiped off table.

Canary walks in with SPARKS, who is holding their SLEEPING BAGS.

EMIELE (CONT'D)

And Canary ended up bringing Sparks back here, too! They're real friendly, and they've been helpin' us get the home back in a better state.

Canary takes a BROOM and starts to sweep the floors.

Sparks helps Samuel measure the hole in the wall

Isabella hangs the PICTURES back up on the walls. Pictures of Sandra and Mazie are up there now, too.

Emiele pulls out a GARDENING SHOVEL and digs in the dirt outside.

EMIELE (CONT'D)

Yep! As any self-respecting gardener should know, all it really takes to grow a home is love, a couple of gay people, and...

Emiele magically produces a NEWEST BOUQUET of flowers.

At the same time, the wall is fixed, Ricky gets a NEW RECLINER, and the home is magically turned pink!

a little magic!

They pass the bouquet to Sandra, who kisses them on the head in return.

Canary sits down at the piano and starts to play the FINALE.

CANARY

WHEN YOU'RE OUT OF LUCK AND LONELY,  
AND YOU'VE GOT NOWHERE TO GO,

CANARY AND RICKY

WHEN YOUR HOME STOPS BEING HOMELY,  
AND YOU FEEL LIKE YOU'RE ALONE,

CANARY, RICKY, AND SANDRA

THERE'S A PLACE WHERE WE CAN ALL BE,  
GENUINELY OURSELVES!

FOLKS

YOU CAN FIND ME DOWN THE ROAD,  
AT THIS LITTLE PLACE I KNOW,

...

YEAH I KNOW IT'S KINDA OLD,

CANARY

BUT THIS PLACE IS REALLY MY HOME!

Emiele exits and comes back with a BASKET OF VEGETABLES that they hand off to Samuel.

EMIELE AND SAMUEL

A COMMUNITY FOR ME...

Ricky goes out to look at the front of the home, and notices the sign is missing something.

Isabella and Sparks change out all the light bulbs.

ISABELLA AND SPARKS

THERE'S NO PLACE I'D RATHER BE!

SANDRA PLACES THE CERAMIC FIGURES  
ON THE TABLES AND SHELVES. SHE  
INTRODUCES THEM TO EMIELE.

SANDRA AND EMIELE  
AND I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE WITH ME...

Samuel uses the vegetables to make  
DINNER.

All of the folks except for Ricky,  
hungry from hard work, gather  
around the kitchen table.

Samuel notices Ricky is still  
painting outside. He walks out to  
him.

SAMUEL

Ricky, dinner's ready!

Ricky uses PAINT to make the sign  
out front say THE OLD FOLKS'  
COMMUNITY CENTER.

RICKY

Yeah, I'm comin'.

Ricky walks inside the community  
center to join his friends.

BLACKOUT.

The piano turns to a low rumble.

EMIELE (V.O.)

Ladies and gentlemen! Or, whatever you freaks  
are.

The Old Folk's Folks Home Community Center of  
Gayness and Wellness proudly presents... our  
first annual... talent show!

LIGHTS UP.

IN FRONT OF THE OLD FOLKS' FOLKS  
HOME COMMUNITY CENTER OF GAYNESS  
AND WELLNESS

There are chairs set up in the  
lawn, and the front steps have  
been transformed into a mini  
stage!

A TIP JAR that says "proceeds towards your local LGBTQ+ charities and organizations" is passed around the audience.

CANARY at the PIANO and SPARKS on the stage, shredding her ELECTRIC GUITAR. They're both dressed up nice, but still distinctive in their styles!

SPARKS

I'M GONNA RAISE UP THIS OLD MAN!

I'M GONNA SHARE HIS VOICE WITH THE UNIVERSE!

I'M GONNA HELP HIM UNDERSTAND,

HE'S MORE THAN WHAT HE SAYS HE'S DEEMED HE'S WORTH!

A COMMUNITY FOR ME,

THERE'S NO PLACE I'D RATHER BE!

SANDRA, SAMUEL, and ISABELLA step out from the home. They are dressed to slay.

SANDRA

Swing her, Sam!

Samuel swings Isa, twirls her, lifts her up, spins her around, EVERYTHING!

The crowd goes wild!

WHEN YOU'RE OUT OF LUCK AND LONELY,

YOU'VE GOT SOMEPLACE TO GO,

WHERE THE COMPANY IS LOVELY,

BE IT RAIN, SUN, OR SNOW!

AND IF THE LOVE IS LOST, OR IN DISREPAIR,

THERE IS NO NEED TO BE SCARED!

FOR A LOVING HOME, IF BROKEN,  
CAN ALWAYS BE REPAIRED!

DANCE BREAK

Samuel and Isabella crank out the craziest swing-waltz they possibly could manage. The crowd goes wild.

RICKY emerges from the house wearing his TAP SHOES, and a nice little TUXEDO.

He does a little TAP SOLO, then gestures for Canary to join him. They are also wearing TAP SHOES!

They tap together, at Canary's skill level. It's really cute!

EMIELE emerges from the house in a tall TOP HAT and a MAGIC CAPE. They're shuffling magic cards everywhere. They POOF a magic cloud out of their MAGIC BUTT.

FOLKS  
A COMMUNITY FOR ME!  
WHERE THE LOVE WILL SET YOU FREE!  
AND I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE WITH ME!

SANDRA  
AT THE OLD FOLKS,

FOLKS  
FOLKS HOME!

Emiele plays out the final riff with their MAGIC WAND. It sounds just like a kazoo.

BLACKOUT.

END OF PLAY.