

ACT I  
SCENE 1

As we transition from whatever occurred pre-show, a ringing sounds. A drone, pitched high but not so loud as to hurt anyone's ears. It goes. Until..

Lights up. A college-aged man, LUCA LEVI, sits on a chair.

LUCA

My great-great grandmother was never diagnosed. You didn't go to a doctor in those days. It was shameful. Everyone knew that. Better to be crazy on your own than have a doctor confirm it. Colleen Strauss would go limp as a pile of melting dough. My grandmother said you move Colleen however you wanted, and she wouldn't resist. Move her proper to a chair. Stick her finger up her nose. Lie her down. Then ten minutes or three hours later, she'd get up and go about her day. She wouldn't mention it. No complaining, no crying, no yelling at everyone for putting her in odd poses.

Colleen kept a diary. Family heirloom now. It'll go to my sister when my mom's done with it, then her kids after that. It's a tome of a book. Page after page of conversations with God. When she went catatonic, her ears opened up to Heaven. She thought that was the price she paid for tuning into the ultimate radio station.

But it wasn't God.

Beat.

When I take the long walk from my classes over at Austin Young Hall to my parking structure, some nights I get bombarded with these... images, I guess you'd call them, of my chest exploding out like a blossoming flower. Skin peeled up, muscles peeled down, and rib cages sticking out like a, I don't know, is it the stamen? Whatever middle school science called it. Like a lotus. Leaf peels and a bone lotus. It would bloom every couple of steps. Blood splatter. *Splloof*. Raining me. So it's hard, you know, to stay... where we're supposed to. So you understand. I understand.

It wasn't God.

He takes a swig from a beer bottle that had been under his chair. He drinks, and drinks, and drinks.

As he drinks, party music comes on.

THANDIE

Gray!

GRAY, an awkward and very drunk college kid, dances over to Luca.

GRAY

Luca. Luca. Give me your hands. Look me in the eye. You are worthy of love.

LUCA

Thank you, Grayson.

GRAY

You are! God made you. He made you with love. You need to know that.

THANDIE, another partying student, comes up to them.

THANDIE

Come on. Stop running away.

GRAY

No. Don't touch me. You're too clingy.

THANDIE

I'm not even close to you.

GRAY

Luca, she's too close.

THANDIE

You're holding hands.

LUCA

He's telling me how much God loves me.

THANDIE  
He's been doing a lot of that.

LUCA  
Figured.

GRAY  
He loves everyone. Luca, I'm tired.

He sits on Luca.

THANDIE  
Come on, man. You're heavy. Right, Luca? Tell him to get off.

LUCA  
He's fine. He's like a large, boney weighted blanket. I don't mind. I like blankets.

GRAY  
My butt isn't boney.

THANDIE  
That's enough of that.

GRAY  
Don't touch me.

THANDIE  
Get up.

GRAY  
Fine. But Luca has to dance with us.

LUCA  
I'm no good with dancing.

THANDIE  
You're also being lame and sitting by yourself at a party you convinced me to come to.

GRAY  
I convinced you to come. Oh no. I didn't mean that. I wouldn't make you come. That's for marriage.

Gray!  
THANDIE

For that, I will dance with you.  
LUCA

He rises. For a moment, they dance. It's not good dancing, per se, but dancing.

You're terrible at this.  
THANDIE

Told you.  
LUCA

Luca, watch us swing dance.  
GRAY

Is there enough room?  
THANDIE

We'll be careful.  
GRAY

You've fallen down five times tonight.  
THANDIE

And because my butt is not boney, I'm perfectly fine, thank you very much.  
GRAY

Swing away.  
LUCA

And they do.

Maybe it's good. Maybe it's lame.

After a moment, Luca applauds.

Bravo.  
LUCA

THANDIE  
You should teach Luca.

LUCA  
No, that's okay.

GRAY  
It's a lot of fun. It'll make you feel better.

LUCA  
I'm okay, Grayson.

GRAY  
No you're not. Dance with me.

LUCA  
Okay.

GRAY  
Follow my lead. Okay, it'll be side, side, back, front. Ready? One-two, one-two, back-two, front-two. Yeah, that's it. Now we repeat.

