

Home Sick for Rain

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Thomas
mid-30s

Thom
mid-30s

Leonard
late 70s

The Kid
mid-20s, looks younger

Timothy
late 40s

Rachel
mid-30s

THE ACTION TAKES PLACE

in the combination living-room/dining-room/kitchen of a well-worn bungalow in the hills of eastern Los Angeles. A door opens directly from this room onto the front sidewalk. A pair of sliding-glass doors open onto a small concrete patio in the backyard. A tiny sink, mini-stove, and apartment-sized refrigerator are lined up along one wall.

The room is empty: entirely void of furniture or any personal effects. Dark patches on the walls and carpet mark where pictures once hung and furniture once stood. A narrow hall leads off to an unseen bedroom and bathroom.

THE ACTION HAPPENS

in the midst of a long, dry spell.

ALTHOUGH

Thomas and Thom represent the same character, it is not necessary for the actors who play these roles to bear a physical resemblance to each other.

THE PLAY

is performed in two acts.

ONE

[Darkness.

A sudden, apocalyptic noise.

Then,

tight, incredibly bright light on Thomas, alone.

He stares; deer in the headlights. His breathing is rapid and shallow. Several mis-matched travel bags lie at his feet. Struggling to gain control of his thoughts and (to some extent) his body, Thomas speaks directly to the audience.]

THOMAS

You go.

You go and you're. . .

You're. . .

You go and you're gone. You're
away.

Then, you come back.

You go, you're away, you come back and,
and, and. . .

You try.

You do. You try.

Try to,

to, to. . .

With all your might, try to figure out,

try

in the face of everything. . .

THOMAS (Con't.)
Everything coming at you.
Everything you try,
in the face of everything,
everything you try,
and then it, it
it
[bam]¹.

What happens then,
what happens. . .

What happens. . .

[bam].

You come home.

You go, you stay away, you come home. . .
You come home and,
and. . .

[Thomas feels dizzy, lost. He looks around, trying to gain his bearings. He reestablishes his connection with the audience.]

Abraham was a rich man.
He had many tents.
He had
flocks
beyond number. But no son.

So Sarai
Abraham's wife, Sari. . .
Sari comes to him. She says, Go to my maid. Go
to Hagar. So. . .
Abraham,
who is eighty-six,
Abraham lies with Hagar.
Abraham lies with Hagar and Hagar conceives, and, and,
[bam].

¹In performance, [bam] should be represented by a silent gesture. Sharp. Fierce. Startling. The entire body suspended in space. Like the memory of falling from a great height.

THOMAS (Con't.)

Then
the Angel of the Lord comes to Hagar and he says,
he says to Hagar, The baby
will be Ishmael. And Ishmael,
The Angel says,
Ishmael
will be a wild ass of a man. The Angel says that. He says, A wild
ass
of a man.
Then. . .
Later. . .

[Knocking.]

Bam!²
[bam].

[Lights up on the front door.

More knocking.]

Later
the Angel comes again.
Only this time,
this time he says it is Sarah
who will conceive. And Abraham,
Abraham laughs.
Because now Abraham is ninety-nine.
And Sarah is ninety. And how can they conceive?
But they do. And that baby,
their second son. . .
Isaac is the, the, the. . .

[More knocking.]

Bam.

[More knocking .]

Bam.

²Bam, without brackets, should be spoken; the verbal equivalent of the gesture that represents [bam]. Percussive. Violent. Angry. Unexpected.

THOMAS (Con't.)

[More knocking.]

[bam].

[Thomas turns to look.

Thom appears, for a moment, in the door's glass window.

Thomas turns back to face the audience.]

Abraham
in my head because of, of, of
of the comfort.
And the terror.
Because of the comfort and the terror
of Abraham's strength.

[Thom appears at the patio door. He carries a well-worn backpack on one shoulder. He presses his face into the glass; cups his hands around his eyes; peers into the room.

Thomas, seeing Thom from the corner of his eye, turns and watches.

Thom tries a patio door and, surprised to find it unlocked, slides it open. He pokes his head into the room.]

THOM
Hello?

[No answer.

Thom steps, cautiously, across the threshold.

Lights up to reveal the entire room.]

