

A VISIT IN THE AFTERNOON - AUDITION SIDE

ALEX: Why are you here?

MARA: I wanted to see you before...

ALEX: Before I was dead. Good. It makes for livelier conversation. But that's not why you're here, is it?

MARA (a slight pause): No.

ALEX: So?

MARA: Mom wanted me to.

ALEX: What did she tell you about me?

MARA: I don't know. Nothing, really.

ALEX: Your mother doesn't speak about me?

MARA: She talks about you all the time, grandpa, okay? About a million ways she's been trying to make you...comfortable.

ALEX: She treats me like an animal.

MARA: No way! Mom like freaks out totally if she thinks you could be remotely in any pain.

ALEX: As I said, she treats me like an animal.

MARA: Maybe I should just leave.

ALEX: No, stay. I want you to do something for me.

MARA: Okay, like what?

ALEX: Sing for me. Please.

MARA: What??

ALEX: I hear you singing every day when you play that music. Which is every day.

MARA: I can't sing that way in here!

ALEX: Why not?

MARA: You'd hate it. And anyway, I can't sing.

ALEX: Alright, just say the words.

MARA: You wouldn't like them.

ALEX: No?

MARA: Grandpa, they're...inappropriate.

ALEX: 'Inappropriate'. What a useful word. It can mean anything at all, can't it? Having spinach on the corner of your lip, disemboweling a baby...

MARA: Trust me. You wouldn't like the lyrics.

ALEX: I know. I've heard them coming from your room.

MARA: Then why did you ask me to say them? I mean, what is wrong with you?

ALEX: A migrating carcinoma. Or so they tell me.

MARA: No, with your goddamn head! Why do you always have to get over on everybody? Why? I mean, are you just what...intrinsically vile? You have people actually trying to love you! Is this how you get off?

ALEX: 'Intrinsically vile.' You're articulate tonight, Mara. Is there an unfolding tragedy on your iPhone? Have you been -- unfriended?

MARA: I love it! People my age are the ones who everybody's screaming can't connect! But it's not me, it's you. You totally can't say what you mean! You can't do it. Some wire in your brain got pulled. And it's not just since you've been sick. It's like forever.

ALEX: Don't hold back, Mara.

MARA: See?

ALEX: I see very well.

MARA (a little formal): Grandpa, is there something I can do for you before I leave?

ALEX: Like what? Rustle me up a quick opioid picnic?

MARA: So I'm just saying this one thing. I hate it that you're gonna die in like two weeks or something, okay? But if it was me, I wouldn't be wasting my time getting all random with everybody .just because I had some stupid idea it was cool.

ALEX: You haven't the slightest idea what you'd do if you were in my position.

MARA: Yeah, okay, you're right. How can I beat the death card?

ALEX: (Smiles tightly.)

MARA: I'm sorry, grandpa.