LUCA  
One-two, one-two... So which of us gets spun?

GRAY  
I'm the man, so you.

LUCA  
But you're shorter so shouldn't it be you?

GRAY  
I'm not short.

LUCA  
I'm just teasing. Oh shit. Sorry. Messed up.

THANDIE  
How about you both spin?

That's a next level move.

GRAY

Give it a try.

THANDIE

So you can continue sitting?

LUCA

I would never manipulate you.

THANDIE

I think I remember it. Okay. Imagine you're mirroring me. It's like, wind-mill-three-four, side-two, one-two-back-two, so on. Right? I think so. Right? Did that look right? Let's try it.

GRAY

As they start their steps, the music changes.  
After a brief moment, the music turns into the  
high pitched drone.

Luca leaves his body. Catatonic.

The [bracketed] dialogue that follows cannot be  
heard over the drone.

[Luca? You stopped moving. Luca? Um. Thandie?]

GRAY

[What's up?]

THANDIE

[You weren't watching. Luca's frozen. Like a robot malfunctioning.]

GRAY

[He is a robot.]

THANDIE

[Really?]

GRAY

THANDIE

[Do the robot at him. Maybe he'll respond.]

He does.

Nothing.

Now enters CHASTEN, a popular actor in the theatre department.

CHASTEN

[Hey guys!]

THANDIE

[Hi.]

GRAY

[Hey! How are you? I haven't seen you in forever. Are you having fun? This is a lot of fun.]

CHASTEN

[You're pretty drunk, huh?]

GRAY

[Shh, don't tell Thandie.]

CHASTEN

[Cross my heart.]

GRAY

[Give me your hands.]

CHASTEN

[Okay.]

GRAY

[You are so loved, Chasten.]

Thandie gets in Luca's face.

THANDIE

[Luca. Luca. Hey!] LUCA!

The ringing stops.

Life returns to Luca Levi.

LUCA

What? Why are you yelling at me?

THANDIE

No, don't cry. What--Never mind. Look. There. That cannot happen.

LUCA

Jesus Christ.

THANDIE

He'll go home with Chasten and I can't deal with that tomorrow.

LUCA

I'll handle it.

THANDIE

Thank you.

LUCA

I'm throwing you under the bus.

THANDIE

Whatever.

Luca goes over to the two.

LUCA

Hey, Chasten. What's up?

CHASTEN

Gray is telling me all about how loved I am. It's really sweet.

LUCA

Yeah, that's his, uh, his whole vibe tonight.

CHASTEN

What's your vibe like?

LUCA

I'm not autistically flapping my cape in the corner for two hours so better than last time.

GRAY

I don't think you can say that.

CHASTEN

He shouldn't. Hey, I'd have offered Gray but he seems pretty gone. You sound sober. Do you want a drink?

LUCA

I'm fine.

CHASTEN

I brought my one hitter. Want a puff?

LUCA

I don't like smoking. Gray, listen, Thandie's tired and her stomach is acting up so I've got to get her back to her apartment and your shit is in my car, like, phone and everything, so it's time to head out.

GRAY

Really?

CHASTEN

Yeah, really?

LUCA

Yes, really. Time to go.

GRAY

Okay. Bye Chasten.

They hug.

Bye every one!

LUCA

See you guys.

CHASTEN

You get a hug too.

LUCA

Oh. Okay. Okay. I've gotta go. Bye.

## SCENE 2

Suggested more so than constructed, a car faces the audience. Luca drives. Thandie sits in the passenger seat. Gray is in the back.

THANDIE

You drive better when you're drunk.

LUCA

Thanks. Is that encouragement? Pretty shitty of you.

THANDIE

Fuck off.

LUCA

But thanks.

THANDIE

Remember when you hit that pole in my parking lot?

LUCA

My car remembers.

THANDIE

Dead sober.

LUCA

Tis what I would be if I weren't a fantastic alcoholic. How was it? Did you get tipsy?

THANDIE

Pretended I was, but no. Takes a lot to get me there, I guess. It was okay. I don't know, I mean, you know those guys. They suck. They're even more annoying when they're drunk. Spent all night looking after him.