THOM
Anybody here?

THOMAS
Everything I've been through. . .
Everything I tried. Everything I couldn't--

THOM
Hello?

THOMAS
Even when I thought about quitting
I went on.

LEONARD [Off.]
Go away!

THOM
Is this 1607 Arroyo Secca Boulevard?

[No answer.]

THOM
Arroyo Secca--

LEONARD [Off.]
I don't eat cookies and my soul's already saved.

THOM
Leonard?

LEONARD
I got a gun.
It's a thirty-ought-six.
Got it from my Daddy who got it off a dead Indian.
That's why there's the curse.

THOM
Leonard Reynard?

LEONARD
I shoot while you're breaking-and-entering
there's not a court between here and Cimarron will find me guilty.
I'm going to aim for your leg,
but
truth be told,
I'm just as likely to hit you in the nuts.

THOM
Leonard it's me.
Thomas.

THOMAS
This was yesterday.

LEONARD
Thomas?

THOM
Yes.

THOMAS
Yesterday
about one-thirty.

[Leonard pokes his head, cautiously, out of the darkened hallway arch. Seeing Thom, he extends an impressive, but obviously toy, rifle. He points the rifle directly at Thom's head.]

THOM
Jesus!

[Leonard moves, cautiously, from the hallway into the room. He keeps the rifle trained on Thom's head.]

LEONARD
When's your birthday?

THOM
June 14, 1968.

LEONARD
Your mother's maiden name?

THOM
Mitten.

LEONARD
Your first pet?

THOM
[Confident.] A German shepherd--

LEONARD
[Refining his aim at Thom's head.] Before that.

[Thom thinks.]

LEONARD
Before the shepherd.

THOM
Before the shepherd?

LEONARD
A Scottie.

THOM
Oh--

[Leonard narrows in on the space between Thom's eyes.]

LEONARD
A black Scottie.

THOM
Right.
[Thom thinks.]

THOM
I was so young.

LEONARD
Started with T.

THOM
I hardly remember--

LEONARD
T. R.

[Thom thinks.]

LEONARD
T. R.
[Sounding out the letters. Leading Thom to the answer.] Tr-- Tr-- Trou--

THOM
Trout.

LEONARD
Right.

[Leonard relaxes; lowers the rifle.

Leonard and Thom regard each other across the distance. Then,
Leonard heads for the hallway.]

LEONARD

Hold on--
Just give me, I gotta--

[Leonard disappears into the darkness.

Thom, alone. Awkward in an unfamiliar space.]

THOMAS

You get on the train.
Stomach full of knots.
Pictures in your head. Pictures
of people coming home. Pictures you've seen.
Other families.
Others coming home.
Family on the porch. Turkey in the oven.
Hugs and kisses.
Knowing that won't happen. Not for you.
Knowing your coming home--

[The sound of the toilet flushing.

Leonard re-enters. He holds the rifle (relaxed) at his side.]

LEONARD

You broke in, I was sitting on the throne.
That stuff sits around long enough the place develops a stink.
It's really you?

THOM

It's really me.

[Thom looks around the empty room.]

THOM

So.
This is where you're living?

LEONARD

Yep.

THOM

That must have been quite a job.
Moving from
out at the ranch. All the way into here.
What'd you do with all your stuff?

LEONARD

[Suddenly prickly.] Stuff?

THOMAS

That was bad.
Moving too fast--

LEONARD

What'd I do with my stuff?

THOM

Yeah.
With all the, the
with the furniture. The piano. Mom
had all that, that--

LEONARD

You're worried about stuff?

THOM

She had that cabinet with the china--

[Leonard raises the rifle once again.]

LEONARD

Why you come back?

THOM

I'm home for a visit.

LEONARD

You hear I'm not well?

THOM

No.

LEONARD

People talking behind my back?

THOM
What?
A fellow can't come visit his only dad?

[Leonard eyes Thom suspiciously.]

THOM
You're not going to do much damage with a,
a, a, a,
a plastic
rifle.

[Leonard lowers the gun.]

LEONARD
It's pretty real though,
wouldn't you say? [Conspiratorially.] Scares the shit out of the gang-bangers.
They get to hopping around. Standing on the corner--

THOM
You pull that on the street?

