

CLOUDCUCKOOLAND

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Characters:

Bobby/Berta – Young woman; twenty-four. Daughter of Cuban exiles. Lives in Miami.

Amelia Earhart

Scarlet – Bobby’s mother (born in Cuba)

Mark – Bobby’s father (American)

Manny/Manuel (aka: “Manny the shop”/ “Bishop”) – Cuban “Balsero.” Scarlet’s best friend.

James – Twenty-four year old black man. Just moved to Miami.

Teflon – Young man; mid twenties. Bobby’s best friend. Muralist.

Sebastian – Young man; mid twenties. Muralist.

Boz – Young man; mid twenties. Muralist

Pinky – Homeless man.

Mary Poppins – Mary Poppins (as you know her; except having taken a life in “cloudcuckooland” and marrying Bert)

“ Old men, bent with your walking sticks
As with the pressure of some hand,
Surely they must have thought you strong
To lean on you so hard, so long!”

*From A Winter Ode to the Old Men of Lummus Park, Miami
Florida. By Donald Justice*

A Play in One Act

SCENE 1

*Stage right -- BOBBY, a young woman,
twenty-four, is lying down on a couch facing
both the audience and her*

*PSYCHOLOGIST. The PSYCHOLOGIST is
sitting in a comfortable chair, her back to
the audience. We never see the shrink's face.
The whole time Bobby is tossing a Coin (a
silver dollar). This silver dollar will be a
tick with her; always with her; always
flipping it. She starts out by staring at the
Silver Dollar and then looking at the shrink
and talking...*

*The Set should imply something “magical”
– transparent blue fabric, for example,
waving in three panels from the background
(like water/sky/clouds)*

BOBBY

The thing is I'm a star [*Tosses the coin high and catches it*]. I've been thinking about all the things we talked about last time and that's the thing. I mean fancy furs, neon lights; the *real thing* – P. Diddy, Marilyn Monroe, you know what I'm saying? We're talking shining here. Bursting meteor-shower-type action ... Except, except I'm stuck in the body of an onion. All wound up. I'm *so* fucking wound up. One frustrated little meteor. I wish I could just let go. Open up, you know. It's like sometimes I wish someone would just peel off that first skin and then maybe I could do the rest of the work. Does that make sense? ... My mother calls me that – her little onion. Except in Spanish of course – her “*cebollita*.” Do you think that's important? ... Anyway, she's

crazy, my mother— she’s already stocked up and ready for Charley because she’s paranoid of being left alone and in the dark again. I mean I know it happened with Andrew but I told her: Charley’s not like Andrew mom, Charley’s not like Andrew. Charley isn’t even gonna hit us, I mean we might get some crap blowing our way but that’s normal, it’s like that with all of them. But no, she’s already gone and filled the car with gas and bought like sixteen thousand gallons of water in case we have to go into hiding or fly the coop like Charley’s the Gestapo or Castro’s fucking police. I told her: Even if he does hit us, it’s just a little wind anyway. Besides it’s only a Category 2 ... You know it’s supposed to hit Cuba, Havana’s right smack directly in its path. Really sucks. Can you imagine having to deal with a hurricane in Cuba? It’s bad enough here, where we’ve actually got shit like bottled water ... I’ve got family there you know ... I hope they’re gonna be okay, I haven’t heard from them and I’m a little worried. All those fucking buildings are just gonna come crashing down and those old cars from the fifties are just gonna be flying around. Disaster ... I turned on the news but it’s like the fucking country doesn’t exist. All they talk about is Florida and the Carolina’s, but no mention about Cuba. Typical. I mean for god sakes if it were anywhere else, *anywhere else*, I mean if were Afghanistan or Uzbekistan, I mean I know they’ve got sand and not water over there but you know what I mean – anything goes on in any fucking shit hole and we get a fucking play by play. But not Cuba. No, who the fuck cares about Cuba? Oh my god, [Pause] I sound like my mother. I know what you’re thinking. You’re thinking that we Cubans think the world revolves around us like we’re the world’s bellybutton. But we’re not getting into that discussion now because it’s too political and I haven’t even told you about the flying. I’m going to build a plane, I’ve decided. Did I start telling you last time. About the Amelia Earhart dreams? They just keep recurring. Amelia keeps popping up out of nowhere and the weirdest thing is that I know all this stuff about her in my dreams except I can’t remember ever googling her or anything like that, so where do I get the info. from? And the info’s all the right stuff, mind you. Because I always check it when I wake up. Do you think we’re born with all of the world’s information? Like all of us know everything there is to know and it’s just a matter of tapping into crap – tapping into “the life force” or whatever? Maybe that’s bullshit. [Pause] Yeah, probably bullshit.

Anyway, I haven’t told anyone about the flying yet, not even my mother, especially not her – I mean can you imagine? If she freaks out about a little wind coming our way, just think about what she’ll say when I tell her I’m gonna be riding that wind like some crazy California surfer on a wave. That I’ve got dreams of riding it like

an old-school cowboy on a horse, or some toothless, tattooed freak on a Harley. Vroom ... Have I told you about this? Any of this? I can't remember if I touched on it last time -- stop me if I repeat myself. Okay, so the Amelia dreams ... I'll start there.

The lights dim and BOBBY gets up from the couch and walks towards center stage, where she stands in an empty and totally white space with intense light. She's "in the middle of nowhere." There is no-one around, except AMELIA EARHART.

AMELIA is in flying gear. BOBBY is standing in the middle of the space, looking at AMELIA who is sitting on a large piece of metal – a warped piece of airplane – cleaning her aviation glasses. BOBBY begins to shiver and a coat slowly comes down from the sky on a hanger. It's big, tacky, bright yellow, and feathery -- but BOBBY puts it on anyway. Throughout this scene, she also fiddles with her coin.

BOBBY

[*Cautiously*]
Hi.

AMELIA

[*Looking towards BOBBY. Surprised that there's anyone around*]
Hi?

BOBBY

You're Amelia Earhart, aren't you?

AMELIA

[*Paranoid. Looks all around*]
That's right. Who sent you?

BOBBY

[*Confused*]
What do you mean? I don't know.

AMELIA

You with the government? You gonna get me out of here?

BOBBY

No, I'm not with ... I just ... I don't know ... I just sort of landed here.

Coming to the conclusion that BOBBY'S harmless and useless. AMELIA goes back to her hunk of airplane and to cleaning her glasses.

AMELIA

Don't we all. What do you want kid?

BOBBY

[A little nervous; Amelia is her idol]

Um...well, I guess...I need your help. I want to fly and-- *[wide-eyed]*

AMELIA

Look kid, I'm not looking for an apprentice.

BOBBY

I know, I know that. I mean I know you're not Donald Trump and I'm not ...

AMELIA

Who?

BOBBY

Forget it, I just mean, I don't want an internship or anything, not really anyway. I just mean it must be destiny...you know, that I want to fly and that I found you, after all these years of you being lost. It must be meant to be...destiny.

AMELIA

Destiny? No. No such thing. I don't believe that crap, all that Freudian hubbub about being cooked by the time you're five. No, I don't believe in destiny. "Preparation," I have often said, "is rightly two-thirds of any venture."

BOBBY

Oh. Okay. Um...Okay...so, help me prepare. Preparation. That's good, that's good – you can help me prepare.

AMELIA

That's not my job. Besides, I'm not an engineer; I'm a pilot. And that aside: look at me; I'm lost... You're barkin' up the wrong tree.

BOBBY

No, no I'm not. I believe in you, Amelia.
I know a lot about you.

*A spotlight lights up, abruptly, on
AMELIA'S face – she covers her face
with her arm, like a shield.*

AMELIA

I always hated that.

BOBBY

What?

AMELIA

The Spotlight.

Bobby looks a little confused.

The fact that people knew things about me without me telling
them. Like where I was from, and what I ate for breakfast.

BOBBY

Yeah...you were a star...one tough meteor-bitch.

AMELIA

[Shocked]
Excuse me?

BOBBY

[A little embarrassed]
I mean... *[Pause]* people loved you. You know that people named
their kids after you and that kids named homing pigeons after you.

AMELIA

Until I disappeared. I know, I know. Always thought it was kind of
ironic about the homing pigeons.

BOBBY

I guess. But they didn't know when they named them that you'd
disappear – They thought you were a pigeon, that you'd "home,"
that you'd come back no matter what. So when you didn't they
spent four million dollars trying to figure out why you didn't.

AMELIA

Who spent four million dollars?

BOBBY

The U.S. government.

AMELIA

I didn't know that. Bet it's bullshit though. I mean, how can you spend four million dollars and not find me.

BOBBY

Easy. One word for you: Osama.

AMELIA

Who the heck's Osama?

BOBBY

Don't worry about it ... way after your time. Different kind of pilots that bunch ... Anyway, there's the Osama factor, but also there's, well let's just say that finding souls in the vastness of the universe isn't always about money. Like me, I found you, didn't I?

AMELIA

[Laughs, stops, remembering]

I remember that...

BOBBY

What?

AMELIA

Being Idealistic... You're just a kid. How old are you anyway?

BOBBY

I'm not such a kid. I'm twenty-four.

AMELIA

[Remembering]

I bought my first airplane at twenty-four.

BOBBY

I know. A Kinner Airstar.

AMELIA

That's right. You're the jolly, yellow stalker, I forgot...

[Sarcastic]

Only a stalker would find me here in the middle of –

BOBBY

-- Of fucking nowhere. What is this place?

AMELIA

I don't know, you tell me. You *found* it, I just landed here one day. Fell straight out of the sky.

BOBBY

Yeah, but me too sort of, I can't remember how I got here.

AMELIA

You should've left a Hansel and Gretel trail.

BOBBY

I never understood that – leaving a trail of bread behind, as if the birds wouldn't eat it? You gotta leave rocks or something like that.

AMELIA

So you should've left rocks. Like I said: Preparation.

BOBBY

It can't all be about Prep-work...I mean what about fate, and "calling" and all that...I think you might be my soulmate.

AMELIA

Hey listen, kid, you really have to drop that line... I know a lot of people thought that just because I wore pants...

BOBBY

[*Interrupting*]

--I don't mean that kind of soulmate. Besides I don't really do the whole Sappho dance either, it's a different kind of thing I'm looking for, what I mean is --

AMELIA

--What *do* you mean? Because if *anything* a soulmate's gotta be flesh and blood and I'm not exactly substantial here...

BOBBY

I don't know. It's just I got to thinking that if I didn't have one kind of soulmate then I might have another and I just thought I should do some searching and I thought of you first because I wanted to fly and then I just popped up here... and then I found you and innately know all this stuff about you, and well, c'mon,

you of all people should understand. I mean you, you didn't get married until you were 34.

AMELIA

Yeah, but I was flying high on the wings of another kind of love way before ...like I said, bought my first airplane at twenty-four.

BOBBY

Exactly. That's *exactly* what I'm saying – I knew you'd understand. I want to be just like you.

AMELIA

No, take it from me kid. Look what happens to you when you tie yourself to the air. It takes you far away and you never really come back...like I said, better to stick to flesh and blood.

BOBBY

So are you saying I should go back and just forget about my dreams?

AMELIA

All I'm saying is I don't agree with you, I think you should stick to what you know: the ground. As for going back – I don't even know where you're from; you do what you want.

BOBBY

Can't *you* go back?

AMELIA

Don't you think I would if I could?

BOBBY

I don't know, can't you *always* go back? I mean can't you go back as a ghost or something?

AMELIA

No, you can't always go back. And you better learn this lesson early kid – learn it before you marry the wind and the wind blows harder than you thought it could and betrays you...Plus, I wouldn't be much of a ghost.

BOBBY

Sure you would. You're haunting me, aren't you?

AMELIA

I'd say it was the other way around.

BOBBY

You know to “haunt” comes from the French root meaning to frequent a place but the *Germaic* is distantly related to *home*.

AMELIA

[*Sarcastic*]

What are you a linguist?

BOBBY

No, it’s just that I wrote this stupid paper about the meaning of “home” in college and it’s just one of those things that stuck--

AMELIA

[*Interrupting*]

--So what are you saying? I’m your home?

BOBBY

I’m saying I don’t know what home is really and maybe I don’t really need one. Maybe I can just be like you and – and do things different. And maybe you can help me to do that.

