

The Messiah of Main St

A play

by
Josh Belville

CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

Maria Petrovna Beloserkovsky, 80, a nun in a monastery in Norilsk, Siberia.

Irina Ivanovna Maisky, 24, her assistant.

David St. John, 28, newspaper editor turned next Messiah.

Kayla Reinhart, 26, his (ex) girlfriend.

Gail Whiting, 28, a news reporter friend and fling of David's.

Pauline St. John, 60, David's mother.

Christopher Watson, 64, a priest and friend to David and Pauline.

Act I

PROLOGUE.

Lights up on an old Russian orthodox church somewhere in Siberia. The sound of cold wind whirling outside. Deep, low chanting in the background. Maria Petrovna Beloserkovsky sits in an old rocking chair, a rickety wooden table with a single flickering candle is beside her. She seems lost in thought, but soon it becomes clear that she is listening intently to something.

A figure (Simon) stands in the shadows far in the background, barely noticeable, if at all.

Maria raises her head and looks around as if she can see, but she cannot.

MARIA

I know you are here, angel. I feel your presence. You cannot hide from me.

(silence)

You are not usually this quiet.

(more silence)

If you have prophecy to give to me, then give it!

Suddenly her body becomes stiff and her head stares straight ahead.

MARIA (cont'd)

Ira.

No answer, but Maria knows she's there.

MARIA (cont'd)

Ira, bring paper. Quickly. He is speaking to me.

Irina Ivanovna Maisky, a young orphan and personal assistant to Maria, hurries on, carrying a pen and a pad of paper. Maria stands when she enters.

MARIA (cont'd)

Here, sit.

IRINA

I should not, Masha.

MARIA

Sit, child. I cannot listen while seated.

And she begins pacing the room. Irina sits, begins writing on the paper, the date and time, perhaps, and then watches Maria with the same amazement she has had from the moment they met.

Maria paces, trying to find the proper location. After a moment she has found it, and she becomes immobile. Her eyes, formerly unseeing, now see all. She speaks in a slow drone, a voice trying desperately to tone down the power which it is being fed.

MARIA (cont'd)

Glory be to our Lord. The time has come. The Savior lives again, though he does not know it. But you know. You must find him and bring him into the light.

Maria gasps as a wealth of information fills her mind. Irina stands, ready to help her, but Maria shoots her arm out for her to stop. Irina sits again.

MARIA (cont'd)

He will be a martyr, and his death shall reunite all religions. This is the plan of our Lord. Peace and understanding shall be wrought from the next Savior's death. This is the plan of our Lord. Hallelujah.

And the voice is gone. Maria, weak, collapses to the ground. Irina rushes to her side.

IRINA

Masha! Masha! Are you alright?

MARIA

I'm fine, child. Help me up.

Irina helps Maria to her feet.

MARIA (cont'd)

Gather your things. We must leave.

IRINA

Where now?

MARIA

America.

IRINA

Is this ... the one?

MARIA

They are all the one. Come, child, we must hurry.

IRINA

But the others--

MARIA

They will understand. They will all understand.

Irina helps Maria offstage.

SCENE 1.

David St. John's living room in his apartment. It is large and clean. Windows line upstage, and various rooms connect via upstage and stage left. Stage right is the entrance.

The intercom buzzes. David enters from off, walking quickly, hands pressed together in prayer.

DAVID

Oh Lord, please let this go over well.

The intercom buzzes again. David goes to it.

DAVID (cont'd)

(hesitantly)

Who is it?

KAYLA

(offstage)

You know goddamn well who it is, open the fucking door.

David pushes a button, letting Kayla in downstairs.

DAVID

(back to prayer)

Look, Jesus, I know you and I don't talk a lot, but please, just help me out, will you? Please? Just a little? A sign? Anything?

David looks to the heavens. No answer.

DAVID (cont'd)

Fine.

Knock on the door. David opens it and Kayla Reinhart rushes in past him. She is furious.

DAVID (cont'd)
Kayla! You got here quick--

KAYLA
How could you?

DAVID
Five flights, I mean, did you *run* up, or--?

KAYLA
How could you?

DAVID
I told you I didn't want to talk about it over the phone--

She slaps him.

KAYLA
How *could* you?

DAVID
Can we sit down?

KAYLA
Oh, you want to sit down? You want this to be civilized now?
Let's be civilized. Let's sit down.

Kayla sits. David remains standing.

KAYLA (cont'd)
You're not going to sit?

DAVID
I'm afraid to now.

KAYLA
Fine. Stand. I can sit.

She pauses, trying to figure out how to begin.

DAVID
Look, Kayla, I--

KAYLA
No. You shut up. I talk now. I've gotten three phone calls so far today, David.

The first was from my brother this morning, wishing me well. He does that a lot. Now that Mom's dead, he likes to think he's the new head of the household, even if he lives halfway across the country.

The second call was from the doctor.

The tests, the ones we talked about a week ago? They're positive. The lump is malignant, and it's aggressive. I have to start chemotherapy soon. I have cancer, David. I have fucking *cancer*. I'm like a one woman after school special, like a, a bad Lifetime movie or... One doctor was hopeful, the other said we caught it too late. So much for a second opinion.

Guess who the third call was from?

DAVID

Kayla, God, I'm so sorry--

KAYLA

I have two people in this world that I love and care for, David. I have my brother, and I have you, and now you're leaving me.

DAVID

I didn't say I was leaving you.

KAYLA

It sure sounded like it.

DAVID

But I didn't *say*--

KAYLA

This isn't my first relationship, Dave. I've had The Talk before. I know how it starts. "Hey, could you come over? I think we should talk about things..." It's the vagueness. It's always the vagueness.

DAVID

It's not like that.

KAYLA

It's not? Then please, tell me what it's like.

DAVID

There's just a lot of variables.

KAYLA

Like what?

DAVID

I feel like you're making me into some kind of monster here.

KAYLA

You ARE a monster!

DAVID

I'm not, I--

KAYLA

I'm starting *chemo*, David. I'm turning into my mother! I'm going to die at 40, I--

DAVID

You're not going to die--

KAYLA

I need you now more than ever. I need you and you *abandon* me.

DAVID

It's not abandon! It's not abandon -- I just need, I need time...

KAYLA

Time for what?

DAVID

It's a lot of things, okay? It's not you, it's me, okay?

KAYLA

Oh great--

DAVID

And not, and not only that, but I didn't know about your cancer when I called.

KAYLA

You knew about the tests! You knew I was getting tested.

DAVID

You always get tested!

KAYLA

Once a year, David! That is not a lot!

DAVID

It's definitely more than once a year--

KAYLA

It's *not*.

DAVID

Well you're always complaining about it.

KAYLA

About what? About cancer?

DAVID

You're a hypochondriac, Kayla...

KAYLA

I'm *what*?

DAVID
You're always at the doctor!

KAYLA
My mother *died from breast cancer*. I don't get tests for the
fucking *flu*, I get tests for *breast cancer*. And it's not
every day, you fucking--

DAVID
Why didn't you call me when you got the results?

KAYLA
Because I was too busy sobbing my eyes out to my brother on
the phone.

DAVID
So you'd call him before me?

KAYLA
No no, don't even try to play that. You have no leverage
here.

DAVID
I'm not -- I'm sorry--

KAYLA
I'm sorry I'm not at your every beck and call, David.

DAVID
Stop that.

KAYLA
(sharply)
I'm not a hypochondriac.

DAVID
I'm sorry. You're right, that was out of line.

Pause. The two of them are still.

KAYLA
Why?
(beat)
What gives you the right--

DAVID
(overlap)
I ... I don't--

KAYLA
--to break up with me like this--

DAVID
I didn't feel like we ... connected. I don't know...

KAYLA

We've been dating for three years!

DAVID

I know. I guess I'm too nice. To tell you how I felt.

KAYLA

Too nice? You don't sound very nice right now.

DAVID

Not now, no.

KAYLA

Well please, tell me now. How do you feel?

DAVID

I feel like ... like this isn't where I want to be. In my life. With you. With ... anything. I think you're amazing, really, really amazing, but I ... I think we're ... friends. I think we're friends.

KAYLA

Friends.

DAVID

Yeah.

KAYLA

Bullshit. You don't date someone for three years and suddenly become their friend. You don't downgrade like that. Either you loved me or you didn't, or you don't love me anymore, or you never loved me, or--

DAVID

Look--

KAYLA

Is it someone else?

Beat.

KAYLA (cont'd)

Is it?

DAVID

No, of course not.

KAYLA

It's always someone else, David. It's always--

DAVID

(overlap)

It's not.

KAYLA
--someone else. Some girl at the newspaper?

DAVID
No.

She studies David's posture for a moment, then laughs.

KAYLA
I don't believe this.

DAVID
Believe what? I'm not seeing anyone else!

KAYLA
You're lying to me.

DAVID
I am not!

KAYLA
I've been with you long enough to tell when you're lying to me.

DAVID
I'm not lying.

KAYLA
(standing)
I just want you to know that I loved you...

DAVID
Kayla.

KAYLA
And that I hope you're very successful with whatever bitch you decided to fuck over at--

DAVID
(overlap)
Kayla, please!

KAYLA
--the newspaper. Was it Jessica? Cindy? Gail?
(beat)
Ooh. It was Gail, wasn't it.

DAVID
Honey...

KAYLA
Don't you 'honey' me. You have no right to call me honey now. Was it Gail?

DAVID
N...no!

KAYLA
She's been around a lot these days, hasn't she?

DAVID
No!

KAYLA
Lots of "stories" to "edit", don't you?

DAVID
Stop it. I'm not seeing her.

KAYLA
Don't you fucking lie to me, David!

DAVID
I'm not--

KAYLA
You ARE!

DAVID
Look, it's...

Beat.

KAYLA
Don't you lie to me.

DAVID
Complicated.
(beat)
We were drunk. Things got out of control.

KAYLA
I don't believe this.

DAVID
I feel like shit, okay? But it's ... I don't know.

KAYLA
You're dumping me for her, I get it.

DAVID
It's not like that.

KAYLA
(holding out her hand)
I'm shaking, David. I'm shaking. Look at this.

DAVID
(taking her hand)
Listen--

KAYLA
(rips hand away)
Don't you dare.

DAVID
We should, um--

KAYLA
We shouldn't do anything. When did it happen?

DAVID
What?

KAYLA
When. Did. It. Happen.

DAVID
Uh ... a couple weeks ago. After work.

KAYLA
So that's where you were.

DAVID
You knew where I was, I called you. We went out, everyone, I mean, from the paper, got some drinks, and ... yeah.

KAYLA
You should've just told me.

DAVID
But you'd be mad.

KAYLA
Of course I'd be mad! I'd be as pissed then as I am right now! But I can understand. I can forgive. You didn't have to just break things apart like this. Over the *phone*. Not over the phone.

DAVID
That's why I said you should come over...

KAYLA
I'm here. It doesn't change things.
(beat)

Well, David St. John, you are a piece of shit, and I have cancer. Looks like we're both pretty bad off right now.

She goes to the door. Stands at the doorway. Beat. Then turns around.

KAYLA (cont'd)
So that's it?

DAVID
What?

KAYLA
No, "Kayla, wait"? No last ditch effort?

DAVID
I ... I wouldn't want to do that to you. Where I am right now.

KAYLA
Gotcha.
(beat)
I'll be back for my things.

She exits. Beat. David sinks into the couch, pulls his cell phone out of his pocket. Dials a number.

DAVID
(into phone)
Hi... I did it. Now look ... What? ... No, I'm not going to tell you. Listen to me, that was -- that was -- hold on, let me speak, Gail. That was one of the hardest things I've ever done. I think we should ... we need to *talk* about this, Gail. ... Yes, we do. I'm leaping into ... Gail, she's ... Gail, she has *cancer*. She has cancer. She has cancer.

(beat)
I know. You can see where I'm coming from here.

As David speaks, the lights begin to get brighter and brighter. A fog rolls into the apartment. David doesn't notice this.

DAVID (cont'd)
She said six weeks, but ... Well, the doctors, they say ... I dunno, I'd say six *months*, not weeks...

A low drone is heard, raising in volume. David glances at the windows, where the brightness is almost unbearable. He notices the fog.

DAVID (cont'd)
Uh, Gail, I'll call you back. Something weird is going on in my apartment.

The drone is loud now. The apartment begins shaking. David leans against the bar.

The front door flings itself open. A bright white light emanates from outside. SIMON enters, clad in a long trenchcoat. He walks in briskly, notices the chaos around, and begins waving it off.

SIMON

Oh, come on! Stop it, stop it STOP IT! Turn those lights off, stop that ridiculous drone! The -- the whole apartment is shaking! Stop it now!

The chaos calms down. Simon brushes himself off.

SIMON (cont'd)

(shouting upward)

This isn't "Angels in America" for Your sake! I don't need a gigantic entrance! I've got wings, that's usually good enough for most people! Thank you!

(looks at David)

Ah, David, hello. I know you might think this is a bad time for divine intervention, but God thinks otherwise.