LEONARD
I stand myself in the doorway. . .

[Leonard positions himself so that he looks very much like John
Brown in John Stuart Curry's painting.]

LEONARD
[Screaming.] Get away. Move
you little fuckers.
[Waving the gun.] Git! Git!

THOM
Jesus.

LEONARD
[Triumphant.] Yeah.

[Silence.]

Leonard regards Thom.]

LEONARD
You're taller.

THOM
What?

LEONARD
You were never this tall.
Everyone convinced you'd be shrimpy.
Not me. Thomas
is going to be the tall one, that's what I'd say.
Was I right?

THOM
I'm the same--

LEONARD
You're over my head.
You start grade school you come up to here.
Junior high graduation you come up to here.
You get your wrestling letter you come up to here. Even then
you're only up to here. But now!
You've grown.
You're tall now, right?

[Leonard crosses to Thom; stands next to him for the first time.]

LEONARD
[Putting his hand on Thom's shoulder.] Am I right?

[Thomas watches; his energy focused entirely on Thom.]

THOM
You're right.

THOMAS
[Upset by Thom's capitulation.] Ahhh!

LEONARD
Of course I'm right.

THOMAS
Bam!

THOM
What do you think?

THOMAS
His hand
pressing--

THOM
Two--

THOMAS
His voice--

THOM
-- three inches taller?

THOMAS
His eyes--

LEONARD
More.

THOM
Really?

THOMAS
--squeezing,
twisting you into younger,
more tender--

LEONARD
I'd say four inches.

THOMAS
Bam!

LEONARD
Four inches, at least.

[Thom and Leonard laugh.]

THOM
I guess I never noticed.

LEONARD
How could you?
Living back east. Alone.
Cut off from everyone you know and love.

[Rachel appears in the inner archway. She is unseen by everyone.]

LEONARD

You might as well be living in Poland. Outer Mongolia,
for Christ's sake.
As much good as you are to people.
People visit.

THOM

I know. I--

LEONARD

People can't visit they pick up the phone. People have people
who love and miss them, they make a call.

THOM

I, I, I--

LEONARD

People don't let people they love just die--

[Rachel puts her hand on Leonard's shoulder.

He is, suddenly, calm.

She disappears back into the darkened hallway.

Thomas, from the corner of his eye, sees movement. He turns, but is
too late to see Rachel. He walks to the archway; sees nothing.

Silence.]

THOMAS

You tell yourself you're leaving
but
you'll be back.
A couple of weeks. A month. Just long enough for things to cool off and,
and
you'll be back.
Not to stay. Staying's no longer an option.
But
to visit.
To keep in touch.
Can't put your finger,
can't figure out what it was kept you,
can't tell where the time--

[Leonard's awareness returns. He sees Thom.]

LEONARD
How long you staying?

THOM
That's hard to say.

LEONARD
Why?
No money for the return?

THOM
No. Obviously I--

LEONARD
That what you're here for?
You come back to get money?

THOM
No.
I have a ticket. I, I, I,
I didn't have a ticket I wouldn't have come back.

LEONARD
Going back tomorrow?

THOM
No.

LEONARD
Saturday?

THOM
No.

LEONARD
[Referring to the backpack.] Can't be more than two underwears in there.

THOM
[Points outside the patio door.] I have more bags.

LEONARD
You have more bags?

THOM
I didn't want to bring them in 'til I knew this was the place.

[Leonard crosses to the patio doors; looks outside.]

LEONARD
Christ Almighty.
You got suitcases for a circus.
You moving back?

THOM
No.

LEONARD
Good.
Grown kids are like fish. Three days and they stink.

[Leonard moves to the hallway.

Thom gathers a small amount of courage.]

THOM
[A new tone to his voice.] Listen.

[Leonard stops.]

THOMAS
Yes!

THOM
I know me showing up like this. . .
It's probably not
what you were expecting.
I wanted to call. I thought we, we,
I thought we could talk. I thought that would be good.
But
you've got no phone. At least I couldn't. . .
I, I, I
I tried to find a number--

LEONARD
You got my letter?

