

ACT 1, SCENE 1

Saturday, November 2, 2002. 2:35 PM.

At rise, we see a two story brick house built in 1950. Only two rooms are visible throughout the play: a living room on the first floor and the girls' old bedroom on the second floor.

The living room is decorated in a 1970s color palette with a large sunshine yellow area rug covering the floor. There is a white sofa in the middle of the room flanked by a white easy chair down stage right. The front door of the house can be found upstage left. There are a series of wall hooks next to the door on which we see a collection of jackets and scarves. There is a fireplace in the middle of the stage left wall. A steady fire is burning in it. Downstage left is an antique table with a record player on top. There is a staircase leading upstairs on the upstage wall flush against the stage right corner. Next to the staircase on the upstage wall is a door leading to the kitchen. On the stage right wall is a short bookcase. On the top of the bookshelf is a simple urn. It is surrounded on all sides by a series of photos. On the top shelf is a bottle of bourbon and several shot glasses.

RACHEL stands in the middle of the room, holding a piece of paper. KIRA and EDITHMARIE sit on the sofa as far apart as possible. ELIZABETH stands behind them. KATIE sits in the chair next to the sofa. ANNA, stands in front of the fireplace. Everyone looks ill at ease.

RACHEL

(reading)

And death shall have no dominion.
Dead man naked they shall be one
With the man in the wind and the west moon;
When their bones are picked clean and the clean bones gone,

They shall have stars at elbow and foot;
Though they go mad they shall be sane,
Though they sink through the sea they shall rise again;
Though lovers be lost love shall not;
And death shall have no dominion.

Edithmarie starts a slow clap.

EDITHMARIE

Lovely. Truly. It's an utter lie. But still, the verse is lovely.

ELIZABETH

Mom!

EDITHMARIE

What? Your father never read a book of poetry in his life. And then he leaves behind this sentimental garbage? It's a fool's fabrication.

ELIZABETH

Please, Mom.

EDITHMARIE

I shouldn't be surprised. He was an accomplished liar.

KATIE

Deceit is a family trait.

RACHEL

This isn't the time or the place.

ELIZABETH

Look, we're all here, let's try to make the best of it.

EDITHMARIE

I didn't ask you to come. This was your flake of a father's genius idea.

KATIE

Fine. I'll grab Sharon and we're out of here.

ELIZABETH

Katie, wait.

KATIE

Why? It's obvious Mom doesn't want us here.

ELIZABETH

That's not true. She's just upset.

EDITHMARIE

No, Katie's right. I don't want you here. Any of you.

KATIE

(headed towards the steps)

See. What'd I tell you.

ELIZABETH

Mom. Stop it. Katie, you can't go anywhere.

KATIE

Watch me.

ELIZABETH

There's a snow storm out there. And all the roads are closed.

EDITHMARIE

I have a shovel you can borrow. You should all go home. Especially the colored girl. I don't want her stealing anything.

RACHEL

You can't talk to Kira like that.

EDITHMARIE

This is my house. I'll say what I want. If you don't like it you can help Katie shovel.

KIRA

Forget her, Rachel. She's not worth the effort.

EDITHMARIE

That's enough out of you. You can get the hell out of my house!

KIRA

Mrs. Hunter you're fortunate that my parents raised me to respect my elders. Even the crazy racist ones.

EDITHMARIE

(laughing)

Your parents.

KIRA

You have something to say about my parents?

EDITHMARIE

You don't even /

ANNA

(trying to deescalate the situation)

Please. I recognize that this is a stressful time, but if everyone would try to calm down I'm sure that we /

EDITHMARIE

Oh shut up, Anna. No one wants to hear your Asian voice.

ANNA

Was that supposed to be an insult? I'm proud of my heritage.

EDITHMARIE

Good for you. Why don't you go home and eat a fortune cookie.

ANNA

Because I'm not Chinese. Not all Asian people are Chinese.

EDITHMARIE

Fascinating. Between you and the black girl it's a multicultural-after-school-special in here. Now, everyone get the hell out of my house.

ELIZABETH

Mom, stop it.

RACHEL

If Dad was here he'd be mortified by your behavior.

EDITHMARIE

Your father's dead. Deal with it.

Black out.

ACT 1, SCENE 2

Saturday, November 2, 2002. 1:00 PM.

The living room. DALE sits in the easy chair. EDITHMARIE moves about the living room cleaning, and placing sheets and towels on a coffee table in front of the sofa.

An old record player is playing *Chet Atkins Goes to the Movies* starting with *Emily*. The fire in the fireplace is burning steadily.

DALE

They'll be here soon.

EDITHMARIE

I know.

DALE

It'll be nice to have a full house for a change.