DAVID

What? What's happening?

SIMON

Don't you worry about it, young man. My name's Simon.

(he extends his hand)

I'm an angel.

DAVID

An angel?

SIMON

You're not going to shake my hand?

DAVID

What?

SIMON

I spent the past century studying your modern greeting methods. You still shake hands, right? Or have we fully moved into the "fist bump"?

DAVID

Who are you?

SIMON

I just told you. My name is Simon.

DAVID

But you just said you were an angel.

SIMON

I did.

(beat)

Oh, I'm sorry. You don't believe me. Most people believe me, though to be fair, I typically deal with prophets.

Simon casually removes his trenchcoat. A pair of wings sprout from his back. He expands and contracts them.

SIMON (cont'd)

An angel.

DAVID

Holy shit.

SIMON

No such thing!

DAVID

What?

SIMON

No shit is holy, David St. John. There's a reason why it makes good fertilizer.

DAVID

What are you ... Am I dying?

SIMON

No, no, not yet. I'm not an angel of death. I'm a messenger. The angels of death aren't nearly as personable as I am.

DAVID

Is this about Kayla?

SIMON

Your girl -- your ex-girlfriend now, I take it? You were a little harsh with her, if I may be so bold. I didn't want to hear any part of that conversation. Unfortunately I hear most parts of every conversation in the world. Such is the gravitas of my title. No, Kayla is a part of God's plan now. In fact, while He didn't want you to get rid of her quite exactly the way you did, now that she's gone the plan can come to fruition. This, my friend, is about you.

DAVID

Me?

SIMON

Yes. Would you like to guess?

DAVID

Guess what?

SIMON

Why I'm here.

DAVID

I'd rather you just tell me.

SIMON

That's not very fun.

DAVID

I didn't know angels had fun.

SIMON

They don't, for the most part. Kind of a boring job. Look, I'll give you three guesses. If you can guess by then, I'll give you a prize.

DAVID

A prize?

SIMON

You won't need it if you guess correctly, but you Americans love getting prizes for guessing things correctly, so I had to include it. You ready?

DAVID

No.

SIMON

Yes you are. Guess!

DAVID

Uh ... you ... you're here to tell me about ... me.

SIMON

You used up a guess for that? That's very vague, David. But true. Continue.

DAVID

Wait, you said something about a prophet. Am I a prophet? Are you going to tell me something about the future?

SIMON

Mmmm... yes and no. You are and are not a prophet, depending on who you talk to. But I am going to tell you something about your future. Last guess!

DAVID

I am and am not a prophet?

SIMON

Is that a guess?

DAVID
No!

SIMON
Alright, be careful now.

DAVID
I, uh ... I don't know!

SIMON
Come on, it's not that hard. Why would an angel come down from Heaven to speak with you?

DAVID
I don't know!

SIMON
Just relax, let it come to you.

DAVID
Is it about my family? Is something wrong with my mother?

SIMON
Nope! Your mother is perfectly fine. You lose!

Simon starts to leave.

DAVID
Where are you going?

SIMON
You lost. I'm leaving.

DAVID
Wait, but you have something to tell me.

SIMON
I don't reveal information to losers...

DAVID
Why is this a game? Aren't you supposed to descend from the ceiling and talk in a big booming voice or something?

SIMON
That's old hat. We like things quieter now.

DAVID
You have to tell me! It could be important.

SIMON
Oh, it is. It's the most important thing in the world.

DAVID
The most important ... is Jesus coming back?

SIMON
What's that?

DAVID
Is Jesus coming back? Is it the Rapture? Judgment Day?

SIMON
(looks heavenward)
Judges?
(beat)
Close enough. You win.

DAVID
I win? Jesus is ... oh my God!

SIMON
Hold on to your horses.

DAVID
I was never a big churchgoer or anything, but this is--

SIMON
Hold on to your horses, I said.

DAVID
Why?

SIMON
Because, Jesus isn't coming back.

DAVID
He's not?

SIMON
No. That's why you're here.

DAVID
Me?

SIMON
Yes.

DAVID
What does that mean?

SIMON
What do you think it means?

DAVID
I don't know!

SIMON
Open up your ears! Listen to the world. Listen to yourself.

Beat.

DAVID

I don't hear anything.

SIMON

That's because you listen to too much rock music. Let me spell it out for you. Jesus is not coming back because you are here.

DAVID

Okay.

SIMON

Okay?

DAVID

I'm the antichrist?

SIMON

The exact opposite.

DAVID

The exact ... wait...

SIMON

There you go.

DAVID

I'm ... I'm...

SIMON

Boy, you're really going to have to work at this...

DAVID

I'm the second coming of Christ?

SIMON

Essentially.

DAVID

What?!

SIMON

You've got quite a shell to break down before you'll be really useful, though. I was certain you'd figure this out much sooner than you did. Not that I'm disappointed in you, but ... we've got work to do.

DAVID

This is impossible.

SIMON

How so?

DAVID

Well, the signs ... my birth, and ... I don't *feel* special...

SIMON

Neither did Jesus. You can talk to your mother about your birth, and as for the signs, well, there are a million signs for a million different things, so people generally don't pay attention to them. The word of God is all you need to know about, and for the time being, I am that word.

DAVID

No way. This is crazy.

SIMON

Crazy? There's an angel standing in your apartment who told you that you are the next Christ! What's crazy about that?

(short beat)

Yeah, it does sound sort of crazy.

DAVID

We get stories like this all the time at the paper. Wackos who stand at the edge of a bridge and preach about how they are Jesus and we're all sinners, right before they jump to their death. Do you talk to them too?

SIMON

No. Those people were lying. Some of them.

DAVID

And you're not?

SIMON

I can't lie, I'm an angel. We don't get the same level of free will that you do.

DAVID

But why? Why me?

SIMON

How would I know? It's God's plan, He chooses who becomes what.

DAVID

But ... I've prayed to Him before and nothing happened. Nothing ever happens.

SIMON

You don't know that. God works in mysterious ways. You prayed to God before Kayla entered this apartment, and now I'm here. Don't you consider that a sign?

DAVID

Why didn't you come *before* Kayla got here?

SIMON

Like I said, God works in mysterious ways--

DAVID

People say that all the time, and it's stupid. If God's so powerful, why does He do everything mysteriously? Why doesn't He just *do* things?

SIMON

Okay, first of all, I'm not people. I'm a little insulted that you would think of me that way. Secondly, He does *do* things, you just don't know what they are. If you knew what they were, you'd be God. Look, I'm not here to discuss theology with you. I'm just here to give you the good news. You're the next Christ. Congratulations. That's the good news. The bad news is that you have a very difficult road ahead of you. The Way has been dirtied up by millions of so-called "believers" who use the Bible to destroy the very foundations it was meant to enforce. Jesus's teachings are being squashed by Baptists and Satanists alike. Congratulations.

DAVID

Maybe I'm just crazy. Maybe the breakup with Kayla made me go crazy. How can I tell if I'm crazy?

SIMON

I have no idea. The only angel who went crazy was cast out of Heaven. We don't really get "crazy" up there.

DAVID

Other people are going to think I'm crazy too.

SIMON

So what? You know who you are.

DAVID

No I don't! I only know because you told me!

SIMON

Well you are.

DAVID

Are what?

SIMON

The next Christ.

DAVID

But ... so ... Can I do things?

SIMON

Things?

DAVID

Like, magic? Like turning water into wine?

SIMON

It's not "magic," it's your divine power! "Magic" is so reductive, makes you sound like Harry Potter.

DAVID

Alright, alright. Can I use my divine power?

SIMON

No, not yet at least, because you've only just learned who you are. You need some time to find yourself.

DAVID

But you found me.

SIMON

I could sift through all the beaches of the world and find a specific grain of sand before you could even think about thinking. Of course I found you. Now listen. Being the next Christ is not about having magical powers. It's about uniting the people under the glorious Kingdom of God. Jesus had to learn to use his powers just like you will. Unfortunately he had a little more time than you do, but we can work with it. Patience is a virtue, and if you're going to be the next Christ, you must be virtuous.

DAVID

But I *am* the next Christ.

SIMON

Okay, don't get an ego here. Humility is what defines a Christ.

DAVID

It's not an ego, I'm just saying--

SIMON

Stop saying. Start listening. I know you're learning but the last thing we need is another arrogant Christ figure.

DAVID

Another? You mean Jesus...?

SIMON

No, not Jesus. I mean the others.

DAVID

There were others?

SIMON

Oh sure, lots of them. That's the problem with free will, David. Gets a lot of potential Christs killed.

DAVID
Potential Christs?

SIMON
Am I speaking too low? Can you not hear me?

DAVID
But you said I was the second coming!

SIMON
You said that, not me. Most people only know of Jesus. They don't know about the others. And we'd like to keep it that way. Somehow the public dislikes the idea of failing Christs. Makes God seem more ... fallible than we would appreciate.

DAVID
But isn't that more--

SIMON
Free will, David. God may create more Christs, but that doesn't mean they will act Christ-like.

DAVID
So we're nothing more than people.

SIMON
No, you're the sons and daughters of God.

DAVID
But isn't everyone a son or daughter of God? Adam and Eve and all that?

SIMON
I hate free will so much. So frustrating. Yes, humanity was created by God, but some people are Christs. Christ isn't a surname, you know that, don't you? It's Greek for "Messiah," that's all.

DAVID
There are more Christs out there?

SIMON
Not right now. One at a time.

DAVID
This is ... a lot to deal with. I mean ... I don't feel like the son of God.

SIMON
And do you think God *feels* like God? No, he feels like Himself, that's all.

DAVID
But he's powerful. I'm not powerful.

SIMON
Not yet. But you will be.

DAVID
How?

SIMON
Just wait. Pray. Meditate.
*(he notices a glass on the bar,
gestures to it)*
Lift that without picking it up.

DAVID
The bar?

SIMON
The *glass*.

DAVID
You mean, like the Force?

SIMON
Like the *Force*?

DAVID
Star Wars--

SIMON
I know what you mean. I just ... it's frustrating when more people know about Obi-Wan Kenobi than the Ten Commandments. Pick up the glass.

DAVID
Like ... how?

SIMON
Like this.

Simon lazily puts a hand out towards the glass. It rises in the air instantly, and then lowers back down.

DAVID
Whoa, that's some David Blaine shit right there.

SIMON
David.

DAVID
What?

SIMON
While swearing itself is *not* a sin, it is frowned upon by God.

DAVID
Swearing? Why?

SIMON
Because most swears are taking the Lord's name in vain, which
is a sin.

DAVID
Except fuck.

SIMON
(grimaces)
Yes. Except that one.

DAVID
And shit--

SIMON
Oh boy.

DAVID
What?

SIMON
I don't think you're ready for this.

Simon starts to leave.

DAVID
Wait!

SIMON
Maybe another time...

DAVID
No, Simon, wait!

SIMON
It's alright, the world has changed--

DAVID
Don't leave!

SIMON
People have different mindsets--

DAVID
I won't swear, I promise!

SIMON
You've said that a million times before.

DAVID
I have?

SIMON

Yes. Every December, right before Christmas, from the ages of seven to ten, you and your friends Mark and Doug would promise not to swear for the entire month, so that Santa Claus wouldn't bring you a lump of coal in your stocking.

Beat.

DAVID

That was...

SIMON

A long time ago, I know. Mark says hello, by the way, and that he's sorry for everything. He's doing fine. It's funny, the suicidal ones are always the most apologetic. Once they die they're suddenly filled with all this information and they *know*, and they regret -- well, regret is not the right word -- they are at ease, but sometimes they wish they had done things differently, even if they don't realize that it's all part of the plan.

(beat)

Anyway, he's doing alright. He's surrounded by people he loves, and who love him.

(he points to the glass)

Now, you want to try?

David, a little dumbstruck, slowly walks to the counter. He extends his hand. The glass doesn't move. He tries harder, his arm shaking a little. It still won't budge.

SIMON (cont'd)

You're trying too hard.

DAVID

I don't know how else to try.

SIMON

Take it easy. Don't fill your mind with the knowledge that this is impossible. Fill it with the wisdom of possibility.

DAVID

I don't know what that means.

SIMON

You will.

David continues trying to make the glass levitate. After a while, his muscles are so tense that when he lets go, he nearly loses his balance. He leans against the counter.

DAVID

I can't do it.

SIMON

It takes practice and patience. You're not used to it. You have no frame of reference.

DAVID

Who *does* have a frame of reference for stuff like this?

SIMON

Those who meditate. A lot. And even they can't actually do it.

DAVID

So all I have to do is meditate?

SIMON

No, you can do it already, you just don't know how.

DAVID

Oh...

SIMON

But meditating would help quicken the process.

David continues trying, while Simon glances around, as if noticing something that's not happening in this room.

SIMON (cont'd)

You're about to have company.

DAVID

I am?

SIMON

Yes, and I highly recommend that you do not listen to her. Now if you'll excuse me...

He starts to leave.

DAVID

You're leaving?

SIMON

I'm going to let you sit with this for a while. You need time to marinate before we can bake you.