THOM
Exactly.
So I thought--

LEONARD

I sent one to The Bastard.
You didn't expect that,
did you? That
is a real kick in the nuts.
You call him?
You get your letter you call The Bastard? The two of you have a little chat?

THOM

No.

LEONARD

You get back in town
you run over; have yourself a get-together?

THOM

No.

LEONARD

You two of you have yourself a little huddle?

THOM

[Emphatic.] No.
I got off the train, I
I, I,
I got my bags, I came straight here.

LEONARD

Straight from the station?

THOM

I got my bags--

LEONARD

You got more bags?

THOM

A few.

LEONARD

[Walking into the hallway.] Don't be thinking to bring them in here.

THOM

What?

LEONARD

[Off.] I'll be right. . .

THOM

Don't
talk and walk away at the same--

LEONARD

[Off. Muffled.] A man needs a place. . .

[Thom walks into the archway.]

THOM

I can't understand--

LEONARD

[Off. Muffled.] I'm coming right. . .

THOM

I can't hear a word--

[Leonard returns carrying a busted-up, folding lawn chair.]

LEONARD

A man needs a place to sit.

[Leonard struggles to set up the chair.]

LEONARD

Shouting.
Acting like you were raised in a barn.
Who taught you that?

[Leonard succeeds, finally, at getting the chair set up. He sits in the chair; looking through the glass patio doors to the mountains in the distance.]

THOMAS

I was trying to be open.
Trying not to let feelings,
patterns
from the past--

THOM

You asked if I had bags--

LEONARD
You have bags?

THOM
A few.

THOMAS
I should have gone.
I should have turned and gone and never--

LEONARD
You're not dragging your rubbish into my house.

THOM
My rubbish?

[Keys in the front door.

The Kid enters.

He carries a motley assortment of overstuffed bags which he never lets out of his sight.]

THE KID
Hey Lenny.

LEONARD
Morning.

[The Kid sees Thom. Stops short.]

THE KID
[Embarrassed.] Oh, man. Sorry.
I didn't know.
I'd known you had company I wouldn't have just barged--

LEONARD
It's not company.
It's my son.

THE KID
Your son? Really?

[The Kid steps into the room.

He sets down his bags.

He pulls pieces of photographic equipment from a couple of them;
readies his equipment for a shoot.]

LEONARD
Would I lie?

THE KID
[To Thom.] You got the letter?

LEONARD
Of course he got the letter.
Why else you think he'd come from all the way back east?

THE KID
[To Thom.] That was some letter, huh?
[To Leonard.] What did I tell you?
[To Thom.] When he read me what he was sending I said you would be right out.
[To Leonard.] I said that, didn't I?
[To Thom.] That was a hell of a letter, huh?

LEONARD
Screw the letter.

THE KID
Somebody in my family sends a letter like that I'm in their face, ten-seconds flat.
I would not let that kind of a statement pass me idly by.
[An imaginary confrontation.] What is this? What in the hell am I supposed to do with
this?
[Holding a light meter to Thom's face. To Leonard.] This the bastard or the other one?

LEONARD
The other one.

THE KID
No lie?
This isn't the bastard?

[The Kid eyes Thom; setting up his shot.]

LEONARD
God's honor.

THE KID
Wow.

LEONARD
Not what you expected, right?

THE KID
Not really.

[The Kid takes a picture of Thom.]

LEONARD
He used to be shorter.

THE KID
Really?

THOM
Hey!

THOMAS
[With Thom above.] Hey!

LEONARD
Much.

THE KID
It's not his height so much as it's more --

[The Kid takes a picture.]

THE KID
I can't quite put my finger on it.

[A picture.]

THOM
What in the hell?

[The Kid stops taking pictures; holds the camera at his side.]

THE KID
[To Thom.] Must feel good to come home.

THOM
I wouldn't say I'd come home.

LEONARD
This is not a homecoming.

THOMAS
This isn't home.

LEONARD
It's a short visit.

THOMAS
It was meant to be business.

THE KID
You fly?

LEONARD
He took the train.

THOMAS
Leonard signs the papers, I get back on the train--

[The Kid resumes taking pictures.]

THOM
Hey!

