

NAT. I wish someone had sat me down when Arthur died. I wish someone gave me a little advice.

BECCA. You know what *I* wish?! *I* wish you would stop comparing Danny to Arthur! *Danny* was a four-year-old boy who chased his dog into the street! *Arthur* was a thirty-year-old *heroin* addict who *hung* himself! Frankly I resent how you keep lumping them together. *(Silence.)*

NAT. He was still my son.

BECCA. And I don't recall anyone giving you instructions on how best to grieve for him. *(Beat.)* I think it's time for me to go to bed now. *(Turns to her sister.)* Izzy, I hope you enjoy the bathroom set.

IZZY. I'm gonna. *(Becca heads upstairs. Izzy loads the dishwasher. Nat is still shaken by Becca's comment.)*

NAT. I was never that mean to anyone. When Arthur died, I was just as upset as she was, but I never took it out on other people like that.

IZZY. What about Mrs. Bailey?

NAT. *(Turns to her, annoyed.)* Nobody's talking about Mrs. Bailey. Izzy, please.

HOWIE. You know what this was about?

IZZY. *(Regarding Nat.)* Yeah, *her* and her mouth.

HOWIE. I knew the party was a bad idea.

IZZY. *(To Nat.)* Didn't I tell you not to get into anything with her?

HOWIE. We got a letter today. From Jason Willette. *(Beat.)*

NAT. What, why? What'd he want?

HOWIE. She said it didn't bother her but ... *(Regarding the gathering.)* Sorry, Iz.

IZZY. No, hey, this was *great*, really. Let's do it again *next* year. *(Crossfade to:)*

Scene 4

Later that night. Lights up on Danny's room. It looks essentially the same as it did when Danny was alive. The door opens and Becca enters. She doesn't come in here often. She quietly closes the door behind her. She looks around a bit, then takes a seat on Danny's bed. She takes a letter out of an envelope and rereads it. Lights up on Jason Willette, seventeen.

JASON. Dear Mr. and Mrs. Corbett, I wanted to send you my condolences on the death of your son, Danny. I know it's been eight months since the accident, but I'm sure it's probably still hard for you to be reminded of that day. I think about what happened a lot, as I'm sure you do, too. I've been having some troubles at home, and at school, and a couple people here thought it might be a good idea to write to you. I'm sorry if this letter upsets you. That's obviously not my intention. Even though I never knew Danny, I did read that article in the town paper, and was happy to learn a little bit about him. He sounds like he was a great kid. I'm sure you miss him a lot, as you said in the article. I especially liked the part where Mr. Corbett talked about Danny's robots, because when I was his age I was a big fan of robots, too. In fact I still am, in some ways — ha ha. I've enclosed a short story that's going to be printed in my high school lit magazine. I don't know if you like science fiction or not, but I've enclosed it anyway. I was hoping to dedicate the story to Danny's memory. There aren't any robots in this one, but I think it would be the kind of story he'd like if he were my age. Would it bother you if I dedicated the story? If so, please let me know. The printer deadline for the magazine is March 31st. If you tell me before then, I can have them take it off. *(Becca flips through the story enclosed.)* I know this probably doesn't make things any better, but I wanted you to know how terrible I feel about Danny. I know that no matter how hard this has been on me, I can never understand the depth of your loss. My mom has only told me that about a hundred times — ha ha. I of course wanted to say how sorry I am that things happened the way they did, and that I wish I had driven down a different block that day. I'm sure you do, too. Anyway, that's it for now. If you'd like to let me know about the dedication, you can email me at the address above. If I don't hear from you, I'll assume it's okay. Sincerely, Jason Willette. *(Beat.)* P.S. Would it be possible to meet you in person at some point? *(The lights slowly fade on Jason. Becca puts the story and letter aside. She just sits on the bed, taking in the room. Meanwhile, the lights rise on Howie in the living room. It's that same night. Nat and Izzy have gone home. Howie plunks into his chair and grabs a couple remotes. He clicks on the TV, then hits play on the VCR. We hear a documentary on tornadoes playing. Howie is confused. Something isn't right. He gets out of the chair and ejects the tape. He examines the tape, panic starts to set in. He pops the tape back in and hits play again. More tornado*