AMELIA

Help you to what? Get stuck in Clouduckooland?

BOBBY

[*Thinking “what?”*]

Cloud-whaty-who-dee?

AMELIA

Aristophones.

BOBBY

The Greek?

AMELIA

He wrote a play called “The Birds.”

BOBBY

Our kind of critters, right?.... [*Bobby says dorkily – smiling away*]

AMELIA

[*Rolling her eyes and moving her head sideways (“no”)*]

Play’s about a group of Greeks who get tired of Athens and all its politics and they decide to join the birds in their kingdom. And,

once up there, they also decide that in order to live the kind of life they want to lead, they are going to intercept all the offerings that humans make to the gods, because they can, because they're right there in this kingdom in the air, positioned right between the humans and gods. But then the gods get angry and start complaining because they're not getting any of the offerings from the humans – the *Cloudcuckoolanders* are basically starving them out. In the end, it turns out the Cloudcuckoolanders are doing a lot of the same travesties they were complaining about the Athenians doing, the same things that they were trying to escape in the beginning. Things turn positive in the end, but you understand the moral, right?

BOBBY

Whatever. I know what you're trying to do, you know...I graduated summa cum laude from my university.

AMELIA

Apparently you didn't learn much about life. Just a load of bullshit...just like flying. You know, kid. Sometimes freedom is a shackle.

BOBBY

I'd hardly call your flying career a load of bullshit.

AMELIA

I should have done more fighting and less flying. Might not have ended up lost.

BOBBY

What do you mean? You're flying was sort of like fighting. No? And you'd probably have ended up dead anyway. Fighting or flying.

AMELIA

I said lost, not dead. We all end up dead. Should've been a down-to-earth bird. Like that pigeon they all thought that I was. I gotta say I miss that place.

BOBBY

You know why they always find their way home?

AMELIA

Who? Pigeons? Why?

BOBBY

Because they know how to read the earth's magnetic field. They know the earth. It's all about pull. It's interesting. Maybe I should build a pigeon! What do you think? I mean a pigeon, that's it isn't it? That's it...

AMELIA

That's complicated... You said it yourself – homing is haunting ...Home is haunting. It's dangerous, kid, if the winds come in, you might never find your way home...look at me, kid...look at me.

Lights fade.

SCENE 2

SCARLET and MARK, BOBBY'S parents, are eating breakfast at their kitchen counter both leaning on either side of it. It's very early in the morning. Nice lighting coming in from the large windows. Very calm, very comfortable atmosphere, except for the occasional fly buzzing around because of the exaggerated amounts of fruit that are lying around in dishes everywhere around the kitchen.

SCARLET

[Like she's having an epiphany]

I kind of feel like a Bloody Mary, you want one?

MARK

I'll drink from yours. Bobby's coming over.

SCARLET

[Getting up to make her drink and getting excited to see BOBBY]
Really! Oh good, I'll make her a drink too...what time did she say she was coming? She didn't tell me. Why didn't she tell *me* she was coming... *[a little jealous that she told MARK and not her]*...

MARK

She said she'd come around 10—

SCARLET

It's 11! You don't think something happened? She's never this late.

MARK

Don't start. She's fine. *[Pause]* Hey Scar, you think you've been hittin' the drink too much lately? I mean ever since--

SCARLET

[A little offended and annoyed]
--What, Mark? Ever since what?

MARK

[Slowly, it's hard to bring up]
Well since the news about...since we heard about your mother...

SCARLET

I didn't even know my mother, Mark. *[says this sadly, tinge of bitterness]* Why would I miss her? I haven't seen her since I was 11 – we've spent our entire lives 90 miles apart...

MARK

Scarlet, it's okay, you know to be sad about this; she was your mother for christ's sake, and ... It's okay to be angry, she was doing the best she could...*[moving closer to her, holding her hand perhaps]* It wasn't her fault—she was trying to get you out of there...she wanted you to have a better life, she---

SCARLET

--I know, Mark, please don't lecture me on my the state of the Peter-Pan Crisis -- it's just I should have...what's really bothering me is...I don't know, I should have let Bob, you know go visit her or something, you know, when she wanted to and I told her she couldn't go until Fidel died...I mean she could've known her grandmother.

MARK

She knew her...they talked on the phone and in the letters and...she sent her that silver dollar and the little trinket...this isn't your fault; she—

SCARLET

[Changing the subject]
--*She* is late. She's never this late... twenty more minutes and I'm calling hospitals *[Jittery]*.

MARK

You're such a freak.

SCARLET

I'm not a *freak*, I'm just her mother. [*Pause*]

MARK

She said she wanted me to do her a favor.

SCARLET

[*Worried*]

What? What favor? What did she need?

MARK

-- I don't know Scar, I'm not psychic. She just said she was coming over and that she thought I could help her with something, she said something about cutting out some letters for her at the shop. And then she said something about Amelia Earhart, and she said she'd explain when she got here.

SCARLET

Amelia Earhart? That's weird. God, she's gotten weird lately...

MARK

[*Sighing*]

Wonder who she gets that from?

SCARLET

I think she needs therapy.

MARK

She doesn't need therapy.

SCARLET

Everybody needs therapy.

MARK

No they do not.

SCARLET

Oh don't even pretend, Mark, don't even pretend like you haven't had therapy. *You* Mr. Calculated, Mr. "fix the problem," Mr. "don't get angry," Mr. "there's work time, there's play time,

there's this time there's that ... you're all compartmentalized. That's therapy. You've been therapied, someone taught you how to deal with your life ... I don't know why you never admit that to me.

MARK

Scarlet, you think you know everything.

SCARLET

Plus you've had you're little traumas and you're just the kind to-- "

MARK

--You're just displacing all your own shit onto me.

SCARLET

Displacing. See, therapy. And yes, yes I've had my little traumas too [*says traumas in Spanish*]. Which is why I went to therapy. Only difference is, I *admit* it.

MARK

Oh my god, here we go again.

SCARLET

Okay, okay. I'll stop, I'm sorry... [*looking at her watch*]She's really late, Mark...

MARK

Aw shit... This is never gonna end, is it?

SCARLET

No, it's not. I'm always going to be her mother... and don't pull that *Americano-relajado* stuff on me, Mark, please I can't deal with it right now.

MARK

[*Sarcastic*]

You're right Scar, what was I thinking? Besides, think of it this way – this will leave you some time to think about how you're going to tell her your own freakish little news.

SCARLET

[*Freaking out a little bit*]

What? The move? We can't tell her today.

MARK

Why not Scarlet? Why not? You sprung it on *me*. It's not fair to keep her in the dark like this.

MARK and SCARLET hear the lock of their front door.

Must be Bobby. Promise we'll tell her about the move.

SCARLET

I'm not telling her today...And, I thought you were fine with this. I mean aren't you that's what you said!

MARK

All I know, Scar, is we have to tell her today. The For Sale sign's going up tomorrow. Either we tell her or she'll find out that way and she'll hate us for it. We *have* to tell her--

BOBBY comes in. She's bright pink from the heat.

BOBBY

Hey guys...Tell me what?

SCARLET

Nothing honey, *ven*, give me a kiss.

BOBBY

[Looks around goes to give her a kiss, then her father]
What's with all the fruit? It's like a still life gone buzruk in here. Oh my god, it's everywhere. I knew it smelled funny when I walked in.

MARK

And you haven't even seen the fridge yet. Or the oven.

SCARLET

The strawberries are really good, sure you don't want one?

BOBBY

Gross...they're rotting. Besides, I need to ask dad a favor and I'm kind of in a hurry—

SCARLET

-- You can have juice next time then; your father's buying a juicer.

MARK

What options do I have? I mean it's either that or throw all this food away. This week it's strawberries and oranges, the week before it was plums, a couple of days ago she was obsessed with Fuji apples, and only Fuji. No McIntosh or Granny Smith, or Rome or Gala apples, no, no, just Fuji.

BOBBY

But, why?

MARK

[Just blurts it out]

Because, your mother decided we should move to Cuba and she thought we should stock up and devour all of life's pleasures before we have to stand in line for a loaf of bread.

SCARLET

[In shock that he's just said it like this]

Mark!

BOBBY

[She thinks he's kidding; laughing]

Yeah, right, whatever...Funny dad. But listen, seriously, I need you to make me some letters. Sticky letters, in your nice calligraphy, I mean your nicest. One of the stickers has to say: "The Amelia," and the other has to say: "For all those that Flew the Coop." Really nice, you know, like with your best font, and whatever you have to do, I mean, I can pay you—

MARK

Don't be silly, Bob...what is this for? *[Confused]*

SCARLET

[Interrupting]

--Want a Bloody Mary? Or, some *cafesito*.

BOBBY

[Rolling her eyes]

Jesus, mom...I'm fine.

SCARLET

You sure? You sure you don't want some *cafecito* with espumita, just like you like it...

BOBBY

[She loves it; she can't help giving in to the cafecito and her mother's love].

Okay, with *espumita*.

SCARLET

Honey, you make it *[to MARK]*.

MARK

[Moving to make the coffee]

Ok...*[looking back at BOBBY]* So, why Amelia Earhart, Bob?

BOBBY

[ignoring his question, answering her mother's comment]

No, dad doesn't know how to make the *cafecito* right, you do it, mom. Besides, can't you see I'm trying to talk to him about something important.

MARK

[Starting to gather the stuff for the coffee]

We are too Bobby, we need to talk about –

BOBBY

Dad, please, I really need you to do this for me.

MARK

I would be more comfortable, Bob, if I knew what it was for.

BOBBY

[Dramatic]

It's for my freedom.

MARK

Are you imprisoned? *[laughing a little]*

BOBBY

It's not funny dad...this is for real. I need you – *[watching him make the coffee and then turning to her mother, getting frustrated]* mom, can you please make the coffee, not dad.

SCARLET

No, your dad has it down now, he's been practicing the *cafecito*. Trust me, you'll see...

BOBBY

Fine, whatever.

SCARLET

Bobby, honey, are you okay?

MARK

[*Continuing to make the coffee*]

You never answered, Bob -- Why Amelia?

SCARLET

Yeah, what's Amelia going to do for you, Bob? The woman is dead. Besides, trust me, you don't trust people that fly those things...they take you places you don't want to go.

BOBBY

No offense, mother, but you're projecting your own Trauma-crap on me...just trust me, ok?

SCARLET

What happened to law school, Scar? What are you going to tell them?

BOBBY

[*Rolling her eyes*]

Mother, for god's sake. Please...I really don't need this right now. Besides, I've got some time, I mean Harvard doesn't have to have my response for a couple of months...

MARK

You've got a couple of months and we've got a couple of days.

BOBBY

For what?

SCARLET

Your father is trying to tell you.

BOBBY

Tell me what?

MARK

We're selling the house.

SCARLET

And moving to Cuba.

BOBBY

[*Totally in shock*]

What?! You're serious?

SCARLET

As a hurricane.

BOBBY

But I don't get it? You're the one who's always saying [*imitating her mother*]: "Cubans built this city, it was nothing before we got here." Blah, blah, blah... And now, now what? Now that it's actually turning into something, now that it's not just a bunch of gringos—

MARK

--Hey now [*pretending offense*]

BOBBY

[*interrupting and continuing right where she left off*]

--now that it's not even just a bunch of Cubans, now that it's actually turning into a global city, you're just gonna abandon it? So what, so that when all the old men playing dominos on 8th street die what's left there? Just a bunch of tourist shops and a sign that says "we sell hand-rolled cigars," or "Elian was here," or "This used to be Little Havana," or some money-grubbing monkey giving tours to Americans from Ohio about where the "exilio" lived?

SCARLET

You're hysterical.

BOBBY

I'm not hysterical. You're hysterical. I can't fucking believe this!

SCARLET

Mark, get her a Xanax, I have them in the little purple box on my dresser.

BOBBY

I don't need a Xanax.

MARK

Both of you, stop it. This is ridiculous.
[then swatting away a fruit fly]
Damn fruit flies, pain in the ass.

BOBBY

Just wait till you get to Cuba, dad...see how many mosquitoes you're going to be swatting away then.

SCARLET

You know what this is, Mark?

MARK

What is, Scarlet?