THOMAS
[With Thom above.] Hey!
Squirrely fuck.
Insinuating I'm not what he expected--

THE KID
That must be some trip.

THOMAS
--Leonard acting like a watered-down Boo Radley--

THOM
How long it take you?

THOMAS
No way I could be expected,
in a situation like this,
everything there is to deal with--

THOM
Day and a-half

THOMAS
No way--

THE KID
I bet you saw some great sights.

THOMAS
Thomas,
begotten by Leonard,
finds himself back home and, and, and up to his neck, and what he--

THOMAS
It's mostly pretty flat.

THOMAS
--what he, what he did--

THE KID
Still--

THOMAS
--what he did, he--

[More pictures.]

LEONARD
That's enough.

THE KID
Got it.

[The Kid puts his camera back in his bag.]

THE KID
Oh.
Helen says Hi, by the way.

LEONARD
You tell her Hi right back.

THE KID
Gonna be worse than yesterday. Thermometer over at Lucky Eddie's says it's already
eighty-four.
[To Thom.] Bet you're not used to all this heat.

THOM

I remember what it's like. We grew up on a ranch--

THE KID

Out by Adelanto. Lenny told me.

THOMAS

This here. This. . .

I should have realized--

THE KID

Nice place, huh?

THOMAS

All that flashing. The light
bam! bam!

Right in my face. That
threw me off.

When it stopped,
when that, that, when that
when the flashing stopped--

THE KID

All that building they're doing.
Big spread like that would be worth a ton of money.

THOMAS

How the hell does he know about the ranch?

That
should have been my clue.

LEONARD

Any rain in the forecast?

THE KID

Nada.

Four-hundred twenty-seventh day in a row with no measurable precipitation.

That's what it says on the board over at Lucky Eddie's.

Coming up on the record.

You picked a propitious time. I said that, remember? I said,

We're living in a propitious time.

[Putting groceries from one of his bags in the refrigerator.] Got you one of the
grapefruit-mango, and two of the orange-cranberry, plus I got an apple-raisin
powerbar.

LEONARD
Nope.

THE KID
Nope--

LEONARD
Nope to the powerbar.

THE KID
Lenny--

LEONARD
What did I tell you?

THE KID
Just a little something.

LEONARD
We talked about this.

THE KID
Cold turkey's too much of a shock.

LEONARD
You asked did I want something to eat. Something solid.
What did I say?

THE KID
You need to ease your way--

LEONARD
Some grapes,
you said. What did I tell you?

THE KID
It's a little, tiny--

LEONARD
You asked about grapes. What did I say?

THE KID
You said, No.

LEONARD
No. And what else?

THE KID
No, and you're through with solid food.

LEONARD
Because?

THE KID
Lenny--

LEONARD
Through with solid food because?

THE KID
Don't make me say it.

LEONARD
Through with solid food--

THE KID
Please.

LEONARD
I'm through with solid food because--

THE KID
Not in front of your son.

LEONARD
Through with solid food because--

THE KID
The one who's not the bastard.

LEONARD
Through with solid food--
Say it!
I'm through with solid food because--

THE KID
-- because you're tired of making crap.

LEONARD
Exactly!
I'm not making any more crap.
Eat it.

THE KID

What?

LEONARD

You're so anxious for someone to eat, you eat it. Here.
Where I can see you.

[The Kid moves into a position directly in front of Leonard.

Thom looks on with disbelief as The Kid eats the powerbar³.]

When The Kid is finished eating, Leonard makes a "come here"
motion with his hands. The Kid crosses to him.]

LEONARD

You got change from the money I gave you?

THE KID

Yeah.

LEONARD

Keep it.

It's good for a kid, knowing he's got some bucks in his pocket.

[He gives The Kid a series of gentle "good boy" slaps on the face.]

You're a good kid, you know that?

[A small, knowing laugh from Thomas.]

THE KID

You ready for our walk?

LEONARD

I need to change my shoes.

THE KID

Me, too.

I'll go do that, then be right back.

[To Thom.] Maybe I'll see you around.

THOM

I expect you will.

[The Kid picks up his bags; exits.]

³Allow this action to take as long as it takes.

Leonard moves towards the hallway arch.]

THOM
Who was that?