DAVID

But you can't just leave. I have questions!

SIMON
Like what?

DAVID
Like ... uh ... I don't know!

SIMON
Write them down.

DAVID
But Simon!

SIMON
If you need me, just ask. I'll be here quicker than--

DAVID
I need you!

SIMON
No, David. I mean *really* need me. Besides, you have to let this knowledge go through your entire system. You need time to think. You're about to make some very important decisions that I can't make for you. I can't even give you advice, not yet. Take some time off. Sleep. Meditate. Think about it. I'll be back soon.

DAVID
Simon, wait!

SIMON
(as he exits)
Take it easy!

Simon is gone. Beat. David goes to the bar. He tries desperately to make the glass move. He can't, but when he relaxes and looks away the glass levitates. He looks back and the glass drops back onto the table. He looks at it in amazement and starts laughing. Then he makes the glass rise up again, which makes him laugh even harder.

The intercom buzzes, throwing his concentration off. The glass falls to the floor and breaks.

DAVID
Ah, goddammit.
(he looks to the heavens)
Oh, sorry ... Dad.
(this makes him laugh)
Ha! Dad! You're my Dad!

The intercom buzzes again. He rushes to the door.

DAVID (cont'd)
(into the intercom)
Simon? Hello?

GAIL
(offstage)
Simon? Who is that?

DAVID
Gail?

GAIL
It's me, Gail!

DAVID
I know.

GAIL
David?

DAVID
I heard you, Gail.

GAIL
Let me up, David!

DAVID
Okay!

He buzzes her in, then goes to the bar and cleans up the broken glass.

Knock at the door. David opens it. GAIL enters. She closes the door behind her and leans against it.

GAIL
Hey there loverboy.

DAVID
Hi.

GAIL
(looks at her watch)
Did you forget what time it was?

DAVID
(looking at watch)
I, uh, guess I did.

GAIL

Well now we're late.

(she starts removing her jacket)

Come on, get those clothes off.

DAVID

Gail, we're not late.

GAIL

(taking off her shoes)

We're ten minutes late.

DAVID

I broke up with Kayla, remember? There is no lateness anymore.

GAIL

I'm on my lunch break.

DAVID

It's Saturday.

GAIL

I work seven days a week.

DAVID

Plus you buzzed *me*. Technically you're late.

GAIL

(kissing his neck)

What's your problem?

DAVID

Nothing, it's just--

Gail pushes him onto the couch. She starts unbuttoning her blouse.

GAIL

Then stop talking.

DAVID

Gail...

Blouse partially unbuttoned, Gail falls onto David. She begins kissing him. He is hesitant at first, but then gives in.

GAIL

So everything's okay?

DAVID
You mean with Kayla?

GAIL
Yeah. I mean, besides the cancer thing.

DAVID
Well, no.

GAIL
Really? What's wrong?

DAVID
She has cancer.

GAIL
Oh Jesus.

DAVID
(reflexively)
Don't say that.

GAIL
Say what?

DAVID
"Oh Jesus."

GAIL
Why? Is he in the next room?

She chuckles at her joke, gets up, goes to the bar, pours herself a drink.

GAIL (cont'd)
Did she use it? Her cancer, like a crutch. Did she use it as an excuse? Play the C card? I knew she'd pull some kind of shit like this. You know her. Always has some reason to keep you from leaving.

DAVID
I don't think she made up the cancer...

GAIL
I don't think she did either, but still. What a bitch thing to do.

(after a long drink)
Well, now I'm not in the mood.

DAVID
You ... want to drink so early?

GAIL
Do you think I'm a drunk, David?

DAVID

No, but ... you said you were working.

GAIL

I am working. I got a big lead on that murder case by the pier. You remember that one? Turns out that bloated excuse for a body still had a thumbprint on her thumb. I saw some photos, it was still disgusting.

(she drinks)

I need to calm my nerves.

(she finishes the drink)

Who does she think she is?

DAVID

The body?

GAIL

No, Kayla.

DAVID

You know she has to start chemo soon--

GAIL

How lucky for her.

DAVID

You're being kind of a bitch right now.

Winces at himself. He looks upward, mouths, "Sorry." Gail pours another drink, takes a deep breath.

GAIL

God. You're right. I'm sorry. It's been a busy week, I've been dealing with the police department who just keep brushing me off. Can't get a decent comment for this story. It's got me on edge.

(she goes to him)

What Kayla's going through is really tough. I understand. My dad went through the same thing a few years back. It's a long battle for her. But you have to admit she found out at an awkward time, don't you?

DAVID

I ... guess.

GAIL

I mean, no matter what happened, you'd have to break it off with her. Just to be truthful to the whole situation.

She kisses him. He makes it brief.

GAIL (cont'd)

Are you alright?

DAVID

It's just been a strange day.

GAIL

I can imagine. I just want to be with you, David. I have for a long time now. And you want to be with me, don't you?

(he hesitates)

Don't you?

She hugs him, digging her head into his chest. He doesn't respond for a second, then puts his arms around her.

DAVID

I do... but...

GAIL

But?

DAVID

It's getting complicated?

GAIL

You're not cheating on me, are you?

DAVID

No, no, it's just ... life is getting complicated.

GAIL

It always does, honey. But we can make it work.

(noticing glass on the floor)

Did you break a glass?

DAVID

Oh, yeah, it slipped.

GAIL

Was there anything in it?

DAVID

No.

GAIL

Did Kayla throw it at you? Be honest.

DAVID

No, I dropped it.

GAIL

You're such an awful liar.

(she takes another sip)

Do you have anything else besides scotch? I'm dying for a merlot right now...

Gail exits left, taking off her shoes, socks, etc as she does. David is alone for a moment.

DAVID

Simon? I need you.

He looks around. Silence.

He gets an idea. He walks over to the scotch decanter and holds out a hand. Nothing happens. He waves his hand around a bit.

GAIL

(offstage)

David, honey. Come to bed!

DAVID

In a minute!

He continues holding his hand out to the scotch. Then, realizing he's being too tense, he takes a deep breath. The scotch darkens, turning into red wine. He nearly shrieks with excitement when he sees it. He pops open the top and pours a glass. Swirls it around. Smells it. Takes a sip.

DAVID (cont'd)

Gail?

GAIL

(off)

Yes dear?

DAVID

I don't have any merlot. Would you care for cabernet?

GAIL

(off)

That sounds fabulous, darling.

DAVID

Great.

He pours a second glass and scurries into the bedroom.

Fade out.

SCENE 2.

Later that evening. David sits on a chair center stage. On one side of him is PAULINE, his mother, and on the other is CHRISTOPHER, a priest and old friend. Tucked away in the back, unseen by anyone but David, is Simon.

Christopher examines David carefully. Pauline holds the decanter of cabernet, formerly scotch.

CHRISTOPHER

Hmm ... you don't *seem* any different.

DAVID

Nothing really changed, as far as I know.

PAULINE

David, honey, why would you put wine in a decanter.

DAVID

I didn't put it there, Mom, I made it.

PAULINE

You made wine.

DAVID

From scotch.

PAULINE

From scratch?

DAVID

No, *scotch*.

PAULINE

You can't--

(she smells the wine)

It doesn't smell like scotch, dear.

DAVID

It's *not* scotch, Mom, it's wine.

PAULINE

I see that.

CHRISTOPHER

And you say, David, that you also made a glass levitate?

DAVID

I did.

CHRISTOPHER

Where is this glass?

DAVID

Well, it fell and broke. I dropped it.

CHRISTOPHER

You made it levitate and then you dropped it?

DAVID

Yes.

CHRISTOPHER

Why did you do that?

DAVID

I don't know why, Chris, I just did. I lost concentration.

CHRISTOPHER

Well ...

(to Pauline)

At this point I cannot prove that he is, in fact, the second coming of Christ.

PAULINE

Thank God.

DAVID

Not the second, Chris. There were a lot before me. I'm just the latest.

CHRISTOPHER

Well--

DAVID

I think. Maybe there are more.

*(looks back to Simon, who
shakes his head)*

Or not. There aren't any more. Just me. Look, I know I sound crazy but it's true. It's all crazy but it's true.

PAULINE

I refuse to have a crazy son.

DAVID

I'm not crazy, Mom, I swear. The other guys, they were crazy, but not me. I mean, not all of them were crazy, but they just didn't succeed.

PAULINE

Succeed in what?

DAVID

In ... Jesus ... things.

PAULINE

Are you taking pills?

DAVID

No Mom, I'm not taking pills.

PAULINE

I knew having an only child was a bad idea. You needed a brother or sister to put some sense into you.

CHRISTOPHER

Now, Pauline, be calm. David, I think you should show us your powers.

PAULINE

Yes. Make another glass raise up, David.

CHRISTOPHER

To prove yourself.

DAVID

I don't know if I can under pressure.

PAULINE

Wait until every sick person in the city shows up at your door.

DAVID

I can try.

CHRISTOPHER

The church would appreciate it if you tried.

DAVID

Okay...

David stands, goes to the bar. Simon watches him.

SIMON

Let's talk.

DAVID

Not now.

SIMON

I tell you you're the Christ and what do you do?

DAVID

Shhhh.

SIMON

You sleep with a woman! A woman you cheated on your girlfriend with! That's not very Christlike at all!

David concentrates on another glass while Pauline and Christopher watch.

PAULINE

Don't pull your groin or anything, dear.

DAVID

I won't, Mom.

SIMON

And then you go and tell other people about your divinity. Why? Why would you do that? You know they won't believe you. And the church? The church has ruined God's will, David. They've taken His words and walked all over them. The church worships themselves more than they do the glory of God.

(sighs)

God never should have given humans free will. Between world peace and personal desires, humans choose personal desires every time.

DAVID

Please let me concentrate.

SIMON

We give you the chance to be the ultimate leader of the entire planet, to give peace to all nations, and you sit here and perform parlor tricks for your mother and a false priest!

DAVID

(under his breath)

Will you shut up?

SIMON

Go on, make the glass hover. Show off how powerful you are. Then you can continue to break God's commandments by lusting after Gail for the rest of the night.

DAVID

Stop it.

SIMON

Can't do it, can you?

The glass does not move. David's frustration rises.

DAVID

Just give me a second.

PAULINE

Are you okay, honey?

SIMON

What other commandments can you break?

DAVID

I'm fine, Mom.

PAULINE

You look like you have to poop.

SIMON

Let's see ... How about dishonoring your mother? She's here, isn't she? Call her a bitch or a whore or whatever it is you people say these days.

DAVID

One second.

SIMON

You're worthless. And I'm going to get in trouble telling God you're worthless, even though He already knows.

CHRISTOPHER

David, stop. It's not working.

DAVID

(to Christopher)

It is working, hold on.

PAULINE

I think you're sweating, dear.

DAVID

Hold on.

SIMON

Maybe you can cheat on Gail now. With Kayla, no less. We'll just have a big Romanesque orgy here in your apartment.

DAVID

Goddammit!

David's rage ignites and the glass explodes. He turns to Simon.

DAVID (cont'd)

You shut up!

SIMON

Good work, you broke another glass with your magic powers.

DAVID

What the hell kind of angel are you?! Don't try to make me feel bad!

SIMON

You're going to run out of glasses at this point.

DAVID
Stop being such an arrogant fuck!

SIMON & PAULINE
Language!

DAVID
Shut up! Just shut up!

Simon points to David's mother. David spins around and faces her and Christopher. Simon disappears.

CHRISTOPHER
David...

PAULINE
Who were you talking to?

CHRISTOPHER
Are you okay?

DAVID
Mom ... Chris ... I broke the glass.

PAULINE
We saw that.

DAVID
I wasn't touching it, though! I broke it with my ... divinity.

CHRISTOPHER
Who were you talking to?

DAVID
I ... I was talking to Simon. He's the, uh ... the angel who came down from Heaven to tell me I am the next Christ. He--
(he turns around)
Well, he's not here right now. But he was there. Just a moment ago.

CHRISTOPHER
Of course.

DAVID
You don't believe me? You saw me break the glass!

CHRISTOPHER
David, will you excuse your mother and me for a second? We need to talk.

DAVID
About me?

PAULINE

Of course about you David. Go to your room.

Simon reappears in the doorway to David's room, as if waiting for him.

DAVID

Mom, I'm 28 years old.

PAULINE

And I'm 59 years old and I'm your mother. Now go to your room.

DAVID

But Mom--

PAULINE

No buts. You're acting like a lunatic and you made a glass explode. Imagine if glass shards got into my eye, David. You would have to take me to the hospital.

DAVID

I ... I'm sorry.

PAULINE

Go to your room, Christopher and I will get this settled.

DAVID

Okay.

PAULINE

Go. Shoo.

David turns to the doorway, sees Simon.

SIMON

Come, we have a lot to discuss.

David hesitantly exits.

Pauline rubs at the rosary in her hand. Christopher can barely contain his excitement.

PAULINE

My boy is crazy.

CHRISTOPHER

I don't think so, Pauline. I think he's the real deal.