SCARLET

This thing about Amelia Earhart—

BOBBY

--Don't even try to change the subject, mother.

SCARLET

--It's called "post-college malaise," that's what it is, Mark. I read about it. It happens to 23 and 24 year olds in this country...she fits right in, Mark – they have it too easy...that's what it is. Bobby, honey, do you have post-college malaise?

BOBBY

--I'm not doing anything wrong, mother. You've got a kid who graduated top of her class and is preparing herself for Harvard-fucking-law...I mean, c'mon! I've never done anything wrong in my life. I'm the biggest super-nerd in the world. All I'm asking is for a couple of drawn-out letters for my project.

MARK

She's right, Scar...

SCARLET

[innately dramatic]
And how is that so different than what I'm asking? How is it so different than being an elephant who wants to go home to her elephant graveyard.

MARK

Jesus, Scarlet, you're not going to die anytime soon, you're being a little dramatic, don't you think?

BOBBY

A little?

SCARLET

Listen, I just want to go home so we're selling the house.

BOBBY

[Shocked again]

I can't believe this. And what are you even talking about – Cuba isn't home anymore –

MARK

[Calmer than the other two, giving in]

--The sign's going up tomorrow.

BOBBY

[Totally in shock]

Really, now, for real, how serious are you? I mean do you have your visas, and your stuff – I mean how set is this, I mean---

MARK

We don't have the papers yet. No—

SCARLET

--We'll have time for all the preparations while we get it sold and closed, and all that. And your dad talked to your aunt and we can stay with her if things go a little long, until we move...

BOBBY

But mom, you can't just abandon Miami like you did Cuba.

SCARLET

I didn't leave Cuba by choice remember? They put me on a plane and dropped me off in the middle of nowhere.

MARK

New York's not nowhere.

SCARLET

It was for me.

BOBBY

Well, you've got a choice now, don't you? Your just going to abandon me?

MARK

Nobody's abandoning you, honey.

SCARLET

Bobby, honey, in a couple of months you'll be off to Boston, and it'll just be me and your dad, we're not abandoning you... *ven aca mi cebollita*.

BOBBY

Why can't you be like the rest of the Miami Mafia and just say you hate Fidel and vote republican just never go back until he dies.

MARK

That term is insulting, Bob, and you know it, your mother has told you a thousand times that—

BOBBY

--Dad, shut up!

SCARLET

-- Don't talk to your father like that [*voice escalating, getting angry at BOBBY*]

MARK

I think we should just calm down, all of us, and sit down, and talk [*Shooing away a fruit fly*]

BOBBY

You think, dad? You "think" – No, neither of you are thinking at all. And, I'm not gonna sit around and listen to this...I'm out of here, I've got a life to build – apparently, on my own! [*BOBBY exits, upset. MARK and SCARLET look at each other like things didn't go so well. SCARLET calls after her a little bit, but then gives in*].

MARK

Well, I guess it didn't go so well.

SCARLET

[*Really upset. Starting to pace*]
No shit Sherlock...I knew it. I knew we shouldn't have told her.

MARK

Calm down. *Calma, Escarlet* [in a thick American accent, trying to act Cuban] *ven aca...*

SCARLET

[*Still a little upset, plopping herself on Mark, giving him love, snuggling by him*]
Oh Mark, what are we going to do?

MARK

[*Calming her, and speaking the Spanish with a thick American accent*]
Nada, darling, we're just gonna sit back a bit and let things unfold. We're gonna think about this. We're gonna think about Cuba, we're going to think, think, think. [*now getting a little dramatic, playing with her*] simmer, ruminate... *calmados* ...then after the *calma*, then we'll figure out something to act on. But, *calma, calma* first.

SCARLET

[*Calming down*]
How do you do that, Mark. Jesus? I swear it's a gift...that mellow-yellow thing you do.

MARK

It must be my excellent and soothing, sugary Spanish, my love.

SCARLET

[*laughing*]
The first time you ever spoke Spanish to me, trying so hard, that was that day that I decided to love you.

MARK

Decided?

SCARLET

Yeah. *Decided*. That's all love is really, just a decision. Beyond a certain point anyway. When you decide that you can or can't live with the other person's faults. Forever –

MARK

[*Joking*]
And you have quite a few.

SCARLET

[Taking the tease]

Oh shut up! *[pause]* God, we were such a disaster – I’m surprised we ever actually made it babe, aren’t you?

MARK

No, not really. You’re it for me babe, you’re home.

SCARLET

[Snuggling a bit more]

So what are we going to about Bobby?

MARK

I’m gonna make her letters and we’ll take it from there...we’ll see what she does with them, maybe you’re right, maybe it’s just some sort of phase, some sort of post-college, ma- what was that thing –

SCARLET

Malaise...post-college malaise.

SCENE 3

Same Landscape as AMELIA and BOBBY without the hunk of airplane – just plane white this time in “Cloudcuckooland.” This time, it’s MARY POPPINS, with an umbrella and a bag at her feet. She’s just standing there with a bird on her shoulder, statue-like almost. BOBBY puts on the yellow coat and reaches out to touch MARY.

BOBBY

Mary Poppins? *[Touching her]*

MARY

[Coming to life, immediately responding]
Practically perfect in every way.

BOBBY

[Looking around]

Dude? Where’s Amelia? What’d you do with her?

MARY

She and Bert are off playing a game. Bert made her one of those side-walk-chalk drawing and she jumped right in. He sketched her an airplane; and she took off.

BOBBY

[*A little frantic, a little confused. Worried*]
Forever?

MARY

It's just an illusion, dear. When the rains come, the chalk will wash away, the drawing fade, and she'll be right back here where she started right here in Cloudcuckooland.

BOBBY

But I need her *now*...When is she coming back?

MARY

For what, may I ask?

BOBBY

So she can teach me to fly.

MARY

I thought she didn't want to do that. I thought she was unwilling?

BOBBY

How do you know?

MARY

Birds of a feather...She told me...

BOBBY

[*Suddenly realizing*]

Wait, can't you fly your umbrella? Like you do in the movie? You know, how like you steer that thing all over London and you can basically fly anywhere you want, even though the wind blows the other nannies out of the ballpark...can you teach me how to do that?

MARY

No, I'm very sorry, it's like painting – you can't teach it. I tried to get Bert to teach me how to draw once, and that was, well, quite frankly, an utter disaster.

BOBBY

Well then, maybe Bert can draw me a plane? I mean he did it for you and the kids and you ended up riding those carousel horses...Maybe he can draw me into flight.

MARY

No, winning has to be attained on your own. Or else, you'll feel empty, you see?

BOBBY

Well, what about you? Isn't there anything in that bag of yours that can help me? How about some of that syrup. You know, like a fuel pill or something. Lime Cordial, Strawberry, Rum punch?

MARY

I've long since stopped being a nanny and no longer carry so many things with me...I've learned to, well, to pack light, helps you fly higher.

BOBBY

So, wait, then why are you here then, if you can fly so high?

MARY

Choice.

BOBBY

What are you choosing?

MARY

Love.

BOBBY

I'm confused.

MARY

Don't be. It was lonely being perfect.

BOBBY

So you're not perfect anymore? You said you were still practically perfect in every way.

MARY

That's right. Practically. Except by practically I mean practical, not almost. Mind your words...they'll get you in a bind if you're not careful.

BOBBY

I still don't understand why you're still here and I'm here and Amelia's here, or there in some chalk-drawn plane, but really here and I can't understand why, if we're in the sky, we can't see through the clouds...I mean look down there [looking down, through the clouds] — it's so...dense.

MARY

I can't tell you why you're here, child. And I can't tell you why you see what you see. We all see different things when we look down. I can only tell you why I'm here.

BOBBY

Why are you here?

MARY

It's where I've always flown to, when the winds blew over; when I'd done what I had to do. Between "gigs," so to speak — to use a colloquialism. But then, I realized I missed Bert, more than any of the others, even the children I'm sorry to say, and not without a dose of guilt... There was something in the way he blew his horn and played his harmonica, dusted chimney's, and drew his sidewalk chalk drawings that made me want to never leave him.

BOBBY

So you brought him here?

MARY

Built a nest here, yes.

BOBBY

So you don't want to leave?

MARY

Why would I want to leave?

BOBBY

Why would you want to be stuck here? Look at Amelia...Amelia wants to leave. And me, look at me, I want to get out of here and go back to my flying machine...

MARY

What flying machine? It doesn't exist yet.

BOBBY

Right. I gotta build it...I just need a little –

MARY

Wind beneath your wings?

BOBBY

[laughing a little]

--Shit, never thought I'd see the day when Mary Poppins quoted Bette Midler.

MARY

Oh, it's my line, dear...she stole it.

BOBBY

Right...

MARY

So then.

BOBBY

So?

MARY

Go.

BOBBY

I want to.

MARY

Go then...No one's stopping you

[Blowing on her, poofing her away, her voice trailing off, singing chimney, chim, chimney, chim, chim, cheree...]

MARY POPPIN disappears and BOBBY jumps down onto the ground, like she's landed back into her life. She's holding a drink umbrella over her head. She looks up at it as if saying: how did this end up here, looking confused, then looks like if she's on to something with the umbrella. she closes it, smiles, and puts the umbrella away.

SCENE 4

BOBBY running onto the stage where TEFLON and JAMES are waiting for her, their feet dangling from the bridge, their bikes and JAMES'S trumpet by them.. TEFLON has paint smeared on his pants. The sound of waves crashing in the background, the scenery must denote perfect weather. The aqua blue light of the city around them, off-setting the near fluorescent orange of the sun and the terracotta tile roofs of the city's houses. The expanding Miami skyline is under construction in the distance.

There are a group of pigeons loitering around the bikes and bass. BOBBY arrives drenched in sweat, red-faced, and out of breath.

BOBBY

[Walking briskly onto the scene]

Hey guys, sorry...*[JAMES responds, "hey," – he is more accepting of how long she's been making them wait]*

TEFLON

Jesus, we've been sitting here for an hour...this better be good!

BOBBY

[Get right into it, squeezing in between them]

--ok, so here's the deal. The other night I had this weird dream with Amelia Earhart. Actually it's a recurring dream, except this time when I wake I got on the internet and punched in "flying" and I found *[big Broadway hands]* Flutag.

TEFLON

Flutag? Are you drunk?

JAMES

[On TEFLON'S heels, interrupting, knowing what it is]
The Red Bull thing?

BOBBY

[Excited]
You know about it?

JAMES

Hell yeah. It's hilarious. People make all sorts of whacked out flying gear.

TEFLON

Wanna fill me in?

BOBBY

It's a flying contest Red Bull has.

TEFLON

Red Bull? The energy drink?

BOBBY

Yeah. You know how they're slogan is "Red Bull gives you wings?"--

JAMES

--The whole thing started in Europe.

BOBBY

Flutag means "flying day" in German.

TEFLON

So?...I don't get it---

BOBBY

--So -- this year it's in Miami ...

TEFLON

Okay?

BOBBY

The way it works is people have to build these flying machines and the winner's based on how creative the machine is and how long it flies for and things like that.

JAMES

But usually they just come crashing down right away, within seconds, and there's a crane that comes and picks up the pieces when they crash, to make room for the next contestant. I mean, you have to be crazy to enter--

BOBBY

--Yeah well, I'm entering. I've already submitted an application and all I've got to do is build the thing and I've put you guys down as co-engineers. Tef, I'll need your help to draw up the plans...and you James, I need you to help me figure out some the technicalities – the “fine-tuning” so to speak--.

TEFLON

--Are you nuts? You want us to make a flying machine? That's dangerous little lady. Plus, what if the hurricane comes?

BOBBY

It's not gonna come, and it's not nuts. It's Red Bull, how dangerous can it be? Besides we're gonna fly, I mean how great is that? Can you imagine flying over the skyline ...cielito lindo and the freedom tower, and all the new high rises – and

JAMES

And bam, straight into a construction crane and down into the debris--

TEFLON

Exactly.

BOBBY

That's not gonna happen...not with my idea. I've got the design in my head, I was thinking I could make a giant one of those.

BOBBY points to the pigeons all around them and raises her eyebrows.

TEFLON

A giant pigeon?

BOBBY

I'd prefer the term rock dove.

TEFLON

I am *sorry* but those things are *not* doves.