LEONARD
Who was who?

THOM
Who was the kid?

LEONARD
Oh.
That was the kid.

THOM
The kid?

LEONARD
The kid.
He's the kid.
He helps me out. Cashes my security for me.

THOM
He cashes your check?

LEONARD
[Conspiratorially.] We got us a girl over at the Exchange. Helen.
He slips her a ten and she pushes it through, no questions.

THOM
Does he have a name?

LEONARD
Who?

THOM
The kid.

LEONARD
William.
He lets me call him Bill.

THOM
You known him a long time?

LEONARD
Since April.

THOM
How'd you meet?

LEONARD
I was having a taco. He asked to borrow part of my paper.

THOM
He's got a key to your house?

LEONARD
You saw him didn't you?
When he came in. Through the door.
Which was locked.
Using a key that he has that unlocks the door.
Obviously, he's got--

THOM
You're right.
I saw he's got a key. That's not the point--

LEONARD
You asked did he have a key--

THOM
I know. What I meant--

THOMAS
Dancing around.

THOM
How well do you know him?

THOMAS
Pussy-footing--

THOM
You're sure you can trust him?

LEONARD
Hauls my laundry, mails the utilities, carries out the trash.
You see anyone else willing to do that for me?

THOMAS
Useless, impotent--

LEONARD
You got a list of names--

THOMAS
Thomas;
begotten by Leonard. . .

LEONARD
-- people signing up to come over?

THOMAS
A person can't be helpful--

LEONARD
Any sons,
anxious to see to it I'm alright?

THOMAS
-- he should get the hell out of Dodge

LEONARD
He stood there, two nights ago, tears in his eyes.
Said it came to him all the sudden.
Standing out there, looking at the stars and it comes to him wasn't it a shame about those
astronauts? Blown up like that.
Dying in flames at the prime of their life.
First, that one with that teacher, then the other one.
Heroes.
Every single one.
Tears in his eyes.
You gonna tell me a boy's got a heart like that and he's not someone I can trust?

THOMAS
I have to say,
from what I've seen, it, it, it. . .
The whole situation,
it
looks questionable.
All those bags?
Does he have a job? Do you know where he lives?
Does he have family?

LEONARD
He lives in my garage.

THOM
Your garage?

LEONARD
He's made himself a little nest.
That
is a kick in the nuts.

THOM
This
is what I mean.
You cannot have some kid
sleeping
in your garage. It's not, not, it's not
it's just not. . .
I'm sure it's all okay,
but
this is how things start.
A kid finds someone who is
is, is, is,
maybe,
is older and, and
alone
and they, they, they, they
they worm their way in.
They
take advantage.

LEONARD
He's not taking advantage.

THOM
It might not seem like that. Not at first.
But later on-

LEONARD
He's got no reason.
I made him my heir.

THOM
What?
You what--

LEONARD

Signed it over. Everything I have.
Totally his.

THOM

You told him he's your heir?

LEONARD

Got to change my shoes.

THOM

You made him your heir?
Actually made him. . .
You made it legal? You signed papers?

LEONARD

Timothy's here.
Lives not too far. . .
Snoops around when he thinks I'm unaware. Thinks he knows what's going on.
There's things he doesn't see.
You tell him that.
You get together, you tell him that. Tell him there's lots
of things
the bastard doesn't see.

[The Kid at the front door.

He wears walking shoes. He carries, in addition to his own bags, the
numerous bags Thom left on the back patio.]

THE KID

Hey, Lenny. Hey, Tommy.
[Struggling to get all the bags in through the door.] Jesus-fuckin'-son-of-a-bitch.
[Finally through the door. To Leonard.] Sorry.
[To Thom. About the bags.] These yours?
You shouldn't leave 'em out like that. Someone walks by; grabs 'em. Where would you
be?
[To Leonard.] I thought you were changing your shoes.

LEONARD

Buster and I were having a heart-to-heart.

THOMAS

If I hadn't been so thrown by the flashing,
the flashing and the, the, the,
the photographic flashing photographic, what Leonard said,
making him his heir. . .
Flaunting his paternal disregard. . .
I would have given him a piece,
given that kid a piece of my mind.

[The Kid stands holding Thom's bags.]