PAULINE

You do? Why? He broke a glass and swore at a window.

CHRISTOPHER

He didn't *touch* the glass, though.

PAULINE

He called the window Simon. There aren't any angels named Simon.

CHRISTOPHER

There are a lot of angels, I'm sure there's one called Simon.

PAULINE

No, they have glorious names like Gabriel and Michael and Metatron. Metatron, that is a glorious, awe-inspiring name for an angel. Simon is a stupid name. Simon is the name you give a stupid angel.

CHRISTOPHER

Surely there are more angels than are listed in the Bible. Regardless, that part doesn't matter. What matters is that he broke a glass without touching it. It's either divine intervention or maybe some kind of telekinetic ability. Faith or science. Either way it's exciting.

PAULINE

So what do we do?

CHRISTOPHER

I say we believe him. He can be of great help to the church. He has obviously been sent here to spread the gospel of our Lord. If he is indeed the Christ, then perhaps he can unify all the Christian faiths. Maybe *all* faiths. Make the Muslim and the Christian break bread together...

PAULINE

Impossible. Not my boy. He used to get peas stuck up his nose. Intentionally stuck peas up his own nose. You know how many times I had to take him to the emergency room? Too many. I'd have to sit there beside him, embarrassed, as the doctor sucked out yet another pea with a tiny doctor vacuum hose. And the entire time David would laugh hysterically, as though the whole thing was a joke.

CHRISTOPHER

That's very sweet.

PAULINE

Sweet?

CHRISTOPHER

At least he wasn't crying.

PAULINE

Oh, he would cry. He would cry right up until the doctor came in. And then he'd plaster a big smile on his face, and I knew right then that he was screwing with me.

CHRISTOPHER

(laughs softly)

He was quite a child.

PAULINE

(gesturing to the decanter)

Would you like a drink?

CHRISTOPHER

Normally I would say no, but if he truly created it, then it's basically transubstantiation.

PAULINE

So ... is that a yes?

CHRISTOPHER

Yes, please.

Pauline searches for two more glasses and can't find one, so she pours the wine into two plastic cups.

Christopher, meanwhile, examines the apartment.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

This is a beautiful apartment. Very big. His job at the newspaper must be paying him well. It's a little ironic, I think, that the second coming of Christ would be working as a journalist.

PAULINE

What do you mean?

CHRISTOPHER

Well, Christ preaches the truth, newspapers print the truth...

PAULINE

Have you read a newspaper lately? The only thing they print now is wasted ink. Anyway, David's an editor now. Did I not tell you?

CHRISTOPHER

You haven't been to church in five years.

PAULINE

(giving Christopher a cup)

Oh, right. I have been a little lax about that, haven't I?

CHRISTOPHER

Plastic?

PAULINE

He broke all the glasses.

CHRISTOPHER

Cheers, then.

They "clink" cups and drink.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

Five years is extremely lax, Pauline. If I were a cynical man, and generally I am not, but if I were, I'd say you used the church to get over your husband's death.

(he sits)

It's perfectly fine, of course. Your husband was a good man, and provided a lot for the church, and we are here to help and guide you in the wake of his death, but ... five years is a long time.

PAULINE

I'm sorry, Chris.

CHRISTOPHER

Please, don't worry about it. I'm glad that we could aid you after his death. You seem to be getting on wonderfully.

PAULINE

I am, thank you. Well, until David went crazy.

CHRISTOPHER

I don't think he's crazy.

PAULINE

Whatever he is.

CHRISTOPHER

Would you like to entrust him in my care?

PAULINE

Entrust him? He's 28, he can make up his own mind.

CHRISTOPHER

Of course. I will ask him myself.

PAULINE

I don't think he'll do it. He's very stubborn. He'll probably want to go about this his own way...

CHRISTOPHER

Which is fine.

PAULINE
Whew, this wine is strong.

CHRISTOPHER
Such is the power of our Lord.

PAULINE
(smiles)
Christopher...

CHRISTOPHER
Yes Pauline?

PAULINE
I missed you.

CHRISTOPHER
(hesitates)
I've missed you too.

Pauline sits beside Christopher. She leans in close to kiss him, but he backs away.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
But that time has passed.

PAULINE
... Right.

CHRISTOPHER
I spent a lot of days in confession because of you, Pauline.

PAULINE
Have you?

CHRISTOPHER
Yes. Back then. Bishop Carter was very upset with me.

PAULINE
I'm sorry.

CHRISTOPHER
I was forgiven in the end, of course.

PAULINE
Of course.

Beat.

CHRISTOPHER
And I suppose I could be forgiven again.

She looks at him. He leans in and they kiss. Simon enters from stage left. He leans against the wall and watches them.

Christopher suddenly pulls away.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

Do you feel that?

PAULINE

Are you hard?

CHRISTOPHER

No, I--

PAULINE

I thought you would've needed Viagra or something--

CHRISTOPHER

No, I don't mean me. I just felt...

(he looks around the room)

I feel like I'm being watched.

PAULINE

By me, darling.

CHRISTOPHER

No, not by you.

(he stands and helps Pauline up)

Pauline, will you do me a favor?

PAULINE

Anything, Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER

I need you to leave me and David alone.

PAULINE

What? No...

CHRISTOPHER

Please, Pauline.

PAULINE

But I want to be with you. It's been so long...

CHRISTOPHER

We can talk about those things later. Right now we need to think about your boy. I think he feels pressured when you're in the room.

PAULINE

Me? Pressure? I'm his mother, and I'll be damned if I'm pressuring him.

CHRISTOPHER

Maybe you're not. But I need to speak to him about the church and what he's planning on doing, and I don't think he will open up as much if you are here. I'm sorry...

PAULINE

No, no, I understand. It's like when I tried to talk to him about sex. Maybe I'll head down to the store and pick up some dinner. Buy something light. Salad makings and maybe chicken? Was Jesus vegetarian?

CHRISTOPHER

Don't worry about it. That sounds great. I didn't even realize I was starving until right now.

PAULINE

Me neither.

(goes to get her things)

You get that boy on the right track, will you?

CHRISTOPHER

Of course.

PAULINE

And I'll be right back, and we can all make dinner together! How does that sound?

CHRISTOPHER

It sounds great.

PAULINE

And Christopher...

She kisses him.

PAULINE (cont'd)

Don't forget.

CHRISTOPHER

(glancing around)

I ... I won't.

Pauline smiles and exits. Christopher is alone a moment. He drinks the rest of his wine, sets the cup on the bar. He is very close to Simon now and he feels it. He turns and looks right past Simon. Simon smiles and waves. Christopher turns away, moves toward the couch.

David enters with a calmness that is almost unbecoming of him. Simon looks at him.

SIMON
Don't let your anger control you.

DAVID
I'm not angry.

Simon exits.

CHRISTOPHER
(turns)
David! How are you?

DAVID
I feel great, Chris. I feel fantastic. I feel as though a great burden was lifted from my shoulders.

CHRISTOPHER
That's wonderful. I sent your mother out to get some dinner, David. I thought we could talk...

DAVID
I spoke with Him, Chris. For the first time, I spoke to Him, and He spoke back.

CHRISTOPHER
He ... you mean God?

DAVID
Yes. Simon led me into my room and I stood there and was suddenly filled with an intense feeling of peace, and in my ear spoke my Father, his voice like a rushing river, powerful yet serene. He told me many things, Chris. Many things, and I feel so full of knowledge and wisdom now. It feels amazing.

CHRISTOPHER
What ... what did he tell you?

DAVID
He told me about things I did as a child that were clues to my heritage. When I was three, I fell out of the crib. Mother said that I somehow climbed out of the crib and fell. He told me that I didn't climb, but rather that I floated up and out of the crib and fell. Another time, when I was seven, I was playing with friends by the creek beside our house, and my friend Doug fell into the creek and we were all so scared that he was going to float away or drown, but I pulled him out. I never remembered how I did it, but He told me that I walked on the water and lifted him up with a strength I could not have had back then.

CHRISTOPHER

David, that's amazing.

Beat.

DAVID

He told me once, when I was eleven, I was in a confessional booth, with you, Christopher, and that you asked me very nicely if I would like to come and sit with you on your side of the booth. And I did, and you sat me on your knee, and you began tickling me, and I laughed, and you were rougher and then ... well, you know what happened.

CHRISTOPHER

I ... I don't remember this...

DAVID

How could you forget a child disappearing on your lap?

CHRISTOPHER

Disappeared?

DAVID

Yes. In one moment I was there, in the next, I was gone. You don't remember that?

CHRISTOPHER

No, that's...

DAVID

Impossible, I know. But I did it. Think back, I'm sure it'll come to you.

CHRISTOPHER

No, I don't ... I don't remember that...

DAVID

You must've erased it from your mind.

CHRISTOPHER

David, I'm ... I don't think it happened that way.

DAVID

You don't?

CHRISTOPHER

No, I don't. And I find it very cliché of you to accuse me of trying to molest you. Not all priests are like that, we--

DAVID

I do not accuse, Christopher. I *know*.

CHRISTOPHER

You're acting very strangely.

DAVID

I am filled with the Holy Spirit.

CHRISTOPHER

I don't know what's going on, but I promise you, as God as my witness, that I wasn't trying to--

DAVID

He told me about others, Christopher. Mary's son Tyler. Dr. Jenkins' daughter, Stephanie, fourteen years old at the time. Others.

CHRISTOPHER

You ... you don't know.

DAVID

I do know.

CHRISTOPHER

You're making this all up.

DAVID

Do you think those children, now grown up, would say the same thing?

CHRISTOPHER

Are you going to ask them?

DAVID

I don't have to, but I will.

(beat)

I know about you and my mother as well.

CHRISTOPHER

Oh, God...

DAVID

You will be making a huge mistake if you sleep with her.

CHRISTOPHER

You overheard us?

DAVID

No, He told me. He told me of the affair, He told me how you nearly broke my mother and father apart. You, a so-called priest...

CHRISTOPHER

I wasn't a priest back then.

DAVID

Are you really going to lie to me?

CHRISTOPHER

I'm not lying!

DAVID

You weren't a priest when you met her, but you were a priest when you slept with her. I can give you specific dates of when you had sex. She was lonely after my father got sick and you used her.

CHRISTOPHER

I didn't use her.

DAVID

You took a union of man and wife and corrupted it.

Beat.

CHRISTOPHER

I know.

DAVID

You have sinned, Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER

I have spent many years in confession, David. Many years.

DAVID

Yes, but you did not confess all.

Christopher looks up at David. Beat.

CHRISTOPHER

David ... f...forgive me.

Christopher falls to his knees at David's feet.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

Forgive me, please.

David puts a hand on Christopher's head.

DAVID

I forgive you.

CHRISTOPHER

I have sinned...

DAVID

You are forgiven.

CHRISTOPHER

I am a terrible person, full of sin.

DAVID

You are not. You are a kind man who was corrupted by the many evils abundant in our world.

The intercom buzzes.

DAVID (cont'd)

You mustn't sleep with her, Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER

No, I ... I won't, Your Grace.

DAVID

You don't need to call me that.

CHRISTOPHER

But...

DAVID

Just call me David.

The intercom buzzes again. David goes to it.

DAVID (cont'd)

(into intercom)

Yes?

PAULINE

(offstage)

David is that you? It's your mother.

DAVID

Come on up.

PAULINE

I have dinner!

David buzzes her in. Christopher comes to him.

CHRISTOPHER

Don't tell her, David. Please. I have sinned, I know, and I will pay for the rest of my life if I have to, but she doesn't need to know. Please don't tell her. Please.

DAVID

I won't tell her.

CHRISTOPHER

Thank you David. Thank you.

David puts his hands on Christopher's shoulders.

The two watch each other intently for a moment, and then Christopher smiles brightly. He starts laughing. David joins in, and soon the two of them are laughing hard.

Pauline enters with KFC.

PAULINE

I'm too lazy to make dinner, so I got KFC. Why are you laughing?

CHRISTOPHER

No reason, Pauline! No reason at all!

DAVID

(gives her a kiss)

Hello Mom.

PAULINE

Hello. Did you two get everything settled?

DAVID

We did.

CHRISTOPHER

We did indeed! This is most glorious!

PAULINE

What, the chicken? It's alright.

CHRISTOPHER

(tears into a leg)

It is the most wonderful thing I have ever eaten.

PAULINE

David?

DAVID

No thank you.

PAULINE

Come on, you must be starving.

DAVID

I'll make myself a salad.

PAULINE

But I bought this for you.

DAVID

I don't eat chicken anymore.

PAULINE

What?

DAVID

No meat. Animals should be treated with care and respect, not eaten.

Christopher suddenly pulls back from his chicken leg. He looks at it, then sets it down gently.

CHRISTOPHER

Of course. Respect ... how stupid of me!

DAVID

It's alright, Chris.

CHRISTOPHER

If I could throw it up, I would.

DAVID

Don't worry about it.

CHRISTOPHER

I need some water.

PAULINE

I bought Cokes!

CHRISTOPHER

Thank you, but no thank you.

Christopher goes off to the kitchen.