BOBBY

Oh yes they are. That's what they're called. Besides, that's what they are if you really think about it – they're the urban dove.

TEFLON

Urban dove? You're so full of shit. The *dirty* dove. The *ugly* dove. Why would you want to make a *pigeon* plane? What about a hawk or an eagle or something? Something big and soaring, and ...

BOBBY

[*All this time JAMES has been fine-tuning his trumpet and is wanting preparing to leave, BOBBY hasn't seen it until now, so she interrupts TEFLON*] Where you going?

JAMES

I gotta go....I got a gig at 8.

BOBBY

[*Anxious, because she still needs his help*]
Wait, but?

TEFLON

Where's the gig?

JAMES

It's at the old slave quarters in Lummus Park – they're having a kind of historic event type thing and wanted a jazz band, so...

BOBBY/TEFLON

Slave quarters?

JAMES

Yeah, they got moved to the park down there by the river—preservation and all that. Been there for a while now apparently.

BOBBY

Oh my god, I can't believe I didn't know about this. I mean you just moved here and I've lived here my whole life ... I'm such a delinquent.

JAMES

I guess there's just a whole group of people that get ignored in this city ... You should go down there sometime—

BOBBY

But what about the pigeon plane...when can we talk about it? – I still haven't asked---

TEFLON

Leave the man alone, Bobby--

JAMES

Sorry, Bobby, it's just I gotta go—

BOBBY

--But—

JAMES

--Why don't you swing by tonight, we can meet there and talk --

BOBBY

[Happier now, excited]
I will. I totally will.

JAMES

Okay then, see you later.

BOBBY

See ya.

JAMES exits, BOBBY is excited she's going to get help from him... TEFLON is rolling his eyes.

TEFLON

Jesus, you're annoying.

BOBBY

Just hear me out. We could make a brilliant machine if we follow the natural schematics of the pigeon. Pigeons do the whole homing thing, which means they know how to get back to exactly where they started because they know how to follow the earth's magnetic field. We can build something like that that'll manage to carry one of us and that'll fly out and then right back in, just like a good old rock dove.

TEFLON

And what, suddenly you're a nobel laureate? I mean how the fuck you gonna figure out how to make a machine that can detect the Earth's magnetic field, Miss physicist?

BOBBY

I don't know I'll figure it out. Besides, I've got latent engineering skills, man. I used to get perfect scores in physics all the time, remember? And I was on that dorky Junior Engineers team of...

TEFLON

That was in high school!

BOBBY

So? C'mon man, I just need you to draw the plans. [*then turning to JAMES*]

TEFLON

I suck at all that science stuff, Bob...At least James used to be a math guy.

BOBBY

He did?

TEFLON

You didn't know that?

BOBBY

No...

TEFLON

Listen, Bobby, you're not getting me into another one of your hair-brained ideas. Okay—we always end up getting in trouble.

BOBBY

Oh my god, how old are you, Tef? Get "in trouble?" Who's gonna get you in trouble – you're mommy!

TEFLON

Make fun all you want, I don't care, I'm not gonna be responsible for your death. Besides I gotta go, I gotta a gig too.

BOBBY

What gig? Can't it wait?

TEFLON

No, Bobby, it can't. They guy we're doing the mural for is some rich crazy-man and I told him I'd be there twenty-five minutes ago. I bet everybody's waiting--

BOBBY

Oh, pu-lease, this is Miami.

TEFLON

Actually, your parents are friends with him, or your mom anyway.

BOBBY

Figures...My mom knows all the loonies—

TEFLON

--Guy came from Cuba on a raft like ten years ago and wants me to paint an ocean scene in his kid's room. You should see this place, it's a palace. It's really tacky, but it's a fucking palace. First of all, the kid's bed is a boat, and --

BOBBY

Oh my god, Manny the shop? Bishop? Oh my god, my mom has known him forever. He's basically like my mother's best friend. They knew each other when they were kids in Cuba.

TEFLON

So what's the deal with his name anyway? Manny? Bishop? "The shop?" I mean which one is it?

BOBBY

[laughing, forgetting a second about her bird] Yeah, I know, it's kind of funny – it's because when he first came from Cuba he opened up this "everything shop" with I'm talking everything. I mean think back to the days when town's had one man as its mayor, vet, doctor, tailor -- all in one.

TEFLON

[Getting into the story]
Uh-huh...

BOBBY

People around the neighborhood started to call him "Manny the shop," but Manny's English was so bad that he thought that they were calling him "Manny Bishop," as in the member of the clergy. As a sign of respect, he thought. And Manny, joking, would bow

his head and make the sign of the cross every time someone called him “Manny the shop,” because he thought it was funny, but people didn’t really get it, just thought he was totally nuts. It wasn’t for a while that everyone caught on and started calling him “Bishop” and when they did, “Bishop” stuck as his new nickname. I think my mom’s the only person in the world that still calls him Manny or Manuel, but...anyway, he’s *un electrico* [throughout this speech there has been laughter on both sides, it is one of the moments we see their friendship shine through].

TEFLON

Cracked out. I’m telling you. Actually *am* I telling you? I mean Bobby, are we talking Scarface here – “fly pelican fly?” [He says the above with an Al Pacino-Cuban accent and then arches his eyebrows to continue].
Did our Bishop’s shop really have “everything?”

BOBBY

No. Drugs? No, no. Not at all. Man’s clean. Never touched the stuff. He’s really just a freakin’ carpenter at heart.

TEFLON

You’re telling me he made his millions chopping wood?

BOBBY

Actually, yeah. Sort of. After a while he closed down the shop and got a job in construction, rose up the ladder, as, don’t mind if I say so myself, Cubans tend to do, and he made a bundle. Now guy’s decided to get back to hands-on work...started making furniture and doing all kinds of carpentry again, but soon those benches started turning into sculptures and it turns out guy’s got a gift. He’s got big time gallery backing down here and everything

TEFLON

You’re kidding?! So all those sculptures he’s got all over the place and all over the garage and the back yard, they’re his? Those weird ass things? I was wondering what the fuck was up with those.

BOBBY

Yep, all his. I kind of like them. My mother loves them. We’ve got a couple at the house.

TEFLON

So what are you pestering me for about your plane; why don’t you ask him to help you?

BOBBY

I can't, he'll tell my parents. My mother would flip.

TEFLON

You see, this shit is dangerous.

BOBBY

You're such a little girl, Tef. When did you turn into such a little, Little girl? What happened to the Tef I knew? The one who was all like: "I'm Teflon, and I let things slide, I'm so cool and shit."

TEFLON

[Shakes his head]

Whatever man...I gotta go paint some waves...

BOBBY

You're not getting away with this so easy you know... You're gonna draw my pigeon plans for me.

TEFLON

You keep telling yourself that, loony.

TEFLON exits and BOBBY is left alone a little dejected.

SCENE 5

BOBBY at the Shrink's office. She's wearing AMELIA'S hat – or a flying hat that looks like AMELIA'S. AMELIA and MARY POPPINS are looking at her from above – there is a kind of ledge that separates her them from where BOBBY is on earth. BOBBY can't hear what they say; but they can hear and see BOBBY.

BOBBY

There's a whole world at your feet and who gets to see it but the birds, the stars, and the chimney sweeps. You know what I mean? *[she continues mouthing words...but audience doesn't hear them, like she's still talking to the shrink while AMELIA and MARY are talking about her]*

AMELIA

Oh dear. She doesn't understand does she?

MARY

I think she does. I think she's well on her way.

AMELIA

On her way? On her way where?

MARY

To wherever it is she wants to go.

AMELIA

And where's that? I don't even think she knows that.

MARY

No. she doesn't. But, she's on her way.

AMELIA

I'm sorry I don't share your enthusiasm, Mary. I really don't. Why did we pick her? Of all people? I mean a *lawyer* for god's sake.

MARY

She's not a lawyer yet, there's still hope. And she picked us, Amelia – don't be so vain.

AMELIA

Look who's talking? You're the one that spends hours powdering your nose and getting all prim.

MARY

Oh really Amelia, your just jealous everyone you knew had their feet on the ground and didn't wish to join you.

AMELIA

You're saying I'm jealous of Bert? Oh, please!

MARY

That's not so preposterous, is it?

AMELIA

I know you better than you think. You picked her because you and Bert want her to defend all the poor pigeon women of the world... You know she talks to the homeless, don't think I haven't seen you watching... Bobby and that damned soft spot -- you think

she's gonna distribute Tuppins a bags, and Feed the birds [sings the last part, "feed the birds, tuppins a bag"].

MARY

I didn't pick her Amelia.

BOBBY

[*As if catching her in mid conversation*]

It's not like I picked my family, but it's like I'm so sad since my grandmother died, and I didn't even know her, not really really, and I'm pissed at my mother, I mean how could she not have wanted me to see my grandmother. [*pause*] I think building this plane for my grandmother...the wings she never had, the wings that could have gotten her out of Cuba.

AMELIA

Kid doesn't even wonder – maybe the woman didn't want to leave.

BOBBY

She would have loved it here...she would have loved me...I would have loved her...I loved her anyway [*very sad, and then happier remembering her grandmother's voice*]. I talked to her and her voice sounded like sugar and waves, all mixed in – like a microcosm of Cuba; and I bet her hips swayed like a rococo staircase with decorative Spanish tile [*starts to cry a little*]. I'm so sad, I just want to get out of here. I can't figure things out, what I feel, why I feel this way for a person I never met...who my own mother hardly knew...My mother, she's so god damned stupid, you know, it's like where does she think she's going? She has it all set up for her, she's got a home, and my dad, and she's got her backyard with the mango trees, and the big oak, and the *amaca* just like she wanted – mango trees she could've never had in New York before, even though the squirrels come and eat them here and leave her mango carcasses every day...Even if the wind comes, and that hurricane hits, and it blows them all away.

AMELIA

Do you feel that? [*the sound of wind*]

MARY

The wind is changing.

BOBBY

It doesn't matter if everything gets blown away because she's planted them before and she knows they'll grow there. She's just being...

MARY

Yes, Bobby, things bloom where they're planted.

BOBBY

...she has that thing already, that untouchable thing that makes you feel safe, all the time. It's like if mom leaves, and she takes dad with her, if she does that I'm on my own...I'll be lost. And I already feel rootless. It's like death did this thing you know – it's like when my grandmother died, they lifted me up from the ground, and left me floating...somewhere in...in...

AMELIA

In the middle of nowhere.

MARY

A pit-stop to the gods.

BOBBY

...in Cloudcuckooland.

SCENE 6

BOBBY walking into Lummus Park, JAMES is wrapping up his set. Saying his "thank you very much's." BOBBY still playing with her Silver Dollar.

JAMES

[Talking on a mic to a large audience, perhaps on the same ledge AMELIA and MARY were before]

Thank y'all for coming out. Really appreciate it. Hope you enjoyed our tribute to Miles...Miles is the man, and I do him no justice. But thank you, thank you ... *[sound of loud applause; JAMES jumping off the ledge]*

BOBBY

[Walking right up to him; he hadn't seen her in the crowd, she surprises him]

So? Miles Davis?

JAMES

The journey of a thousand Miles begins with one note [*a little dramatic, but playful*]

BOBBY

Ah...a poet...

JAMES

Nope. I just like to blow this thing...gets me flyin' nice and high, you know what I mean.

BOBBY

I know what you mean. I'll be building my own trumpet tomorrow. And you're gonna come help me right?

JAMES

You're a persistent little thing.

BOBBY

Well...there are miles to go before I sleep.

JAMES

[*smirks*] Who's that?

BOBBY

Robert Frost.

JAMES

Didn't know lawyers did poetry.

BOBBY

I was an English Major...*And* I'm not a lawyer yet.

JAMES

Really, an English Major...hmmm...[*walking a little back towards the ledge...*] Here, let's sit here...so what's all this about this pigeon plane?

BOBBY

I think you can help, especially with the magnetic field stuff...

JAMES

What magnetic field stuff?

BOBBY

That's right you missed that part...basically I want to make a plane that works like a pigeon, follows the earth's magnetic field and can always come back home...and I know you can help -- Tef said that you started out with math and then moved to music.

JAMES

Yeah...they're a lot alike, you know: math and music -- Both abstract. Both about pull.