THE KID

Where do you want--

[Thom points to where Thomas' bags lie.

The Kid puts down the bags; steps back to admire them.]

THE KID

Those are some swell bags.
I bet life's a heck of a lot easier; a guy's lucky enough to have bags like that.
[Silence.]

LEONARD

[Off. Garbled.] Bring the chair.

THE KID

[Calling off.] What?

LEONARD

[Off.] The
chair.

[The Kid picks up the chair, moves towards the hall.

Thom steps in front of him, cutting him off.]

THOM

Bill--

THE KID

[Correcting Thomas.] Ben.

THOM

[Thinking he's been called Ben.] No, I'm Thomas.

THE KID

Right.

You're Thomas; the anti-bastard. And I'm Ben.

THOM

Your name's not Bill?

THE KID

It's Ben.

THOM

So Ben.

You and my Dad. . . Dad says you're a big help.

THE KID

I do what I can.

THOM

Which is nice.

Considering everything there must be for a boy your age,
a boy to do. A boy your age.

I'm really very. . .

Dad says you're a great help.

THE KID

It's what anybody would do.

THOM

Listen. . .

Dad said

this crazy thing. About making you his heir.

THE KID

[Shocked.] He what?

THOM

I know it sounds ridiculous, but--

THE KID

[Embarrassed.] Fuck.

He promised he wouldn't say anything.

THOM

It's true?

THE KID
You think he would lie?

THOM
No--

THE KID
A man of his stature?
What would he gain?
You think he's playing some kind of game?

THOM
No.
Just. . .
When he said he'd made you his heir, I guess I just, I . . .

THE KID
[Sympathizing.] I know.
I told him it would be awkward. I said those
sons
of yours find out you've put everything in my name
it's going to be awkward.
Not that he would listen.
Not to me.
And not that you wouldn't find out. You'd have to find out eventually. But
to have it color your relationship. . .
That
I told your father,
that
is not good.
Not here at the end.

LEONARD
Dammit!

THE KID
You okay?

LEONARD
Broke the Peter-peckin' shoestring.

THE KID
Don't move! I'll be right there.

[The Kid drops the chair. He picks up his camera; exits into the
bedroom.]

The shadow of a flash attachment going off, repeatedly, in the bedroom.

Thomas watches as Thom moves to the archway; tries to see into the bedroom; returns to the living room; paces.]

LEONARD

Stop
the pictures.

[The flashes come to an end.

Thom hurries back to where he was when The Kid left the room; tries to appear casual.

Leonard and The Kid return from the bedroom. Leonard wears walking shoes. He is noticeably weaker, worn out from the effort of changing his shoes.]

THOM

Goin' for a walk?

LEONARD

Yep.

THOM

Shall I come?

LEONARD

[Definitive.] Nope.

THOM

How long you be gone?

LEONARD

[To The Kid.] Don't forget the chair.

THE KID

[Starting for the chair.] Sorry.

THOM

I'll put it away.

THE KID

It goes in the bedroom. Under the window. Lean it against the wall.

[Thom picks up the chair. The Kid takes his picture. The Kid takes Leonard's picture. The Kid takes several pictures of Thom and Leonard in rapid succession.

The light from the photographic flash comes, at first, from The Kid's camera. However, the size and sound of the flash grows with each shot. Soon, the flash is large enough it illuminates the entire room. The light is hot and aggressive; it comes from everywhere. The sound changes as well. It becomes sharp, combative, overpowering.]

THOM
Stop. Stop.

LEONARD
[As if reprimanding a disobedient dog.] Put the camera away.

[The Kid stops; puts the camera in one of his bags.]

LEONARD
[To The Kid.] Let's go.

THE KID
Don't forget about the chair.

THOM
I won't.

THE KID
Where you gonna put it?

THOM
In the bedroom.

THE KID
Under the window and against. . .

THOM
Against the wall.

THE KID
Right.

[The Kid picks up his bags; exits out the front door.

Leonard looks at Thom, then follows.

Thom moves to the open doorway.]

THOM
[Calling off.] I'll wait.
You get back I'll be right here.

[Thom in the doorway as lights go to black.]

END OF EXCERPT