PAULINE

(to David)

You sure you don't want any?

DAVID

No thank you.

PAULINE

Sheesh.

She digs in. David sits next to her.

DAVID

Mom, what was Dad like?

PAULINE

You know what he was like, honey.

DAVID

I mean before I was born.

PAULINE
Why are you asking me that?

DAVID
Because I'd like to know.

PAULINE
David, your father was a saint. And I'm not just saying that because you are Jesus.

DAVID
I'm not Jesus.

PAULINE
You're close enough.

Beat.

DAVID
Did you two ... stay faithful?

PAULINE
David, this is a strange time to be asking your mother these kinds of questions.

DAVID
It's important to me. I have to know my heritage if I'm going to help others. I have to know myself first.

(beat; an idea)
Did you ... How was I conceived?

PAULINE
Excuse me?

DAVID
How was I--

PAULINE
You're 28 years old and you still don't know about sex?

DAVID
That's not what I mean--

PAULINE
The birds and the bees and all that?

DAVID
Mom, I mean, if I truly am the Christ, then you ... you were a virgin, and...

PAULINE
(laughs)
Well, you're not the Christ then.

DAVID

Mom.

Christopher reenters, drinking water.

PAULINE

Honey, I was married to your father when you were ...
conceived.

DAVID

Yes, but are you sure he--

PAULINE

Of course I'm sure, darling! Just because Jesus was born by
immaculate conception doesn't mean you have to be.

(to Christopher)

Does it?

CHRISTOPHER

Well ... I don't know, really. We all assumed that it would
happen roughly the same way.

The telephone rings. David goes to it.

Simon enters.

PAULINE

I mean, I suppose I could've just gotten pregnant.

CHRISTOPHER

It's possible.

DAVID

(into phone)

Hello? ... Oh, hi Kevin. How are--what's that? ... What?
She's not? She ... Oh, that's ... Oh no.

CHRISTOPHER

What's wrong?

DAVID

It's Kayla. She's not feeling good.

(into phone)

Look, how is ... What?

(beat)

Oh my God. Really? Did you take her to a ... You did? Well,
I'll ... I'll be right there. As soon as I can.

(beat)

What? ... She did? ... Well, no, I wouldn't expect her to ...
Oh, Kevin, I ... I don't know what to say. I'll be there.
Okay.

(hangs up)

Kayla's in the hospital. There's some serious complications
with the chemotherapy.

CHRISTOPHER

Let's go see her.

PAULINE

Yes, we'll all go say hello.

DAVID

Okay. Okay, I...

(he sits on the couch)

Oh boy.

PAULINE

It's okay, David. She'll be okay.

DAVID

I just ... I...

PAULINE

Come on, get your coat on, it's cold outside.

SIMON

David.

CHRISTOPHER

We'll buy some flowers on the way.

SIMON

David, I must talk with you.

CHRISTOPHER

Do you know what kind of flowers she likes?

DAVID

I, uh, I don't, actually.

PAULINE

She won't care, she's probably unconscious.

SIMON

David, please.

Christopher and Pauline are at the door.

PAULINE

David?

CHRISTOPHER

Are you coming?

DAVID

(looking at Simon)

Uh, will you ... could you leave me alone for a moment?

PAULINE
Leave you alone? Don't you want to come?

DAVID
I do, but ... I have to get ready first.

PAULINE
Really?

DAVID
Yes, really.

PAULINE
Is this some kind of Christ thing you have to do?

DAVID
Sort of.

CHRISTOPHER
That's so exciting!

PAULINE
Are you going to teleport to the hospital?

CHRISTOPHER
Please, Pauline, it's not Star Trek.

PAULINE
Well, you never know.

DAVID
You guys go ahead, I'll meet you there.

PAULINE
You're sure?

DAVID
Yeah.

PAULINE
Well ... okay.

CHRISTOPHER
Don't be too late.

DAVID
I won't.

*Pauline and Christopher exit. Simon
steps into the scene.*

DAVID (cont'd)
You can't.

SIMON

You must.

DAVID

You can't tell me what to do.

SIMON

Correct, but I can guide you in the right direction.

DAVID

That is not the right direction.

SIMON

It is absolutely the right direction. God has plans for her.

DAVID

God has plans for everyone. That doesn't mean she has to die.

SIMON

You don't know that she will die.

DAVID

She will if I don't see her.

SIMON

God has foreseen your troubles with her. You must understand, David, that these things work out in ways you cannot imagine--

DAVID

No! I *can* imagine! That's the point! I am the Christ, I can imagine what God is going to do. I can't allow it.

SIMON

David...

DAVID

I'm going to see her.

SIMON

You can't.

DAVID

Why?

SIMON

Because you are here to help form a more perfect union with God, not to disobey God's will.

DAVID

How is saving another human life disobeying God's will? Doesn't He want people to live?

SIMON

Some may live, others may die. That is the way it goes.

DAVID

Did God give Kayla cancer? Is that what's going on here?

SIMON

God's ways are mysterious...

DAVID

Well they shouldn't be mysterious anymore.

David heads for the door, but Simon blocks his way.

SIMON

You mustn't allow yourself to become arrogant.

DAVID

I'm not.

SIMON

What you are about to do could be considered arrogant, and arrogance has no place in God's kingdom.

DAVID

When Jesus rose Lazarus from the dead, was that arrogance?

SIMON

That was a way to bring many people into the faith...

DAVID

Oh, so it was a marketing ploy? Playing with people's lives to bring about more followers. That's not what I'm doing, Simon. I'm saving someone who deserves to be saved. Someone I love very dearly.

SIMON

Are you sure you can even do it? You still don't have complete control over your divine abilities.

DAVID

I'll learn. Please get out of my way.

SIMON

I can't let you go.

DAVID

Simon!

David grabs Simon's arm. There is a bright flash of light, mainly centered on Simon, and a cracking noise, like lightning. Simon is thrown to the ground. David steps back.

DAVID (cont'd)
Oh my God. I'm sorry, I had no idea--

SIMON
(grabbing his arm in pain)
You're heading down a dangerous path!

DAVID
Let me help you up--

SIMON
I don't need your help.
(standing)
You need to listen to your Father. You cannot make these decisions on your own, not now.

DAVID
No. You're wrong. You're wrong Simon.

SIMON
David, I urge you to reconsider. Nothing good will come of this.

DAVID
Not for you, maybe. But I owe her, and if I really am the next Christ, then I must atone for my own sins.

David exits.

Simon stays kneeling on the ground, nursing his arm.

SIMON
Forgive me, Father. I tried.

*The lights become very bright, and then
Blackout.*

END ACT I.

Act II

SCENE 1.

*David's apartment, a few days later.
Mid-afternoon. There is a low cacophony
outside, the sound of a crowd of people
shouting and milling about.*

*David sits on the couch. At the bar is
Gail.*

Where is she?

GAIL

In the bedroom.

DAVID

Oh, I'm...

GAIL

*(she points to a voice recorder
on the table)*

I'm taping this, by the way.

DAVID

I don't mind.

GAIL

Okay. Thank you. I mean, I hope you understand that I'm not,
you know...

DAVID

I understand.

GAIL

I'm not trying to turn this into the "big break" story or
anything.

DAVID

It's okay. I asked for you.

GAIL

I know. I appreciate it.

(beat)

So ... what was it like?

DAVID

It was the most fulfilling experience of my entire life. I
finally know what my purpose is. I don't think a lot of
people can say that about themselves.

GAIL

They can't.

(sits next to him)

Did she take it well?

DAVID

She is very grateful.

GAIL

And what about the doctors?

DAVID

They ... well, the cat's out of the bag, I guess. I mean ... I healed her right there. I didn't even think twice about it. I laid my hands on her and felt the radiation and the cancer just disappear. I remember her gasp -- it was an amazing sound, like her soul returning to her body. The doctors know now, and Christopher tried to keep them from talking, but...

GAIL

The street is filled with people.

DAVID

I know.

GAIL

The sick and disabled are coming out of the woodwork.

DAVID

I know.

GAIL

What will you do?

DAVID

I'll heal them.

GAIL

All of them?

DAVID

If I can. I'll do whatever I can to help as many people as possible.

GAIL

There are too many people, David.

DAVID

I don't care. I must help as many as I can.

GAIL

Well, that's ... courageous of you.

DAVID

It's not courage, it's the way things must be. There are too many underprivileged, too many sick and starving, too many destitute and lonely, and I'm the only one who has the power to save them. I have a right and responsibility.

GAIL

Of course.

(beat)

Can I talk to you about your past?

DAVID

Sure.

GAIL

I want to talk about your upbringing. Religiously, I mean.

DAVID

Okay.

GAIL

Your priest's name is ... Chris, correct?

DAVID

Christopher, yes.

GAIL

And you've known him...?

DAVID

All my life.

GAIL

And has he been a good priest?

David hesitates.

DAVID

No.

GAIL

He hasn't?

DAVID

I thought he was, once, when I was young, but ... I know better now.

GAIL

What is wrong with him?

DAVID

He is an adulterer and a...

GAIL
What? You can tell me.

DAVID
Stop the recording, please.

GAIL
You want this off the record?

DAVID
I want to you to stop that.

GAIL
Okay.

Gail switches off the recorder.

DAVID
I don't wish to incriminate him.

GAIL
Incriminate? What did he do?

DAVID
He molested children. Boys and girls.

GAIL
Really.

DAVID
Yes.

GAIL
How do you know this?

DAVID
My Father told me.

GAIL
Your father like ...
(she points upward. David nods)
I see. So you have no proof.

DAVID
I have the truth. The truth is proof enough.

GAIL
But you can't prove it.

DAVID
With physical, tangible evidence? No. But I know what I know,
and if people know I am the next Christ, they will believe
me.

Is that enough? GAIL

Is what enough? DAVID

That they believe you're Jesus? GAIL

Do you not believe me? DAVID

How can I? You have no proof. GAIL

Since when did you become the ethical journalist? DAVID

A beat. Gail is obviously insulted.

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to say it like that. But I know. DAVID (cont'd)

About what? GAIL

The murder case. You faked a comment from the police. DAVID

I'm not the only one who does that. GAIL

I know. DAVID

You've done it before too. GAIL

I know. I forgive you. DAVID

Shut up. GAIL

Did he molest you? *(beat)*

No. I ... disappeared before he could. DAVID

Like, in thin air? GAIL

Yes. DAVID

GAIL

Boy, this story just gets better and better. Did you tell your mother?

DAVID

No. At the time I didn't even know what was happening. You can turn the recorder back on. If we talk about something else.

GAIL

I think I'm done, actually.

DAVID

Okay.

Gail sits next to David.

GAIL

How are you doing, David? Really and truly.

DAVID

I'm great. I feel magnificent, as though a thousand doors have opened and I can go through all of them.

GAIL

That's amazing.

DAVID

What about you, Gail?

GAIL

What about me?

DAVID

How are you doing?

GAIL

I'm ... fine.

DAVID

Are you?

GAIL

Yes.

DAVID

You seem troubled.

GAIL

I'm not.

DAVID

Is it me?

GAIL

No, it's not you.

DAVID

Is it because I have this following now?

GAIL

Well, that is ... different.

DAVID

What is it?

GAIL

It's nothing! Stop saying it's something!

She stands, goes back to the bar.

Beat.

DAVID

It's Kayla, isn't it.

(beat)

I want you to know, Gail, that under my new position I'm obligated not to fraternize with any women--

GAIL

Stop it, David. Just stop.

DAVID

What's wrong?

GAIL

Your new "position"? Is that all this is to you? You take the cancer out of a girl's breast and amaze people across the world and all you can think about is your position?

DAVID

It's more than that--

GAIL

I *know* it is! You are the second coming of Christ, David. That's immeasurably more important than your position. We all know your position. It's not a business. You're the son of God.

DAVID

What's your point?

GAIL

My point is that I wish I had cancer and you took it out of me. I wish I could be at your side when the entire world found out that you were Christ. This is stupid, please don't laugh, but ... I want to be your Mary Magdaline.

DAVID
Isn't that a Ramones song?

GAIL
(laughs)
Stop it. You maybe thought our relationship was just cheating, but it wasn't, not to me.

DAVID
Well, let's be fair, Gail. You pretty much forced me to break up with Kayla in the first place.

GAIL
I know, I know.

DAVID
It *was* cheating, for a while...

GAIL
I never said I was a perfect person, David. But I love you. I really do. Kayla scared me -- your relationship, I mean, it scared me, that connection she had with you was something I wanted and I fought for it, maybe a little too hard. But I didn't know she had cancer, for Chrissakes.

DAVID
I'm sorry, Gail, I don't know what to say.

GAIL
Tell me you love me.

DAVID
What?

GAIL
Tell me you love me and you need me. I love you, David. I loved you the moment I met you at the paper. I loved the way you wrote, your editorials made me laugh so much, and I loved the way you thought about life. And for a while there, I was okay being "that girl," because you kept saying that you would end it. And I thought you would, but ... I guess the girl with cancer takes precedence.