BOBBY

That much I get; everything's about pull.

JAMES

Or repulsion.

BOBBY

Which is just a pull in the opposite direction.

JAMES

Sort of...

BOBBY

So do you think you can help me build this thing?

JAMES

Maybe. I'm not sure how successful I'll be -- I haven't really picked up a formula in a while, you know what I mean?

BOBBY

I hear it's like riding a bike.

JAMES

Yeah, but riding a bike's not like flying a plane.

BOBBY

Why not?

JAMES

Because, if you want to make something that follows the earth's magnetic field, like a pigeon, you're talking about re-creating something that's natural to that particular bird, not another... Especially not when it's made out of metal.

BOBBY

Yeah, but that's what we always do, isn't it – don't people just mimic nature all the time? Isn't that what all those satellites orbiting space are about?

JAMES

Sort of...but do you know how hot it has to get for a magnetic field to form? Do you really know what you're dealing with?

BOBBY

How hot?

JAMES

Really hot. Dynamo action depends on the presence of highly conducting fluids ... like the liquid iron of the Earth's outer core or the ionized gas of the sun...that's hot stuff. You've never felt anything so hot.

BOBBY

Sure I have. I live here don't I...and I wouldn't be here if it weren't for that heat.

JAMES

Did I ever tell you about my dad?

BOBBY

No—

JAMES

--My father was originally from Ghana.

BOBBY

Born there?

JAMES

No, no...we're talking ancestral past.

BOBBY

Middle Passage-ancestral-past?

JAMES

Right. Way back.

BOBBY

Ok.

JAMES

He never got it, you know, never got how a mixed-up soul could settle down despite the rush of pain and loss. And, so when I was ten, he left us, went back to where he thought he wouldn't feel so mixed up anymore...left my mother with me in her arms and only the sound of her hymns to soothe us both.

BOBBY

He went back to Africa?

JAMES

Yep.

BOBBY

And did he find what he was looking for?

JAMES

No, he lives in Georgia now. He was in Ghana three years, and then he realized he didn't know anything about the red ochre of the dirt, he didn't know the trees or the hollows of their trunk – Ghana didn't know him and he didn't know Ghana.

BOBBY

Africa was a stranger.

JAMES

Exactly.

BOBBY

So is that why you play music?

JAMES

I don't know, it's like I know where I am when I'm playing this thing. It's like I got my feet on the ground and my head in the air...following some note pattern I can't see, but I can hear somewhere in here [*points to head and heart*], you know what I mean?

BOBBY

I think so...like you sort of get something your dad didn't.

JAMES

Like my mother's singing is in there somewhere.

BOBBY

Do you ever see him?

JAMES

No...that's the danger of tying yourself to the wind.

BOBBY

So I'm told -- It takes you far away and you might never come back...

JAMES

He lost us.

BOBBY

Will you help me *not* get lost.

JAMES

I can only try...Why are you doing this anyway?

BOBBY

It's just a contest; it's not a big deal. I'm not building a jet, it's just a --

JAMES

--A pigeon plane, I know...but that still don't explain much...You're sure putting a lot of work into "just a contest."

BOBBY

I put a lot of work into everything.

JAMES

So I'm told.

BOBBY

Who've you been askin' ?

JAMES

Let's just say a little bird's been feeding me ideas.

BOBBY

[She's smirking, but persists]

I'm gonna start early, you're gonna be there right?

JAMES

How early? I'm gonna be here a while, you know...and then I do an after hours gig. So I can't exactly be cracking the dawn like a walnut, know what I mean?

BOBBY

Not really...but, I'm gonna be there from six in the morning until I finish.

JAMES

I can't make it at 6, Bobby...

BOBBY

Can you come around noon?

JAMES

On one condition.

BOBBY

What's that?

JAMES

You tell me why you're really doing this.

BOBBY

[Looking out at her silver dollar, pausing a little, then holding it out and saying or singing]

With tuppence for paper and strings,
you can have your own set of wings.
With your feet on the ground,
you're a bird in flight!
With your fist holding tight,
to the string of your kite!

JAMES

I don't get it.

BOBBY

Think about it...*[jumping off her ledge]*. So, Bayfront Park...noon.
I'm gonna see you there right.

JAMES

Yeah, I'll be there. I'll be there...*[BOBBY smiling, and turning to go...when JAMES calls her back with]* Hey! Be careful walking home...it's late.

BOBBY

I will. And don't worry. I got Pinky to watch out for me *[walking away]*.

JAMES

[*A little jealous*]
Who's Pinky?

BOBBY

[*Not looking back*] Just a friend. [*continuing to walk, waving her hands backwards*] See you tomorrow.

SCENE 7

BOBBY's walking home at night, from JAMES' show; she's near Camillus House (soup kitchen) about to enlist a homeless guy to help her build the plane. PINKY is standing by a trash can – he's called PINKY because he's got a habit of looking at his PINKY every two seconds. Meanwhile, BOBBY'S got her coin, which as usual she's playing with, and which occasionally catches PINKY'S attention away from his PINKY. A couple of crackheads are smoking in a doorway nearby.

PINKY

[*Seeing BOBBY come up to his trash bin*]
Hey, Red Shorts! How you doin'?

BOBBY

Just the man I'm looking for...

PINKY

Oh yeah, red shorts, why's that?... You here to help a brother out?

BOBBY

Nope, not today. I'm broke, but...actually, *you're* gonna help *me* out.

PINKY

[*Talking to his pinky*]
Uh-oh, hear that? Lady's gone off her rocker... [*Using his pinky to make a cuckoo sound*] Cuckoo! You be careful with that kind of futsy-nutsy talk 'round here Red Shorts or your red-short-butt is gonna end up right here by this trash can. You listen to the wise

fool before you [*dramatic then cracking up*]. You listenin' Red Shorts?

BOBBY

I'm not wearing my red shorts today – you can't call me that.

PINKY

Call you what? Red Shorts? You'll always be Red Shorts to me. [*Starts to laugh, looks back into his trash can, which he is doing throughout*]

BOBBY

What's so funny?

PINKY

You. Way you run around here every day in those funny little shorts and funny sneaks. Like all you need left is one of those headbands and wristbands or leg warmers or something and off you go rocket-man.

BOBBY

Whatever. Maybe you're not as dorky as I am, but you've got that whole lame-ass Carlos Santana thing going on.

PINKY

Hey man, it's not like I got a choice in gear; I wear what I can find.

BOBBY

Yeah, but the bandana? It's your personal touch, admit it. And, it's just as lame so lay off the ---

PINKY

[*Suddenly interrupting, looking like he's trying to figure something out*]

Hey, Red Shorts, what day is tomorrow?

BOBBY

Sunday. It's day-to-help-rocket-man-day--

PINKY

--Wish it were Monday.

BOBBY

Really? Nobody ever wishes for Monday.

PINKY

I'm not everybody. All I know is Mondays are mac and cheese nights at Camillus and a sweet little Cutie named Carolina volunteers there to serve up that Mac and Cheese. Sweet as sugar cane juice. I'd bet my pinky she's Cuban. Got those beautiful almond eyes. Know the ones?

BOBBY

Yeah. I know exactly the ones. My mother's Cuban...

PINKY

Lucky you. You must get some nice rice and bean action at home.

BOBBY

My mother doesn't cook. Don't think the woman's every lifted a ladle.

PINKY

She hot?

BOBBY

You can't ask me that. She's my mom...And, anyway, listen, I got to ask you a fa--

PINKY

--So *what* if she your ma? you gotta know if the woman is *caliente*? ... You ever been to Cuba?

BOBBY

No, but my cousin, who's an activist and is basically the only one in the family that goes back like once a year -- everybody thinks she's a little lefty, but she's not really she...she just came back from one of her trips and boy does she have stories. It's like one after another.

PINKY

[Looking through the trash, not really caring for the stories, being sarcastic]

Yeah, yeah you'll have to tell me them someday...Weren't you off to somewhere -- I mean you're pretty long-term today for just "passing by."

BOBBY

Well, that's what I've been trying to tell you. I'm not just passing by. I'm here to enlist you.

PINKY

Oh, no. No. Nope. I ain't going to no Iraq. I know your tactics – you all come into poor neighborhoods 'cuz we ain't worth much... What's nigger or a spic good for, right? Just 'cuz he ain't got a home...I got a home, this trash can's my home. "Join the marines, No, no, uh-uh, no— not me. You go find yoself another spic.

BOBBY

I'm not recruiting you for the army, man...I'm not the freakin' homeland security I'm here because I want, I need -- I *need* you to help me build something.

PINKY

Ain't you listenin'. I ain't buildin' no bombs. Ain't you heard dude, war is not healthy for children and other living things like my Pinky [*waves his his pinky around*].

BOBBY

[*Slowly*]

Pinky, listen to me. I don't want you to help me build a bomb, I want you to help me build a pigeon plane. A flying machine that looks like a pigeon that'll be able to read the earth's magnetic field and make its way back home no matter where it is.

PINKY

Whatever man. You got a buck?

BOBBY

You wanna help me build it or not? I need a crew. I got one buddy joining already, and I'm pretty sure I can convince the other one, and now all I need is a little more man power.

PINKY

[*Laughs out loud*]

Wait, wait, so you tellin' me you're for real? You really *are* the rocket man?

BOBBY

Rocket *woman*, thank you very much.

PINKY

You gonna pay me for my labor?

BOBBY

I don't have any money.

PINKY

Yeah, okay then, no. I gotta find where my next meal's coming from girl. Soup Kitchen's closed on Sunday. Don't really got time to do any "pigeon building," see what I'm saying?

BOBBY

I understand.

[Thinking for a second, and then looking at the palm of her hand at the silver dollar that she always carries around and then, with some hesitation offers PINKY the silver dollar]

Here.

PINKY

[Waving away the coin]

Hey man, thanks, but I'm telling you, I don't know how much I can help you with that flying shit. I mean I gotta keep my ear to the ground in my line of living, if you know what I mean.

BOBBY

I get it, but you don't have to worry, I mean it's all good. This thing *[looking at the coin between them]*, it's a silver dollar. It's good luck. It was my grandmother's. *[Gives the dollar to PINKY who finally takes it]*.

PINKY

Why you giving it to *me* for rocket man, don't you got a regular buck? I feel bad taking this -- don't you got any friends? I mean first you stand here chewing the fat with me for an hour, then you tell me you only got two friends to help you build this weird bird thing, and then you give me an heirloom?

BOBBY

It's totally cool -- I wanna give it to you. I've rubbed it dry, time to pass it on. I'm thinking it recharges when it passes hands. Like it'll have a new set of powers for you.

PINKY

Aren't you gonna be needing it out there in space?

BOBBY

I'm not gonna jet across the freakin' atmosphere – I'm just gonna fly a little bit...Besides I've got this little Mary [*pointing around her neck*] ...you in or what?

PINKY

On one condition rocket-man –

BOBBY

What's that?

PINKY

When you're up there on the sky, like the man on the moon – you bring me back a souvenir, you hear. A piece of sky or something.

BOBBY

[*They Shake and BOBBY gives PINKY the silver dollar*]
It's a deal.

SCENE 8

TEFLON is in BISHOP'S son's room with his crew, composed of one helper: BOZ. They are painting the mural and arguing. TEFLON, is Cuban. BOZ is Indian-American.

TEFLON

Yeah, I know, maybe he's a little nuts, but we gotta do it with feeling, like he says. This isn't coming out right, bro, it's not like he wants it [*looking at the mural, upset with BOZ*]

BOZ

Can you imagine sleeping in that bed? He's gonna make the kid mad. I just don't think we should do it, not exactly like he says anyway – he has no...no aesthetic.

TEFLON

Forget aesthetic. Art is money. And we gotta give the man what he paid for. [*now emphatic*] We have to do it just like he says. Get it?

BOZ

Why, it's lame. We're not gonna be happy with the outcome.

TEFLON

[*Getting exacerbad*]

It's not for *us*. It's for *him*...you want to make something *you're* happy with go buy some paintbrushes and a canvas and lock yourself up in a room, knock yourself out. And. It's not lame. You don't get it, dude, crossing the ocean like that on a raft, washing up on the shore like that, it's got to fuck with your head.