EDITHMARIE

It's going to be crowded, not full.

DALE

Don't be a spoil sport. Have you thought about where they'll all sleep?

EDITHMARIE

Of course. I laid out towels in the guest room for Katie and set up the girls' room for Elizabeth and Rachel, but Rachel will probably sleep on the sofa.

DALE

Why put yourself out like that? The girls can all sleep in their old room, just like when they were kids.

EDITHMARIE

They're grown women, for Pete's sake, they can't all fit in that tiny room. The things you say sometimes. I swear you're just trying to get a rise out of me. And what about the baby?

DALE

I figured she could sleep in our room.

EDITHMARIE

Be serious. Our days of staying up with crying babies are long past.

DALE

You don't seem excited to have the girls here.

EDITHMARIE

That's because I'm not.

DALE

That explains it.

EDITHMARIE

I still don't see why they have to come.

DALE

I asked them to.

EDITHMARIE

I wish you hadn't.

DALE

You don't want to see them?

EDITHMARIE

Not like this. No.

DALE

How long has it been?

EDITHMARIE

You know how long.

DALE

A year.

EDITHMARIE

A year.

DALE

Doesn't feel like it.

EDITHMARIE

I guess it wouldn't, would it.

DALE

Is that what you're going to wear?

EDITHMARIE

What's wrong with it?

DALE

Nothing. Just doesn't feel very... dressy.

EDITHMARIE

You want something *dressy*?

DALE

It might be nice.

EDITHMARIE

You're wearing jeans.

DALE

No one's going to notice what I'm wearing. You'll be the center of attention.

EDITHMARIE

Which is exactly why I didn't want anyone to come.

DALE

Maybe you can wear that black dress.

EDITHMARIE

What black dress?

DALE

The formal one you wore to my brother's funeral. You looked wonderful in that dress.

EDITHMARIE

That's a summer dress.

DALE

So?

EDITHMARIE

It's November.

DALE

And?

EDITHMARIE

And it's snowing outside!

DALE

That's a no, then?

EDITHMARIE

You're impossible. For forty three years you haven't had an opinion about what I wear. You pick today to start?

DALE

I take it back.

EDITHMARIE

You can't. It's already out there.

DALE

I take it back. You look fine. Wear what you have on.

EDITHMARIE

No. I'm not dressy enough.

She starts to walk toward the stairs.

DALE

Where are you going?

EDITHMARIE

To find a formal dress apparently.

DALE

Stockings might not be a bad idea.

EDITHMARIE

Don't push it, Dale.

DALE

I wouldn't dream of it, dear.

EDITHMARIE

You better be gone by the time I come back down. I don't want you here when the girls arrive.

I need a sandwich first.

DALE

No you don't.

EDITHMARIE

I'm starving here.

DALE

Will you please go?

EDITHMARIE

Fine. I'm leaving.

DALE

Thank you.

EDITHMARIE

You really are in a mood today.

DALE

It's your fault.

EDITHMARIE

Dale watches her go up the stairs and then lets out a slow sigh as he exits through the kitchen.

The living room is quiet for several beats. The only sound is the Chet Atkins record which has moved on to *Charade*. Outside, we hear a car pull up. A single car door opens and closes. A few beats later another car door opens and closes. The sound of footsteps trudging through snow can be heard.

After several beats the door bell rings. Nothing happens for several more beats. The door bell rings a second time. Again, nothing happens. Finally, someone puts a key in the lock and the door opens. Katie, heavily bundled in layers of sweaters, jackets, gloves, and a scarf enters holding a baby wrapped in a thick blanket. In her other hand is a single suitcase. Everything is covered in a thin layer of snow.

KATIE

(calling out)

Mom? (*To the baby.*) Well, Sharon: we're here.

Katie enters and closes the door behind her.

KATIE

Mom! Mom are you here?

Katie, carefully balancing Sharon, starts shedding layers, placing her boots on the floor under the hooks, and her jacket, scarf, and gloves on an open hook.

KATIE

Looks like we have the place all to ourselves.

EDITHMARIE

(offstage)

Katie? Katie is that you?

KATIE

Yeah, Mom. Down here.

EDITHMARIE

Hold on, I'm changing. I'll be down in a minute.

KATIE

Take your time. (*Under her voice.*) No need to rush for me.

Katie gradually becomes aware of the record playing and crosses to it.

KATIE

What is this trash? I feel like I'm in a black and white movie.

Katie turns off the record then walks around the room, taking stock of anything that's changed. On first inspection, everything seems to be the same. On closer examination, though, she notices some minor changes: a new book, a recent photo of Sharon, etc. Her eyes then fall to the urn sitting on top of the bookshelf.