(short beat)
I'm sorry, that sounds terrible. I don't mean it.

DAVID
Gail ... I can help you.

GAIL
Help me? What do you mean?

DAVID
Come here.

David stands, and approaches Gail. She stays motionless.

Simon enters, watching the scene.

David carefully places his hands on Gail's cheeks and stares into her eyes.

GAIL
What are you doing?

DAVID
I'm helping you.

They stare at each other a moment, and then Gail begins to smile. David smiles back. And then, Gail moves in and kisses him. He pushes her away.

DAVID (cont'd)
Gail.

GAIL
I'm sorry.

She kisses him again. He moves away, noticing Simon as he does.

DAVID
I can't do this.

GAIL
I love you, David. And, and ... I can be with you, and help you, and--

DAVID
I don't need your help.

KAYLA
(*offstage*)
David?

DAVID
She's awake.

GAIL
Let her come in, I don't care.

DAVID
I'll be right back.

GAIL
Where are you going?

DAVID
I'm going to see if she's okay.

GAIL
She's fine, David! You made sure of that!

DAVID
Gail, please.

GAIL
Stay here, David. Stay with me.

DAVID
Sit down, I'll be two seconds.

GAIL
David!

David exits. Gail starts to follow.

Simon quickly moves beside her and she stops. She looks around but does not see him. He whispers in her ear. She becomes transfixed. When he steps back she looks around the room. Seeing no one, she grabs her voice recorder and exits.

Kayla enters, David right behind. Simon slips away.

KAYLA
Where is she? Where is that bitch?

DAVID
Kayla, there's no reason to -- where is she?

KAYLA
I can't believe you brought her here.

DAVID
I gave her an interview, that's all.

KAYLA
Where did she go?

DAVID
I don't know.
(he opens the front door)
Gail? Are you out there?
(shuts the door)
That's odd.

KAYLA

(looking out the windows)

Couldn't you have given an interview to someone else? Time? Newsweek? Christian Science Monitor?

DAVID

It just seemed right to talk to someone I know...

KAYLA

I know you, why didn't you talk to me?

DAVID

You were asleep, you've been through a lot--

KAYLA

You realize that this is an incredibly awkward place for me to be. You realize that, right? Just because you saved my life doesn't mean I don't hate you for the way you ended things. You understand?

DAVID

I understand. I am a much different person now. I see what I did wrong, and I apologize for the way I treated you.

KAYLA

Well that's a start.

The intercom buzzes.

DAVID

Maybe that's Gail.

(into intercom)

Hello?

IRINA

(offstage)

Are you David St. John? The new Messiah?

KAYLA

And here comes the cultists.

DAVID

(into intercom)

Yes, I am.

IRINA

(offstage)

We must see you.

DAVID

Who are you, please?

IRINA

Oh, my apologies. My name is Irina Maisky, and I am assistant to Maria Beloserkovsky. We have traveled from Siberia to visit with you.

DAVID

Siberia?

(he looks at Kayla; she shrugs)

Come on up. Make sure no one else comes up with you, though.

IRINA

Of course.

David buzzes them in.

DAVID

Siberia, huh.

KAYLA

Probably just some loonies from outside.

DAVID

I don't know...

KAYLA

You heard those accents. Terrible.

DAVID

They sound legit to me.

KAYLA

Beloservok, serkor ... whatever. What kind of name is that?

DAVID

Kayla, don't be intolerant.

KAYLA

Intolerant? That's a big word coming out of your mouth there, partner. Is this one of the pros of being Jesus?

DAVID

I'm not Jesus.

KAYLA

(she sidles up to him)

Come on, Jesus boy, don't be a pouter.

DAVID

I'm not!

KAYLA

Don't be intolerant of me...

DAVID
Okay, now that's just not funny.

KAYLA
It's kind of funny.

She flicks his nose. He laughs and tries to flick her back. The two of them playfight as Maria and Irina enter.

MARIA
What is going on, Ira?

IRINA
I think they're attacking each other.

DAVID
Oh! Hello!

David stands, goes to introduce himself. He extends a hand to Maria. She does not take it. Beat.

IRINA
(to David)
Your Grace ... she is blind.

DAVID
Oh. Oh! I'm sorry.

MARIA
Were you expecting a handshake, Your Grace?

DAVID
Well--

MARIA
It's alright, it happens all the time, even with Messiahs.
(she steps into the room)
My name is Maria Petrovna Beloserkovsky, and I have traveled over the ocean to visit you. This is my young assistant, Irina Ivanovna Maisky.

IRINA
A pleasure, Your Grace.

DAVID
Please, there's no need to call me that.

MARIA
Then what should we call you?

DAVID

Call me David.

MARIA

Alright, David. And who is your friend?

DAVID

My friend? I thought you couldn't see--

MARIA

Just because I'm blind doesn't mean I can't smell out strong perfume.

Kayla huffs.

DAVID

This is Kayla, my, um ... my good, very good friend.

MARIA

A pleasure.

KAYLA

Same here.

MARIA

Shall we sit?

Irina guides Maria to the couch. David sits on an armchair. Kayla remains standing.

DAVID

May I ask how you knew where I lived?

MARIA

Many people know these days. They see it on the television, read about it in the newspaper.

IRINA

I googled it.

MARIA

But I knew before they did. I even knew before you did.

DAVID

You did?

MARIA

Yes. I am a nun in a monastery in a very cold and desolate place in Siberia. I am also a prophet.

DAVID

A prophet?

MARIA
I receive messages from the angels.

DAVID
Really?

MARIA
Yes. Simon spoke to me a few days ago. He told me that it was time for you to awaken.

IRINA
We have made pilgrimage from Siberia to wish you warm welcome, Your Grace.

MARIA
Ira, child, call him David.

IRINA
Oh, I am sorry ... David.

DAVID
Simon told you I was going to ... "awaken"?

MARIA
Yes.

IRINA
And it appears you have.

MARIA
To an extent. We represent the Orthodox church, David. As you know, there is a great schism between the Eastern Orthodox church and the western abominations that you know well.

DAVID
I ... know a little bit.

MARIA
I must apologize, David, for my reasons for coming are twofold. Of course I have come to pay my respect to the new Christ. I have many questions for you. But I also must speak to you as a representative of the Orthodox church. No doubt you have spoken to priests or bishops from the western church.

DAVID
Just one so far.

MARIA
It is early. You are lucky, not enough people know who you truly are yet. When they do, many will be afraid, and will deny their true calling to try and subvert you. Simon has told me of this. Your future is full of trouble.

DAVID
Simon told you that?

MARIA
He did.

DAVID
He didn't tell me anything.

MARIA
Perhaps he thought you already knew.

Simon enters.

MARIA (cont'd)
He is here now.

David turns, notices Simon. Irina and Kayla look around but see nothing.

KAYLA
I don't see anything.

MARIA
Of course you don't, child, Simon is an angel. Only David can see him. And I can hear him, for reasons I still do not know.

SIMON
It's because I trust you, Maria.

MARIA
Ah, of course. Trust.

KAYLA
This is all a bit much for me.

MARIA
Is it? Why is that?

KAYLA
Well, I'm an atheist, so...

MARIA
A non-believer?

KAYLA
Yes.

MARIA
There are no non-believers, child.

KAYLA
Uh, no, I'm one. I don't believe in God.

MARIA

Even now? Even while your friend takes his rightful place as Christ?

KAYLA

Yes, even now.

MARIA

You were once sick, were you not?

KAYLA

How do you know that?

MARIA

Simon talks to me often these days. It is quite exciting, the times we live in.

DAVID

Simon...

SIMON

God has forgiven you, David.

DAVID

Oh, don't give me that. There's nothing to forgive. I did what was right.

KAYLA

(to David)

Are you talking to him?

SIMON

If you would just put aside your arrogance, you would realize...

DAVID

This is not being arrogant. I have a destiny to fulfill, and I'm not going to let innocent people just die!

MARIA

We are talking about your former lover, yes?

KAYLA

Me?

MARIA

Simon says you should have died, child.

KAYLA

What?

MARIA

God's plan was to have you in His arms once again. David took that away from you.

KAYLA

Well now I'm really glad I'm an atheist. I don't have to subscribe to the plan of some nut job in the sky.

IRINA

I was once like you, Kayla. I was afraid to embrace God. But when Masha and the other nuns took me in, I found that God had been embracing me the entire time.

KAYLA

Oh Jesus.

IRINA

Yes, Jesus.

KAYLA

No, I mean ... look, I don't care what you think. I find your religion stupid and morally corrupt, based around a guy who was made into a God by Constantine at the Council of Nicaea.

Simon laughs.

MARIA

Simon is laughing.

KAYLA

I don't care!

MARIA

You are partially correct, child. Man did take the word of God and use it to destroy others. Many have died who should not have. But it is still the word of God.

KAYLA

You're wrong, it's the writings of a bunch of madmen.

DAVID

Kayla, maybe you should--

KAYLA

Leave? You want me to leave?

DAVID

Well, I don't know...

KAYLA

Why are you mixed up in all of this?

DAVID

I was *chosen*, Kayla.

KAYLA

So? That doesn't mean you have to become a Christian!

MARIA

But he is the Christ...

KAYLA

And Christ wasn't Christian, he was Jewish. David's not Jewish. He's practically an atheist, like me.

DAVID

I wouldn't say that.

KAYLA

When's the last time you prayed?

DAVID

Right before I broke up with you.

KAYLA

Really? Were you serious? Or were you just shooting off a half-assed sympathy prayer like everyone does these days?

MARIA

God hears all prayers...

KAYLA

Yeah, and answers none of them.

MARIA

You cannot understand God's plan.

KAYLA

I don't try to, because there is no plan. There's no God to make a plan.

MARIA

Child, I find your lack of faith disturbing.

KAYLA

I have lots of faith, faith in things that are tangible. Rocks, trees, water, fire.

MARIA

And where did those things come from?

KAYLA

Billions of years of natural processes that can be measured using science.

IRINA

Science says that all things came from a Big Bang. What do you think caused the Big Bang?

KAYLA

I don't know.

IRINA

But you believe it happened.

KAYLA

Yes.

IRINA

The probability of something like the Big Bang happening is very, very small. And yet you believe. So why is it so difficult to believe that perhaps God is behind everything?

KAYLA

Look, lady, I took a Philosophy 101 course, okay? I know where you're going with this.

DAVID

(standing)

Okay, okay, can we stop this, please?

(to Kayla)

Look, what do I have to do to prove to you that I am Christ? I already healed you.

KAYLA

It's not about that, it's about ... your sudden about-face. You weren't a Godly man at all before and now, now you're trying to be someone you're not.

DAVID

That's not true. I've always been me, Kayla. I'm just filled with a light now that wasn't here before.

KAYLA

Ugh, give me a break.

DAVID

(looks at Maria)

Here, let me show you something.

(walking to Maria)

This is not about me, at all, really. It's about others.

SIMON

David.

DAVID

It's about healing the world.

SIMON

David, don't do what I think you're going to do.

DAVID

Maria, how long have you been blind?

MARIA

All my life.

DAVID
How would you like your sight back?

MARIA
Oh, David, I never had it in the first place.

DAVID
I can lay one hand--

*Simon suddenly jumps toward David.
David puts a hand up, and Simon
reflexively touches his own arm, then
steps back.*

SIMON
You can't heal her.

DAVID
You can't stop me.

SIMON
You're taking your divine abilities too far. Maria is not to have sight. That is the plan.

DAVID
Maria is not to have sight? She is to be handicapped on purpose? To be denied this beautiful world my Father gave to all of us?

SIMON
She is a prophet. Prophets are blind so that they may understand better than those who see.

DAVID
What? How does that work?

KAYLA
What's going on?

SIMON
Those who see only see things on the surface. Maria sees deeper than that. She sees with all of her senses.

DAVID
It's not fair for her not to have sight, Simon. What kind of God denies His people sight?

SIMON
The kind of God who knows that sight betrays the Truth.

DAVID
Then why does he give us eyes?

KAYLA

David, what's happening?

MARIA

They're fighting, child. Let it alone.

SIMON

Step back. Please. I urge you.

DAVID

No.

SIMON

You're heading down a dark path...

DAVID

No, I'm not. I'm helping people. I have the ability to help others and by God I'm going to do so.

SIMON

Don't use His name like that!

DAVID

Don't tell me what to do!

David puts his hand over her eyes.

MARIA

What are you doing?

DAVID

I'm saving you.

MARIA

I don't need to be saved.

IRINA

David, please stop!

DAVID

Glory be to our Lord.

Another flash of light, and then it is over. David removes his hand. Maria's eyes are closed.

Simon moves closer, but keeps his distance from David.

DAVID (cont'd)

Go on Maria. Open your eyes.

MARIA

I ... will not.

DAVID

Please, Maria, I have given you the gift of sight.

MARIA

You have disobeyed your Father.

DAVID

I haven't, though. I am carrying out what is right and honest. I am making things right in the world. Go on. Open your eyes.

A beat. The Maria, with some effort, opens her eyes. The room becomes very bright. Maria screams, shuts her eyes, and weakly falls to the floor. She shivers, and Irina hugs her.