BOZ

Big time. But still I still think it's tacky, bro. And, plus, the dude is nutso...he don't co-here. Like the other day, coming in here with his:

[*BOZ imitates BISHOP demonstrating, attempting a really thick, Scarface accent, but his Indian accent is present regardless -- standing on the boat bed, bouncing lightly up and down*] "You get it all in there boys, the whole mother-fucking sea. I've seen the face in the trees my brothers and I want that in there too. But not too much. We don't want to scare *el mojonsito*, remember my kid's gonna be sleeping in here. But don't let that stop you from getting in as much as you can. The whole goddamn sea. Allegories, symbols, lay it on thick; I want to feel the water and the breeze in my face when I look at it. I want to come in here and be able to say: [*Starting to get really riled up. Very dramatic*] "Thank you Jesus. Thank you Jesus. Thank you for that water, and for saving me from her vicious teeth. I want to sit on this bed and feel ... [*SEBASTIAN spreads his arms wide and rolls back his eyes*] Tu comprendo? Comprendo now what I'm paying you for?" I mean. C'mon.

TEFLON

You know what? I get it. I get that he wants the kid to grow up surrounded by water. It's his way of teaching him the currents...love the water, be afraid of it – understand the complexity of things.

BOZ

[*Poking fun*]

Ahh, look who's sensible and sensitive.

BOBBY comes in.

BOBBY

Who's sensitive?

TEFLON

Oh great, look who it is, the pigeon lady. Just what I need.

BOZ

[Happy to see BOBBY as he has a tiny crush on her; poking fun still of TEFLON]

Hey Bobby, how's it goin'? ...Your friend here's a sissy.

BOBBY

Maybe you should use some of that sensitivity on me.

BOZ

Ooohh.

BOBBY

Not like that, gross! ...For my bird.

BOZ

What are you talking about?

TEFLON

Don't worry about it. Keep painting.

BOBBY

Yeah, keep painting, I just need to talk to Tef for a minute.

TEFLON

Go. Paint! *[waiving to BOZ, and turning to BOBBY. BOZ is painting and BOBBY and TEFLON talking – obvious that BOZ is overhearing more than painting]*

C'mon Bobby, I'm serious, man, I got to work...I'm in a time bind here.

BOBBY

Me too! And plus, you owe me.

TEFLON

For?

BOBBY

Let me see, maybe because we're blood brother and sister and best friends forever, and I was your first kiss and I taught you how to hoola hoop, and--

TEFLON

--Oh, pu-leeze...

BOZ

[Poking his head over to their conversation from afar]
Is this gonna get interesting?

TEFLON

No, no it's not -- you keep painting. We got to finish by Saturday.

Pause. BOZ turns back to stare at the wall, which has some outlined schematics for the mural but is still mostly blank/white. Meanwhile we see TEFLON and BOBBY bickering in whispers.

BOZ

I still say we leave it out. The crap about the face in the trees.

TEFLON

[Turning away from Bobby and looking at BOZ and SEBASTIAN – Upset, like he can't leave them alone for one minute]

Oh my god. Again? I thought we settled this. No, no, no. See what happens Bob when you come in interrupting; you mess everything up. *[Turning to BOZ]* We give the man what he wants. He wants a face in the fucking trees, we give him a face in the trees. We do just what he says. Symbolism, allegory ... that's what he's paying us for. As for you flying lady *[turning to BOBBY]*, I'm serious -- out,--

BOBBY

[interrupting]
--I can paint--

TEFLON

[interrupting]
out, out...

BOBBY

[taking out a paintbrush; all these interruptions are right on top of each other, very fast]

I can paint.

TEFLON

--no non-painting girls allowed.

BOBBY

C'mon Tef, all I need you to do is draw me up a plan.

BOZ

What you need, girl? What she talkin' 'bout Tef? Could I possibly be of some assistance to the beautiful Bobby. *[BOBBY is grossed out by SEBASTIAN, who thinks he's smooth]*

TEFLON

Nothing, I told you paint, or I'm gonna find myself another crew.

BOZ

Jesus....chill out, Fidel.

[Both TEFLON and BOBBY have an "oh no you didn't expression" responding to the insult; meanwhile BOZ has been staring at the water mural and, seemingly out of the blue]

Seriously though, what would make you do that? Jump out into the water like that?

TEFLON

That's easy man. How much time you got? I can tell you stories.

BOBBY

I don't have time, Tef. C'mon, the contest is just in a couple of days.

TEFLON

Point proven, Bobby, for god's sake you can't build a plane in a couple of days.

BOBBY

Yes I can, if I have the right set of plans, I can do with some help.

TEFLON

Seriously, Bob, please leave me alone. Can't you see I'm trying to explain to them why Cubans jump out in to the ocean and why we need to get the face in the fucking trees in there *[pointing to the mural]*.

BOBBY

Looks like you're not doing a very good job.

TEFLON

Oh yeah? You try!

BOBBY

Fine.

[*Turning to BOZ and SEBASTIAN*]

What you wanna know about? Why people jump into an open sea that might kill them before they reach free land? Which reason do you want me to tell you about? Fear? Human rights? Hunger? Take your pick. [*Pause*] Here, I got one for you – my cousin was telling me that this guy that used to live on his block in Havana, started selling “*pan con bistec*,” which is a typically Cuban sandwich – steak sandwich. Well, typical here not in Cuba, ‘cuz in Cuba they ain’t got jack. Anyway, guy starts selling “*pan con bistec*,” and word gets around and people are really excited ‘cuz they haven’t had a good “*pan con bistec*” since god-knows-when. But then they start getting sick. Turns out the guy was marinating *floor insulation* and sticking in between two pieces of bread and the people had forgotten what meat tasted like, so they devoured it. One kid died.

BOZ

Yeah, but I mean, where I come from people starve all the time, and it’s never talked about here, not like with the Cubans. Kids starve all the time in lots of places in the world, they eat anything they can get their hands on, just the same.

TEFLON

You see, it’s like they’re retarded. You people talk, I’m gonna paint. Somebody’s got to work around here [*turns to paint*].

BOBBY

I got another one [*BOBBY turns to TEFLON, like she’s going to get them with this one...TEFLON rolls his eyes and then turns to BOZ and SEBASTIAN to take, “inspiringly” again*]

I have this *Tia Julita*, my grandmother’s sister? Well, she used to be a writer and she knew Lezama Lima back in the 60’s. She had all these first editions of his books, *Paradiso* included, with all these super cool dedications in them. She loved those books more than anything. But in the 90’s when things got really bad she was sick of having a dirty ass and used the pages as toilet paper. She

said she figured she'd had them long enough and she couldn't stand the smell of shit anymore. Wiped her ass with *Paradise*.

*There is a loud yell, a woman's voice,
coming from another room of the house.
Both SEBASTIAN and BOZ are distracted
by the noise but BOBBY and TEFLON in an
aside.*

BOZ

[Referring the sound offstage]

That's the wife. Ever seen her? The woman wears make-up like a fish wears water -- all over the place. And she screams out her sentences. Just listen to that ... I always feel like I need earplugs when she comes in here.

TEFLON

[Turning from the mural, getting back into the conversation]

Ok, but have you seen her in her cat suit?

BOZ

[Raises an eyebrow]

Nooo?

TEFLON

Woman came to me the other day to talk to me about another possible mural for the ceiling of her private bath -- just a tight black cat suit and a painted mole on her upper lip, that's it. Wild hair, curves like a road sign for a winding road. And let me tell you, you just wanted to leave skid-marks all over her.

BOBBY

[interrupting, getting them back on track.]

--But this mural isn't for her is it? Who's it for?

BOZ

It's for the ballerina.

BOBBY

The daughter?

TEFLON

The son.

BOZ

The son? I thought it was the daughter! You're shitting me?

TEFLON

Swear to god. He came in the other day with his tights, started leaping around, then the father comes in and looks me straight in the eyes and says: You better watch out for that kid, he's the next Barishnikov!

BOZ

He was bragging?

BOBBY

--Okay, so he'll be sensitive to the mural. That's good.

BOZ

[Ignoring her]

No, seriously, he was bragging? I thought Cubans were all macho and afraid of the whole "maricon" thing.

TEFLON

This dude's different – este balseiro's got the kid's legs insured. He's got it all planned out. Debut performance with the ABT, moving on later to a solo career and his own company among the greats: Twyla, Martha ... Emilito.

BOBBY

So that's it then. That's what you have to get in there. The floor insulation, and the screaming and the cat suit, and the little boy with a ballet career and the man who crossed the water in search of something better...that's the face in the trees. I know your parents saw it, Boz, don't pretend like they didn't. Indians making their way in America [*and now at the height of her speech*] so stop fucking around and paint.

TEFLON

Jesus you're getting excited.

BOZ

[Turning]

No, man, leave her alone...she's right...let's just do it.

[Teflon is totally surprised]

Don't be such an ass, and let's get some work done. We're being assholes. Even I remember what that was like, being little and my lunch stinkin' up the lunchroom and –

TEFLON

--Okay, okay, don't get sentimental...

BOBBY

[Happy with herself]

That's right, get it all in there...get it all in there.

[Boys paint, BOBBY turns to TEFLON]

You owe me, my man. You owe me big time.

TEFLON

[Pretending to be tough as nails, but warming up]

Yeah, we'll see.

Lights fade.

SCENE 9

It's early morning, the wind is blowing. BOBBY is sitting by the raw materials that will become the Pigeon Plane. She looks a lot like AMELIA did in the first scene, on a hunk of metal (or plastic in BOBBY'S CASE) with her hat on, waiting. BOBBY is looking at her watch, walking around. Goes to her pocket to get her silver dollar and there isn't anything there. Empties her pockets. Sits down, gets back up.

All the while, AMELIA and MARY are looking down from their ledge.

AMELIA

You think they're gonna leave her stranded [*Nervous, displacing*]?

MARY

It's possible.

BOBBY

[*Looking at her watch*]

Little fuckers [*getting pissed*]. Where the hell are they?

More of the same kind of impatient waiting; takes out her phone. Tries calling TEFLON and JAMES.

Embarkation. Oh my god, *que embarque*.

More of the same pacing.

AMELIA

[*In disbelief almost. Upset for her*]

They are, they're going to leave her stranded. I knew this whole thing was a terrible idea.

MARY

Shh...Amelia, look she's leaving

AMELIA

I bet she's going to talk to that woman.

MARY

The psychologist?

AMELIA

The shrink. I don't like her.

BOBBY walks across the stage, sad, dejected, walks straight onto the shrink chair.

BOBBY

They didn't come. They didn't come! I can't believe it, they didn't come. What kind of friends are they? Urgh! [*getting pissed*] I'm an idiot, I thought James liked me, you know, like I thought he had a

little crush and for sure he'd show up, and I kinda like him too you, but he just left me hanging. And Teflon, that's the worse one – Bff Forever, my ass...No, Pinky. Pinky is the worst, really he's the worst...I gave Pinky my grandmother's Silver Dollar! What was I thinking? He probably used it to buy something. I'm so stupid. I'm sooo stupid. [*pause, as if the shrink is telling her something or she's seeing something*] What? Why are you looking at me like that? [*Again, like she's listening*] No, no it's not, I'm not having a pity party. I have every right to be mad. So what if this is *my* idea. It's a good idea. [*listening again. Goes to talk and then it seems she's interrupted...listens, and again...*] Aren't you not supposed to be talking back to me? Aren't you just supposed to listen? Aren't you breaking some psycho-analysis code, or something? [*listens again*] I *am* independent. What are you implying? I am an independent woman. Of course I can do things myself. But what do you want me to do? Build an entire airplane by myself?

AMELIA

Jesus that woman gives bad advice. I'm telling you, I don't like her.

MARY

You don't like anybody, Amelia.

AMELIA

That's not true. That's simply not true.

BOBBY

No, no, you're right. You're absolutely right.

AMELIA

No she isn't. No she isn't.

BOBBY

I'm gonna build the plane myself.

AMELIA

Oh no. Oh no...She has no idea what goes into that kind of thing.

MARY

Amelia, please, stop talking, I can't think. And don't be so negative.

AMELIA

Negative? It can't get any worse, what are we supposed to do, just watch the girl fail.

MARY is thinking, and then snapping her fingers. When she snaps her fingers, PINKY appears on the ledge with them, he starts out like he's still looking into a trash can, but there is not trash can and then he notices he's moved, and he looks around, paranoid, like he's losing his mind. BOBBY is still talking to the shrink – silent to the audience.

PINKY

I knew this would happen one day. The final screw would just...*[flicks his pinky several times, he hasn't noticed MARY or AMELIA]*.

MARY

Pinky?

PINKY

AHHH! *[jumps and freaks out]* Who in the hellish pits of my brain are you?

MARY

No, dear, this is not hell, or your brain.

AMELIA

[Looking at MARY]
What are you doing?

PINKY

AHHH!

MARY

Pinky, darling. Calm down. Please, you have to calm down.

PINKY

Please don't give me electroshock treatment. Please. I ain't nuts, not really, I ain't nuts. Must've been something I ate.

MARY

Pinky darling, aren't you forgetting something?

PINKY

Yeah, where I left my brain apparently.

MARY

You're fine Pinky. You're fine. But, you are forgetting something.

AMELIA

[Like she can't believe what MARY is doing]

Mary, this is not a good idea.

MARY

Pinky, what's that in your hand?

PINKY

[looking at his pinky]

What? This...this is –

MARY

Not your pinky, Pinky – you're other hand. You're other hand.

AMELIA

Mary, you're treading into dangerous territory.

PINKY

[Opening his other tight-fisted hand, looking at the silver dollar, and then, suddenly remembering]

Oh Shit! Shit! Red Shorts!

[jumping off the veranda, running in search of red shorts... goes to the hunks of stuff in Bayfront, but find her not there]

MARY

[From above]

Come back there tomorrow Pinky, she'll be back tomorrow.

[Pinky looks up, a little scared still of the voice, takes the silver dollar in his fist, opens it again and puts it in his pocket]

AMELIA

That was not one of your most brilliant plans, Mary...not at all.
Not at all.

SCENE 10

PINKY and BOBBY are putting the plane together. The side facing the audience already says "The Amelia"... There are real pigeons all around, which PINKY has to shoo-away all the time. BOBBY and

PINKY are fine-tuning, BOBBY is nervous. PINKY is excited.

PINKY

[Shooing away the pigeons]

Shoo, pigeons, shoo. This ain't no pigeon god. Look elsewhere for salvation, mon petite ugly birds.

BOBBY

That god you're here, Pink, what would I do without you? Could you pass me the wing, please.

PINKY

Wing...mmm...I'd give anything for some chicken.

BOBBY

[Full of sweat, all disheveled]

C'mon Pink, please. This thing is tomorrow. The wing.

PINKY

Right, the wing. *[looking down at the parts]* Republican or Democrat?

BOBBY

What?

PINKY

Right or Left?

BOBBY

Left.

PINKY

Right.

BOBBY

No, left.

PINKY

Right, right, I got it.

BOBBY

[Going over to the other side and getting the part herself]
Forget it. Just look at the plans and see if you can figure out that front part there...the propeller there, it's pretty well drawn-out, just see if you can do that part. Okay, ok, Pink.

PINKY

[Excited, his pinky out of control. Taking the plans into his hands]
Of course I can, I'm Red-shorts' Co-pilot, Pinky. Hey *[as if in ephipany]*, you ever notice that: pink and red! We're in the same family, sister. Same shady gene pool of color, man. That's right, bring on the rainbow of fruit flavor, bring it on *[looking at the map, confused now]* Pink and Red on a mision...um...um...

BOBBY

[A little frustrated]
You have it upside down.

PINKY

Right, right, I knew that *[Turning it right]*

BOBBY

Left, turn it to the left. And then left again.

PINKY

Right, right, I got it.

BOBBY

[Going over there and fixing the map] Like this.

PINKY

Like that.

BOBBY

Right.

PINKY

You said left.

BOBBY

You know what?...why don't we just do this...Why don't you go to the other side there and stick these letters to the plane?

PINKY

Reading: "For all those that flew the coop." The chicken coop.
Damn I'm hungry.

BOBBY

Jesus, Pinky, here [*Hands him money*] go get so chicken, already,
you're driving me nuts!

PINKY

You're already nuts, red-shorts, ain't nobody gotta drive you there.
You there. [*taking the money*] Hey, you need some fuel?

BOBBY

Not yet, we haven't even finished building it.

PINKY

I mean for you, fool. For your digestion-energy-making process-
machinery... [*pointing to his belly*] know what I mean?

BOBBY

Oh, uh, no, I'm fine...

PINKY

Okay, then, but don't go telling me later you want some of my
chicken when I bring it back here and start my chompin' [*goes to
exit, the wind is getting stronger*]

*The wind is howling now. All the
while it's been increasing in sound,
and now it's getting stronger.
BOBBY is left alone looking at her
plane, which is almost finished, it
just needs some bits and pieces to be
done... BOBBY sits down for a while,
and, tired, begins to rest a bit and
falls asleep.. Above AMELIA
appears on the ledge above, without
MARY.*

AMELIA

[*From above*]
Hey...Psst. Psssst. Psssssst!

BOBBY

[Waking up, hearing the sounds coming from above, looks around and then up]

Amelia!

AMELIA

Kid, listen, kid, you're not prepared. You can't do this. You've hired some hobo without a home and that will never get you home. He doesn't understand the plans.

BOBBY

He's not a hobo, he's my friend. Besides look at Mary, she's with Bert isn't she?

AMELIA

Mary and Bert both know what they want. You're not Mary. The hobo can be your friend, but he can't be your co-pilot. You're co-pilot's got to understand the way you work, got to understand where you're going...the man doesn't even have a roof over his head, how can he possibly ever take you where you want to go?

BOBBY

But I don't even know where I want to go.

AMELIA

But you will, you just haven't figured that out yet. That's why you can't get into that plane yet. Not yet. Preparation. You have to prepare, figure out where you're going, figure out the way the wind blows [*wind sounding*] and *then* you get into the plane and let it take you to the moon.

BOBBY

I *am* prepared.

AMELIA

You're not.

MARY comes running in, on the ledge, near AMELIA.

MARY

Bobby, dear, you can't do this. Not now.

BOBBY

But I thought you were going to help me Mary, you were supportive, I thought you of all people were okay with this—I thought you believed in me –

MARY

It's not that, child, it's only that Charley's coming and Flutag has been cancelled---the storm is coming straight at us. It says so on the news. And this kind of thing doesn't go away with a spoon full of sugar, you understand? Go home, kid, go home and put up some boards and prepare.

BOBBY

Just loan me your umbrella, Mary, and I'll be fine. Give me your umbrella.

MARY

The umbrella won't work for you, dear.

AMELIA

Go home. Go home, Bobby.

BOBBY

I'm not going there. They're packing and I just can't take it. I can't watch my mother move like that.

AMELIA

You don't have a choice right now.

BOBBY

I don't care what you say. I don't care. I'm flying this thing, Flutag or no Flutag.

MARY

Why put yourself in the face of danger like that? Remember that the ride down is always more brutal when you get too high too fast. Like Uncle Albert, remember Uncle Albert? He loved to laugh, loud and long and clear...but then the only way to come down was to come *way* down; he crashed straight to the floor and couldn't stop crying. Remember?

BOBBY

Uncle Albert was a drunk. Just like you Mary...all that rum punch, don't think I don't get it. Don't think I don't know what's going on, why you all are up there – because you're failures, because you failed. And you got stuck there, alone and depressed, and who cares if Bert is with you because he's just a loser who can't keep a job. Selling kites and making drawings and being a chimney sweep and making music...he's all over the place, so I don't care. You two just want me to fail because you failed.

MARY

[A little hurt, but with patience]
We're trying to protect you, dear.

AMELIA

[More upset than MARY]
Don't be such a bird-brain, kid.

BOBBY

I don't care what you say. I'm flying. I'm going, and I'm going now. Come rain, hail, or stormy weather. Come Charley or not...I don't care *[Puts on her helmet]*.

Lights fade.

SCENE 11

SCARLET is in the hospital, sitting next to BOBBY'S bed, praying over her, nervously, touching her forehead, kissing her. Worried.

SCARLET

[Worried, talking to her]
Oh honey, please, please. Please come out of this, please.

BISHOP comes in.

BISHOP

Scarlet.

SCARLET

Manny *[starts to cry]* My *cebollita*, Manny, *mi cebollita*.

BISHOP

She's going to be okay, Scarlet...she's going to be okay.

SCARLET

Oh Manny...*[sitting down next to her, looking at her daughter]*
When she was little, she wouldn't let go of me. I mean literally she wouldn't let go of me. I asked the doctor if he thought something was wrong and he said she had "Separation Anxiety." He told me that when she clung on to me like that to just keep going about my

business and eventually she'd let go. So I did, and when she would cling I would just keep walking, you know, trying to ignore it like he'd said to. But she just held on tighter and I'd end up dragging her all around the house with me. I used to call her my little broom, *mi escobita*.

BISHOP

[*soothing Scarlet, trying to, petting her arm*]
And now she's your *cebollita*.

SCARLET

Mi cebollita.

BISHOP

Don't worry. *Ya versas*, she'll come out of it. She'll be fine, you'll see.

SCARLET

You know they told me it's because I let her sleep with me too long?

BISHOP

Who?

SCARLET

The Separation Anxiety. They said it was because I let her sleep in our bed that she wouldn't come out from under my skirt.

BISHOP

That's bullshit. Emilito still sleeps with us sometimes.

SCARLET

You see! That's what I said. I said, there's such a thing as the family bed, you know. Do you know what the family bed is, doctor? There's a whole book about it, you should read it sometime. *Pa que fue eso* ... American doctor – he just didn't get it. And Mark didn't either. Not at first...although me and Bobby worked our wonder on him...cubanized him.

BISHOP

Where is he?

SCARLET

I sent him home to get a shower and some food, we're taking turns — but I don't think I'm going to leave when it's my turn to shower, I can't leave her Manuel, I can't...

BISHOP

--It's okay Scarlet, it's going to be okay.

SCARLET

--Thank you Manny.

BISHOP

For what?

SCARLET

For saving her. For being there, for taking her out of the wreck. How did you know? Did you know she was going to do this?

BISHOP

Teflon told me. He's at my house doing the mural and he told me about Bobby doing this crazy thing, that everybody had tried to stop her and then I heard about the storm and – and I ran over there --

SCARLET

[*Burying her face in her hands*]

--Oh my god. And thank god it was just wind, and the hurricane didn't actually hit, *por dios, por dios*, can you image [*looking at Bobby*] Bobby *mi amor*, what were you thinking, what were you thinking?

[*Pause. Looking back at BISHOP*]

Thank you for being there, god knows who would have taken her out of the wreck. They wouldn't have been careful with her like I know you were. You've always been there for me Manny.

BISHOP

Stop it, Scarlet. What stupid talk.

SCARLET

You have Manuel, you've always been there for me.

BISHOP

And I always will be *mi amor*. I don't know why you're talking like this ...

[*Pauses*]

She made a gorgeous bird, you know. You didn't get to see it, but it was beautiful.

AMELIA and BOBBY come in, from above, step off their ledge and come down. BISHOP and SCARLET can't see them.

AMELIA

I think she made the bird for them...

MARY

I think so too. Deep down, I think she did.

AMELIA

She said it was for her grandmother...but her grandmother never left Cuba. She never flew the coop.

MARY

No, she didn't. Not like they did...It was for her mother.

BISHOP

I wish you could've seen it – prettiest damn bird. No, pretty no, stunning.

AMELIA

It was a nice bird. Lady bird...

SCARLET

Ay, Bertica, mi amor, where are you? [*looking at her daughter*]

BISHOP

Bertica?

SCARLET

That's Bobby's real name: Berta...I named her after your mother.

At this moment, when SCARLET and BISHOP are mostly facing each other, BOBBY gets up (what is the ghost of BOBBY – or a ghost of sorts), without BISHOP and SCARLET seeing her and goes to AMELIA and MARY'S side of the bed.

BOBBY

[Asking MARY and AMELIA]

What happened?

AMELIA

You weren't prepared.

MARY

And you didn't listen to us.

BISHOP

I didn't know that. You never told me. In all our letters, you never told me you named Bobby after my mother.