MARIA

Too much! There is too much!

IRINA

It's okay, Masha.

MARIA

I saw it all!

(to David)

I saw more than you can see! I saw too much. I saw too much. I saw too much...

She repeats this softly, rocking back and forth, as Irina comforts her. Simon steps closer.

SIMON

You see? You see what you've done?

DAVID

It's her first time seeing! Of course it's going to be hard!

SIMON

No, David. She sees *more* than what is visible. She sees me, and she does not have your divine blood to make sense of my form. She is mortal, human, and a human cannot see an angel. Not in this form.

DAVID

So she'll ... she'll learn.

SIMON

She cannot learn. She is not ready. No one is ready for that yet. She is blind so that she may not see.

DAVID

This is absurd. Am I not allowed to heal my people? Am I not allowed to take the disenfranchised and raise them up? The meek shall inherit the earth, Jesus said that, and now I have the opportunity to *give* them the Earth, and they should not take it?

SIMON

You are not fully steeped in your abilities. You don't understand yet.

DAVID

I *do* understand! I understand all too well!

(beat)

I can't stay here. This place is stifling, and there are people ... people out there who need my help.

SIMON

David, please.

KAYLA

Are you leaving?

DAVID

I have to. I can't stay here.

KAYLA

Wait...

DAVID

No, no waiting. People have been waiting for two thousand years. It's time they found the glory of God.

David exits. The room is quiet. Simon walks over to Maria, who is still sobbing and rocking.

SIMON

I'm sorry Maria.

She does not respond.

Simon exits.

KAYLA

Is she going to be okay?

IRINA

I do not know.

The lights slowly fade out.

SCENE 2.

*Later in the day. Christopher and Gail.
Gail is holding the voice recorder.*

GAIL

So you have no comment.

CHRISTOPHER

That is correct. You can't ... you can't publish a story without proof. Without evidence.

GAIL

That's true. That would be a tabloid paper. But I can publish a story about a man who suddenly has supernatural powers, including the power to learn the secrets of a certain priest. And I can also track down the names he has mentioned...

CHRISTOPHER

You don't know any names.

GAIL

How do you know?

CHRISTOPHER

Because, David didn't know any names.

GAIL

You're lying to me. I could ask him. If he ever comes back.

CHRISTOPHER

He will. His mother is out looking for him.

GAIL

How did you even get in here?

CHRISTOPHER

The landlord let us in. Extenuating circumstances.

GAIL

Of course.

CHRISTOPHER

Kayla was here, and two Russian pilgrims.

GAIL

Pilgrims? You didn't tell me about pilgrims.

CHRISTOPHER

You didn't ask me. And now I don't feel like telling you.

GAIL

Oh, come on, Chris. I have a story about David that will go up no matter what you say. Whether you're mentioned or not. The least you could do is flesh out what happened today.

CHRISTOPHER

I don't know what happened. David went and he healed Kayla of her cancer, and then took her back home. That's when people started showing up outside the building. They just kept growing and growing, it was like a sea of people. Then, at some point, those pilgrims showed up.

GAIL

Who were they?

CHRISTOPHER

One was a elderly nun from a monastery in Russia, the other was her assistant.

GAIL

Why were they here?

CHRISTOPHER

I don't know. The nun could not speak. She looked like she had been through something intense. I think David laid his hands on her.

GAIL

And the assistant?

CHRISTOPHER

She gave me little information. She was more concerned about the nun.

GAIL

And after that?

CHRISTOPHER

They just left. Kayla said she would explain when they got back. Ten, twenty minutes later I got a call from Pauline saying she was going to look for David as well. I offered to help but she said I should stay and look over the apartment. So here I am.

GAIL

Interesting. Where do you think David is now?

CHRISTOPHER

I think he's trying to help as many people as he can.

GAIL

Do you think he'll be successful?

CHRISTOPHER

I think ... if he doesn't watch out, he'll get hurt.

(beat)

Are you going to blackmail me?

GAIL

What? No, of course not.

CHRISTOPHER

Good. The last thing the church needs is another scandal.

GAIL

Did you know ... I was keeping up with the newswire and there are a lot of people in the middle east who are up in arms about David. They are angry because Christ, they believe, would never be reborn in America. It's funny too, because all of the religions are angry. Jews, Muslims, Christians ... they are all upset with this so-called Christ.

CHRISTOPHER

Well, they don't know everything.

GAIL

Exactly. They're going off of stories, stories of stories. They haven't seen the miracles he's performed. Still, they say it's parlor tricks, or some new magician. Can you believe it? Comparing him to Houdini.

CHRISTOPHER

I can see where they're coming from.

GAIL

Do you think he is the Christ?

CHRISTOPHER

I do.

GAIL

What brought you to that conclusion?

CHRISTOPHER

Isn't it obvious? He took the cancer from Kayla's body. And the Russian girl, the assistant, she said something interesting before she left ... "His Grace gave her sight, and now she is blind by it." The old woman was blind, and he gave her sight. These are miracles, are they not?

GAIL

No parlor tricks, then? No smoke and mirrors?

CHRISTOPHER

No. He is Christ.

GAIL

I see...

CHRISTOPHER

Are you going to give him a fair article? They say the media is fair and balanced but they never are. Are you going to call him what he is, or are you going to be skeptical?

GAIL

I'll try and find the middle. Explore both sides.

CHRISTOPHER

There is no middle. He is the Christ. He needs to be respected.

GAIL

He will be respected.

CHRISTOPHER

Have you spoken with him?

GAIL

I have.

CHRISTOPHER

Do you think he's the Christ?

GAIL

I...

CHRISTOPHER

Would you consider yourself a religious person, Miss Whiting?

GAIL

I was, once.

CHRISTOPHER

Once?

GAIL

My parents are Mormon. I was Mormon until I was sixteen. That's when I rebelled, I guess, if you want to call it that, and ran away from home.

CHRISTOPHER

Where did you go?

GAIL

I lived with an aunt. Graduated from high school near the top of my class. Went to college for journalism. The rest is history.

CHRISTOPHER

So you once felt God's embrace, but you have since shunned it.

GAIL

I wouldn't put it like that...

CHRISTOPHER

Do you deny God's existence?

GAIL

No ... I consider myself an agnostic.

CHRISTOPHER

Ah.

GAIL

Whether or not God exists has no bearing on the way I live my life now. I try to be a good person no matter what. I don't think God, or getting into Heaven, is the reason for being good. I think you should be good for goodness sake.

CHRISTOPHER

Like the Christmas song.

GAIL

I don't consider myself a bad person.

CHRISTOPHER

No one is bad inherently. We are corrupted by various evils and sins.

GAIL

What corrupts you?

CHRISTOPHER

(beat; is she testing him?)

The same things that corrupt everyone else.

GAIL

Like?

CHRISTOPHER

Miss Whiting, if you're expecting me to reveal information for your witch hunt, then you're mistaken.

GAIL

I'm curious as to what makes a priest tick. What do you do all day?

CHRISTOPHER

I get up, I shower, I read, write. The same as everyone. I even brush my teeth occasionally.

GAIL

A pious man like yourself must have desires, thoughts. Just like everyone else.

CHRISTOPHER

Of course, but I resist temptation so that I may be closer to God.

GAIL

And now you've spoken to the son of God, a man who never resisted temptation, believe me. How does that make you feel?

CHRISTOPHER

What do you mean?

GAIL

Why do you think I'm here?

CHRISTOPHER

I ... I don't understand.

GAIL

David was cheating on Kayla with me.

CHRISTOPHER

Is that so?

GAIL

He said he was going to leave her but he didn't. And then the day finally came when he did break up with her, and that was the day she found out she had cancer.

CHRISTOPHER

Oh...

GAIL

What kind of Christ does that?

CHRISTOPHER

One who doesn't realize he's the Christ, I'd think. We don't know most of Jesus's growing up. We don't know if he had girlfriends, or even wives, before he began preaching. We don't even know when he started preaching. So it's possible--

GAIL

That he cheated?

CHRISTOPHER

Well ... it's possible. I'm sure the church wouldn't like to hear about it, but it's possible.

GAIL

They say that Jesus might not have died on the cross at all, and that he lived, went on to marry Mary Magdaline. If they weren't already married.

CHRISTOPHER

People have said that.

GAIL

Is that so wrong?

CHRISTOPHER

For man? No. For Christ ... well, people like to believe that Jesus was free of sin. It would make sense.

GAIL

But he is just a man.

CHRISTOPHER

He is a man and he is a God. That is the mystery.

GAIL

Man sins. God does not. Jesus would be a ... perfect man.

CHRISTOPHER

One would hope.

GAIL

David is far from perfect.

CHRISTOPHER

Well, this makes me think ... if he knew he was the Christ earlier, he would probably be the perfect man now. Either way, he is striving for it even as we speak.

Sounds of fighting outside.

GAIL

Do you hear that?

CHRISTOPHER

It sounds like someone fighting.

A bottle breaks. The two go to the windows.

GAIL

Oh my God, are they ...?

CHRISTOPHER

They are. Hold on.

Christopher goes to the intercom. The shouting gets louder. He hits the buzzer.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

Are they in yet?

GAIL

Not yet.

CHRISTOPHER

Please, Lord, let them be safe.

He keeps hitting the buzzer.

GAIL

Okay, they're in!

CHRISTOPHER

(opens the door; shouting)

Pauline! Are you okay?

PAULINE

(faint)

David is hurt!

Christopher runs out. Gail starts to follow, but stops, as Simon is in the room again. She doesn't see him but feels his presence.

Christopher, Kayla, Pauline, Maria and Irina enter, carrying David. Maria's eyes are voluntarily closed. They lay him on the ground.

CHRISTOPHER

What happened?

PAULINE

I'm not sure.

KAYLA

Some men came, they threw rocks and bottles at David.

IRINA

He was trying to help a little boy--

KAYLA

Is he breathing?

PAULINE

He's breathing.

CHRISTOPHER

He just looks scraped up.

Gail moves near them. She points the voice recorder at the group.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)

Did the men follow you?

PAULINE

For a while.

IRINA

We got in car, we drove...

PAULINE

But there are so many people outside.

IRINA

When we reach apartment, everyone outside is hysterical.

KAYLA

They thought we killed David or something.

IRINA

That's why all the shouting.

CHRISTOPHER

My goodness.

IRINA

We need doctor.

CHRISTOPHER

Gail, call a doctor!

SIMON

David.

GAIL

Uhh, okay, hold on.

Gail rushes to the phone. Simon takes another step.

SIMON

David.

PAULINE

He isn't bleeding very much.

(she breaks)

Oh God, David, what have you done?

CHRISTOPHER

Pauline, you should sit down.

PAULINE

No, not with my boy like this.

SIMON

David!

*Suddenly everyone and everything
freezes. David bolts upright.*

SIMON (cont'd)

There we go.

DAVID

What happened?

SIMON

You were nearly killed by some men who did not enjoy the fact
that you are the Christ.

DAVID

What? I don't remember that.

SIMON

It happened very quickly.

DAVID

(looking at the others)
What's going on?

SIMON

David, I have some news.

DAVID

Is everyone frozen?

SIMON

Yes, for the time being.

DAVID

Are they okay?

SIMON

They'll be fine.

*He goes to David, helps him stand up.
When he touches David, it becomes very
bright.*

DAVID

Did you just heal me?

SIMON

I did.

DAVID

That felt amazing.

SIMON

I wouldn't know. Listen, I must speak with you.

DAVID

Why? I was doing such great work out there.

SIMON

No, you weren't. You have created a cascading phenomenon. People are choking the streets waiting for you. Across the planet there are people already finding ways to kill you. The Middle East is infuriated.

DAVID

The entire Middle East?

SIMON

Every major religious group is going crazy. They want your head. Or proof.

DAVID

Proof? I'm giving them proof!

SIMON

They wonder why you aren't in Israel. Why you weren't born in Bethlehem.

DAVID

Why are you telling me this? Shouldn't this be part of God's plan?

SIMON

You said you knew God's plan, you tell me.

DAVID

You mean you *don't* know?

SIMON

I am just an angel. I am a messenger, I don't know everything.

DAVID

So ... what's the big deal?

SIMON

The big deal is that unless you figure out some way to handle this, you're liable to start World War III.

DAVID

Me? That's ridiculous.

SIMON

God sent me down here to ask you ... if you'd give up your powers.

DAVID

What?

SIMON

You've done good. People are healed. But if this continues, things will get worse.

DAVID

Worse? This is God's plan!

SIMON

No, this is your plan. God did not want any of this. Kayla should have died. Maria should still be blind.

DAVID

You can't give me powers to heal and then not let me heal people!

SIMON

Those powers are inherent to the Christ. If you spent more time getting in contact with your Father, you would know who needs to be healed and who must die.

DAVID

No one must die! People should live!

SIMON

You're creating a great imbalance.

DAVID

You said yourself you don't know what God's plan is; well *this* is God's plan. To make sure everyone lives full and fruitful lives. To bring the Garden of Eden back to Earth. To allow all of mankind a chance at Paradise.