BOBBY

I'm named after Manny the Shop's mother? [*confused*]

AMELIA

People have long lives, kid.

MARY

With many loves and many homes.

SCARLET

No, I never told you. I don't know why, I just didn't.

BISHOP

She would've loved that. She loved you so much. You know she thought we'd get married.

SCARLET

Yeah ... [*Pause*] Do you remember when we were kids and we used to go out to Camaguay to visit *mi tia* in el campo?

BISHOP

Oh my god, I had completely forgotten about that. All those times. Every summer. There were soo many stars and we were just these little shits. How old were we?

SCARLET

That was real country.

BISHOP

Talk about hicks.

SCARLET

I know. And we were such little city brats. But I remember, looking up at those stars, I wanted to be one. A bright, shooting star.

AMELIA

Just like you.

BOBBY

Just like me...

BISHOP

Remember the smell?

SCARLET

Cuba always smelled sweet.

BISHOP

But like salt.

SCARLET

Mixed with sugar.

BOBBY

Like Abuela's voice...

BISHOP

And sweat.

SCARLET

It was the sea.

[Pause. She sits up abruptly]

BISHOP

But it's not the same, Scarlet, it's not the same place. Places change, *la patria cambio*, you can never go back to what we lost.

SCARLET

Who told you? Who told you I was going back?

BISHOP

It was so hard to leave Scarlet, I can't understand how you could go back to a place--

SCARLET

--I never had a choice, I would've rather stayed, I was so scared. I was just a kid. I didn't want to fly, I wanted to stay with my parents, hang on to my mother's skirt. I didn't want them to send me away to New York to live with strangers and never see them again [*turning to BOBBY*]...*mi amor, mi amor...please, please come back.*

AMELIA

Go back to her, kid. Look at the woman.

BOBBY

How? I don't know how...I don't know how to wake up. How do I go to her?

AMELIA

Choice.

MARY

Look at Amelia. She got here, didn't she? To you...

BOBBY

I thought you couldn't leave Cloudcuckooland?

MARY

She doesn't *want* to leave there. That's a whole other story.

BOBBY

You prefer to stay lost?

AMELIA

I'm not lost.

BISHOP

Why leave here when you have a choice? This place took you in, it took me in. Why would you go? I don't get it....And how can you leave me again? You know how much I missed you over there when you left. You over here and me over there and just the ninety miles between us, but my god an entire world, and so much wind and so much... I thought I'd never make it across that sea. I really thought I wouldn't make it – don't leave me.

SCARLET

[*Looking down at the bed, where her daughter is*]
Don't leave me, Bobby, don't leave me.

AMELIA

Don't leave her. You can always be found. Look at Fred.

BOBBY

Noonan? Your flying partner?

AMELIA

Fred Noonan.

BOBBY

But nobody found him either.

AMELIA

Sure they did, you just don't know about it. She came one day, and she took him away...

BOBBY

And they left you behind?

AMELIA

I wanted to be alone. You get what you want in the end, kid. Just figure out what that is, and you get it. Just be careful what you wish for.

MARY

[Quoting the Robert Frost poem BOBBY quoted before, but quoting it from earlier] The woods are lovely, dark, and deep, But you have promises to keep...

BOBBY

And miles to go before I sleep...And miles to go before I sleep...

AMELIA EARHART and MARY POPPINS disappear and BOBBY is looking across the bed at her mother, who still doesn't see her. MARY POPPINS, before she leaves, wraps a skirt around SCARLET – her costume for the rest of the play, as she's sitting by the bed, consists of a huge, billowing red skirt like a tent.

SCARLET

Wake up, Bobby, honey, wake up...*[pause, looks down, over the bed, leans in]* You know some women when they're giving birth, they shit and piss and fart? Not me, can you imagine your mother

doing that? No. When I had you, I put in two enemas; I wasn't gonna be shitting in the poor doctor's hands, are you crazy, no way. Remember how when you were little I used to make you give yourself the squeaky-clean-test before you got out of the shower? Remember? If you went like this [*rubs finger on her arm*] and you didn't squeak, then you had to re-lather and start over. Oh my god, you thought I was such a freak. You hated me for that, but look at you now, you're always nice and clean, I bet you still do the test before you get out of the shower. Do you? I bet you do. I don't care what they say, there's nothing more wonderful than that clean feeling after you shower. That's why, forget it, two enemas for me thank you very much. Birth's messy enough to begin with. Why add to the disaster?

Bobby, slowly starts to attempt to crawl over to her mother from the other side, but she can't seem to do it right. Throughout the monologue, she keeps trying...

She figures out how to cross over, walking towards her mother, but her mother still doesn't see her, her mother is still looking down at the bed.

Honey, come back...I'll tell you stories, stories about Cuba, just like you like [*thinking of one to tell her, stopping, working through her tears*] You know your uncle used to go around Havana with a real live lion just because he felt like it. He was crazy. But imagine, that's how it used to be. I know what you think. I know you say that's why Castro got into power. What was that thing you told me the other day that we were such "frivolous *bourgeois* little fucks who didn't give a shit about the poor." That's easy for you to say, you only half the story, *mi amor*. You know the story from across ninety miles of sea. Anyway, your uncle with the lion, he used to own a hotel and now, now his wife doesn't even have running water. And she says that the water they have they have to boil because it's so dirty. Like after Hurricane Andrew, remember how we had to boil the water?

She manages to go all the way to her mother and sits by her, holding onto her skirt. Scarlet continues to talk into the bed.

Remember Andrew? Remember how we went outside after the storm and all the trees were down all over Coral Way? All those beautiful, huge trees. And you started crying and crying but I told you not to worry that they would grow back and I told you to look on the bright side, that the tree in our yard, the one we'd planted when you were born, was still standing. That *meant* something, that had to mean something. Your life was solid as an oak ... I was thinking about Andrew just now as I was driving over here. I was listening to the news about Charley. I'm so glad it didn't hit -- Miami's such a mess now, it's like you have to doge all the construction everywhere when you're driving. I already got two flat tires this year. Can you imagine all that flying everywhere. I know, I know, I know it's gonna be beautiful in a couple of years but it's too much for me. I don't know, I don't know what's wrong with me, I just feel suffocated here now. I know you don't understand why I want to go, why I want to leave the city when it's so "magical" now, when everybody else is so happy here now and when everybody's flocking to it like bunch of birds on a magnet. I just ... I just ... I don't know. I guess, I guess birth is a messy thing.

BOBBY climbs under her skirt, and BOBBY come out the other way, makes her way to the bed, and wakes up.

SCARLET

Honey, on my god, honey, *mi amor, mi amor* [hugging her, kissing her, crying] oh thank god...oh my god...thank god...thank god...

BOBBY

Mom, mami...

Lights fade

SCENE 13

BOBBY is awake in the hospital room. SCARLET, MARK, BISHOP, JAMES, TEFLON are at her side. Up above, looking in are AMELIA and MARY.

MARK

You gave us quite a scare kiddo.

BOBBY

I know, dad. I'm sorry.

MARK

If I'd known the letters were going to be—

BOBBY

--I know, I know...I'm really sorry.

TEFLON

We're sorry too, Bob, you know. I think I was being really—

JAMES

We were asses, really. I should've shown up, I'm such a—

BOBBY

No, really it's fine. Really, it was a stupid idea. I was just trying to—

SCARLET

It was my fault. I failed you--

BOBBY

--It's not your fault mom, it's not at all – I was being a stupid, spoiled brat, and I --

SCARLET

I should have let you gone to see your grandmother.

BOBBY

Well, yeah, especially since you're being a hypocrite and going and moving there anyway.

SCARLET

We're not moving.

MARK

We're not?

BOBBY

You're not?

SCARLET

We're not...Bobby was right...this is home. After so many years...this is home. I already took the house off the market...I told the tias in Ranchuello...

MARK

What did they say?

SCARLET

Nothing about the move, I don't think they believed we'd actually do it...but they did tell me about the hurricane...Charley may not have hit us, but your *tia* says it hit them pretty hard.

BISHOP

Que paso? Que dijieron?

SCARLET

They said the storm was devastating, and that after the storm, they went to walk around to see what it had done to the neighbors, and they walked by one of their neighbors, un *viejito*, who was staring at all his trees blown to pieces.

MARK

Poor man.

SCARLET

They said he was just standing there, hands at his sides, staring at what had once been a mango tree, a banana tree ...And so the *tias* went over to him and told him: "*Que pena, hermano, que pena*"... 'Cuz a fruit tree, you know, can get you a long way in Cuba. But the old man, he just looked at her and said: "No, no, don't worry love. The Cuban? The Cuban's always strong as an oak and always looking forward." "*No, no mi hijita, no te preocupes. El Cubano? El Cubano siempre pa'lante...*"

BISHOP

Siempre pa'lante.

TEFLON

[*laughing a little at BISHOP*]

*El Cubano siempre exagerado...*What about you, Bob? What you looking forward to?

BOBBY

Definitely not much flying ...only flying I'll be doing is to Boston.

MARK

You've decided?

BOBBY

Yeah...I think I even dreamed up a concentration.

JAMES

What?

BOBBY

I think I'm gonna do immigration law.

AMELIA

[cheeky]

She's definitely learned a thing or two about migration.

MARY

I kept thinking, you know, I should've had Bert shake her hand.

AMELIA

Oh, what do we need men for?

MARY

Chimney Sweeps are good luck, don't you know that?

AMELIA

Good luck?...You mean schmuck, look at her beau. He left her stranded.

MARY

We'll see.

BOBBY

Why are you crying?

[looking at SCARLET].

I'm fine mom, really, I'm fine...

SCARLET

I know, it's just I'm gonna miss you so much. At least in Cuba I would have had things to distract me, like bread lines and power outages, but here it's too easy, I'm gonna miss you so much.

BOBBY

[Laughing a little]

Jesus, mom! It's not like I'm not coming back or like I'm not gonna be here for every vacation.

JAMES

And we can go visit her...

BOBBY

[Back to being a little flirtatious and then a little more serious towards the end]

You gonna come visit me? Well, you're gonna have to earn that first. Trust isn't a must you know...you got to earn that.

AMELIA

Good girl.

MARY

Oh, Amelia...*[Rolling her eyes]*

We hear PINKY'S voice from the hall, asking for Ms. Red Shorts. "Where's Ms. Red Shorts? I'm looking for Pilot Red Shorts..."

PINKY

There you are, red shorts. Jesus, man, I go for some chicken and then you're gone like a fly and smash, just like a little bug. I ain't ever eatin' chicken again.

BOBBY

Hey Pinky...Pinky, this is my family; family this is Pinky.

AMELIA

The hobo.

BOBBY

He was practically working pro bono...

PINKY

That's what I wanted to see you about, man. I just wanted to give this back to you *[tosses the Silver Dollar in her direction]*...I just felt bad, man...and besides I was holding all the time, and I think it was givin' my pinky a rash, man, so, anyway, I think you should have it back.

BOBBY

I'm sorry I didn't bring you that piece of sky.

PINKY

Hey man, don't worry, if there's anything I got enough of is open sky...we in Miami aren't we?

SCARLET

Is that *abuela's*? [*Looking at the silver dollar*]

BOBBY

Abuela's, yeah [*nodding*].

SCARLET

Can I see it?

BOBBY

I think you should have it mom...

SCARLET

I can't, *mi amor*, *abuela* gave you that... [*they argue back and forth a little*]

BOBBY

You can, mom...you should hold on to it...I almost lost it.

SCARLET

No, Bobby, you love this thing...I've seen you with it...

BOBBY

Okay, well, then, just keep it safe for me while I'm away.

SCARLET

Until you come back.

BOBBY

Until I come back.

The characters embrace, and slowly each one begins to leave the room...in a sort of slow motion. BOBBY is left alone, on her bed, sitting, staring out into the shirnk/audience.

BOBBY

And so it was that I re-entered the world, longing. Kicking and Screaming and wondering when and where my long search would end. Would it be in the arms of a lover that had become a friend, a home, his body a familiar landscape? Would it be in the work that would take me in – a driving passion? Or in the smell of Café with espumita? I didn't know. What I knew is that this longing would push me forward, onward, always treading – *pa lante* – on that crooked path from messy birth to glorious home.

THE END