SIMON

David, I don't want to do this.

DAVID

Do what? What could you possibly do?

SIMON

I can take your powers from you.

Simon steps toward David.

DAVID
You're bluffing. You know when I lay my hands on you
something happens.

SIMON
Not this time.

*Simon puts a hand on David's shoulder.
The room brightens. David tries to move
his hand but cannot.*

DAVID
Stop it!

SIMON
I'm sorry, David.

DAVID
I don't need you! Get off of me!

*David grabs Simon by the shoulders. The
room brightens more. David shoves Simon
away, and there is a thunderous crack,
the sound of something large breaking.
Simon utters a loud groan, and then
disappears.*

*David falls to the ground. The room
unfreezes.*

PAULINE
David, honey--

CHRISTOPHER
Where did he go?

IRINA
He is there!

*They all huddle around David in his new
spot.*

PAULINE
You moved!

CHRISTOPHER
Another miracle!

DAVID
No... No miracle ... no miracle...

CHRISTOPHER
What happened?

IRINA
Did you travel through time?

MARIA
Don't be silly, child.
(to David)

You fought with Simon, didn't you? I heard his voice ... very faint is it now ... and then you were gone. You have angered your Father?

DAVID
No, no I haven't...

MARIA
Then what?

DAVID
I don't know! I don't know what's happening anymore.
(beat)
Can you leave? Can you all leave please?

PAULINE
Leave? But you're hurt!

DAVID
No, I'm not. Simon healed me.

PAULINE
But--

CHRISTOPHER
We shouldn't leave you alone.

DAVID
Please, go. I want to be alone.

PAULINE
I'm not leaving you--

DAVID
PLEASE! I want to be left alone!

CHRISTOPHER
David--

GAIL
Come on, everyone. He wants to be alone. Let's not deny what the Savior wants.

KAYLA
You can't tell us what to do.

GAIL
Well you're doing what he wants, so I figured I'd step in.

CHRISTOPHER

She's right. We should perhaps leave David alone for a while.

PAULINE

Why? What if he slits his wrists?

CHRISTOPHER

He won't. He just needs time to commune with God. He hasn't been alone for quite a while.

PAULINE

I don't know...

MARIA

The priest is right. David has been around too many people. It is time for him to be quiet.

PAULINE

Maybe we can get a hotel nearby...

KAYLA

That's too expensive. Let's just all go home.

They slowly get up.

DAVID

I apologize.

CHRISTOPHER

Don't. We understand.

PAULINE

I don't, I'm your mother. I'm not leaving you alone like this.

DAVID

It's okay, Mom. I'll be fine.

CHRISTOPHER

Will you call one of us when you want to talk again? Or if you're in trouble.

DAVID

Of course.

GAIL

Come on, let's get dinner or something.

KAYLA

I'm not eating with you.

GAIL

Kayla, please, this isn't the time.

Everyone is ushered out by Gail. They say their goodbyes to David. Soon it is just David and Gail alone.

GAIL (cont'd)
Are you going to be alright?

DAVID
I'll be fine.

GAIL
If you ... need anyone. You know, to talk to, you can--

DAVID
Thank you Gail.

GAIL
(beat)
I'm going to go ahead with the story.

DAVID
You talked to Christopher?

GAIL
Yes. It's going to work out.

DAVID
... Okay.

GAIL
Just thought you should know.

DAVID
Thank you.

A beat, then Gail exits.

David stands, paces the room for a bit. His eyes fall on a glass at the bar. He tries to make it levitate but it won't budge. So instead he grabs the glass and hurls it at the wall. It shatters.

He walks around, unsure of what to do. After a moment, he kneels at the coffee table, puts his hands together in prayer, and inaudibly says a prayer. As he prays, he begins crying, but quickly stifles it. He says an audible "Amen" and stands, looking at the entrance to his apartment.

Simon appears from the bedroom.

David. SIMON

Simon? DAVID

Now you know. SIMON

Know what? DAVID

That God listens to all of your prayers. SIMON

I wasn't asking for a sign. DAVID

I know. SIMON

I wasn't asking for you, either. DAVID

I know, but all the other angels are currently busy. How do you feel? SIMON

I feel like my life was taken away from me. DAVID

Hm. Perhaps you should shift your viewpoint. SIMON

I'm tired. Exhausted. Unfulfilled. DAVID

You've done a lot in the last week. SIMON

I know. It went by in a flash. It's not enough time. It just isn't. DAVID

It doesn't matter. If you want to heal people now, you're going to need a medical license. SIMON

So that's it? That's the end? DAVID

Not quite. There is one last thing. One more piece of the puzzle, as you mortals would say. SIMON

Events, as I have said many times, have not turned out the way that God has planned. He ... must rectify things.

DAVID

What does that mean?

SIMON

It means tomorrow morning you will be killed.

DAVID

What?

SIMON

From your death, perhaps, there will be peace. Or at least mending.

DAVID

How? How is that possible?

SIMON

I don't know. It is the word of God. Perhaps he sees the turmoil you have caused in the Middle East, and he plans on using your death to unify the religions of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity.

DAVID

Wow.

SIMON

I'm sorry it had to turn out this way. It seems all of the new Christs are martyred in one way or another.

DAVID

I...

(he sits)

How? How will I die?

SIMON

Again, I don't know. I was only given the information, not the motive.

DAVID

What happens after I die?

SIMON

Normally you would be resurrected into the kingdom of Heaven. Just like the others. To sit with God and the other Christs, which will all be you.

DAVID

What?

SIMON

There is only one Christ, and you are all of them.

DAVID

I ... okay.

SIMON

Or, you were. But now you are powerless. We've never really had that happen before.

DAVID

So what does that mean?

SIMON

I'm not sure. I didn't know how this was going to end, other than I knew that you would be martyred. But without your divine powers, you are no longer the Christ. I will say this, though: you will be given a fair judgment, and God was, in the end, very pleased with you.

DAVID

He was?

SIMON

He admired your sense of duty to your fellow man, even if that man, or woman, specifically, was really needed in the other world. You have reminded God that not all of mankind is completely full of sin.

DAVID

Th...thank you.

SIMON

You're welcome.

DAVID

So what do you do now?

SIMON

I go back to Heaven and await the new son of God.

DAVID

Is that your job?

SIMON

Part of it, yes.

(beat)

I should go. I shouldn't keep God waiting.

DAVID

Thank you for telling me.

SIMON

Of course. All part of the plan.

DAVID

Got it.

Sleep well. SIMON

I'll try. DAVID

You feeling alright? SIMON

DAVID
(beat)
Yeah. I feel really good, actually.

Good. SIMON

The lights start to brighten.

Simon! DAVID

The lights return to normal.

Goodbye, David. SIMON

Goodbye. DAVID

The lights are bright. Simon disappears.

David surveys his room. Beat. Then he starts laughing. He laughs at the absurdity of it all, and his laughter turns into tears.

Fade out.

SCENE 3.

The next morning. The stage is empty. Gray clouds appear in the windows, and a light rain rattles against the windowpanes.

David is asleep on the couch.

The intercom buzzes. It buzzes again. David wakes up. He goes to the door.

DAVID
(into intercom)
Hello?

CHRISTOPHER
It's Chris. Can I come up?

DAVID
Sure.

He buzzes Christopher in. He stands, takes a deep breath, goes to the windows to look outside. Chris knocks on the door. David opens it.

DAVID (cont'd)
Hi Chris--

David's words are cut short as Christopher stabs him in the stomach. He presses David into the knife, then lets go. Then he stabs two, three more times. David reels backward, falls against the couch.

Christopher enters the room. He has a newspaper in his hands. He shows it to David.

CHRISTOPHER
Front page. Of course it was front page.
(he throws the paper onto the floor)
She said she wasn't going to run it. She said...

David slumps to the ground.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
Forgive me, David. I'm ruined. I'm ruined. Forgive me.
(he starts crying)
Forgive me, Father. Forgive me.

Christopher kneels beside David, puts David's head in his arms, cradles him.

CHRISTOPHER (cont'd)
Forgive me Father. Forgive me. Forgive me...

Lights fade out.

EPILOGUE.

Three days after David's death. His apartment is now full of iconography and other religious artifacts, candles, crucifixes, etc.

Maria sits in a chair, like in the Prologue. Irina sits on the floor beside her.

Gail paces in the back of the room, voice recorder in her hand.

Simon is in the shadows.

A long moment of silence as we watch Maria listening. Then, she slowly opens her eyes, turns to Irina, who looks up hopefully.

MARIA

Nothing.

GAIL

Nothing? What do you mean, nothing?

MARIA

I mean I hear nothing. Their voices are gone from me.

IRINA

Don't worry, Masha, they will return in time.

MARIA

No.

(she smiles at Irina)

It is good, child! David was right. Now I am free to live the end of my life in peace.

Pauline enters from the bedroom.

PAULINE

I checked the bedroom, I checked the kitchen. Hell, I even checked the bathroom. I didn't think David would resurrect in the shower but you never know. So far, nothing.

GAIL

Three days is an arbitrary date. He could resurrect at any time.

MARIA

No, three days is not arbitrary. Three is the most important number.

IRINA

If you cannot listen, then we will just wait until he returns.

PAULINE

(tearing up)

I hope he comes back. I hope he comes back.

Gail goes to comfort Pauline, but Pauline won't let her.

GAIL

Maybe we should all go to the hospital. Did anyone tell the coroner not to put him in the morgue?

PAULINE

I saw him. I saw his face. He looked dead. He didn't look like someone who was going to come back. He looked dead. Why did you have to run that story? Why did you have to ruin his life? And Christopher's?

GAIL

He said everything would be alright.

PAULINE

We'll it's not alright! My baby boy is dead! And Chris is locked up for God knows how long. My husband is dead. I'm alone. I'm all alone.

IRINA

No, Pauline, you are not alone. We are here for you.

The intercom buzzes. Gail goes to it and pushes the button.

GAIL

Who is it?

(straining to hear)

Who? I can't hear you.

(listens)

Oh, okay. Come in.

PAULINE

That wasn't David, was it?

GAIL

I think if David was resurrected he would at least have his house keys.

PAULINE

Then who is it?

The door opens, and Kayla steps in, eyes red, body weak. She looks at everyone. Beat.

KAYLA

He's not here, is he?

PAULINE

No.

KAYLA
Thank god.

MARIA
Sit, child. You look very distraught.

KAYLA
I don't even know why I'm here.

MARIA
Faith brought you here.

KAYLA
No, no faith. Just curiosity. I was curious. He's dead, he's not coming back. That's how the world works.

MARIA
But you miss him.

KAYLA
It doesn't matter. He's dead.

MARIA
It does matter. You miss him.

Kayla does not respond to this, but instead sits on the couch and buries her head in her hands. Gail puts a hand on her shoulder. Kayla looks at her, then shrugs the hand off and moves away from her.

There is a moment almost like a tableau. Then Simon speaks, his voice loud and booming.

SIMON
Maria.

MARIA
What? Who said that?

IRINA
Nobody spoke, Masha.

SIMON
Maria, listen.

MARIA
Simon? Is that you? Your voice is so faint.

SIMON
This is the last thing I am going to say to you, so listen carefully.

PAULINE
Is Simon talking to you?

MARIA
Quiet! Quiet everyone!

SIMON
Go home.

MARIA
What?

SIMON
Go home.

MARIA
What do you mean?

SIMON
Go home.

MARIA
Simon! What do you mean? Simon! Simon? I can't hear you anymore! Please, what do you mean?

IRINA
What did he say, Masha?

MARIA
He said, "Go home."

GAIL
Go home?

MARIA
Yes. Go home.

GAIL
What does that mean?

Kayla stands.

KAYLA
It means I was right. David's not coming back.

She heads for the door.

PAULINE
Where are you going?

KAYLA
Home.

And she exits. Beat. Then Maria gestures for Irina to help her stand.

MARIA
Let us go back home as well.

IRINA
Really?

MARIA
Yes.

IRINA
But ... I don't want to go. I want to stay and protect this holy place.

MARIA
We will speak with the nuns in Norilsk. Perhaps they will give you leave to travel here again. Come, let us go. Pauline, thank you. You will always be with us in our hearts.

IRINA
I will come back, Pauline. We will take care of this place. You will not have to be alone.

PAULINE
Thank you. Thank you.

MARIA
Goodbye.

IRINA
Goodbye!

PAULINE
Goodbye.

Maria and Irina exit. Gail and Pauline look at each other.

PAULINE (cont'd)
Always have to be the last person in the room, don't you?

Gail turns off her voice recorder and sets it on the couch.

GAIL
It's off. Goodbye, Pauline.

Pauline doesn't respond. Gail exits.

Pauline stands alone in the apartment for a moment. She tears up, can't keep herself from crying.

She walks to the door, opens it, flicks off the light switch, and exits.

As the lights go out, a single light appears on Simon, who has been in the shadows. He glances around the room, then makes a gesture and the light around him goes out.

THE END.