

END OF MY ROPE

by David Pluebell

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CHARACTERS

CHRISTOPHER THOSKIN Late Twenties/Early Thirties. He isn't the person you would immediately call in any event. Very reserved and set in his way. He is depressed, but has a sense of humor as he uses sarcasm to communicate with the outside world.

SUNNY CALLINE Around the same age as Christopher but a little younger. Relentlessly cheerful to the point where she is draining to be around. She can see the bad sides to situations but chooses to not let that into her life for her own reasons

SPORK Gender Neutral and Mid-Thirties. Spork is an escaped convict who acts much tougher than (s)he can ever really back up. Manipulates Alex whenever possible but deep down at least cares a little bit about the relationship

ALEX PHENROS Gender Neutral and Early Thirties. Alex is the other half of the odd couple relationship with Spork. (S)He is very submissive and has a hard time not following orders from Spork.

SETTING

A small rundown studio apartment in a bustling city. There is a small kitchenette area, a single window, and single door. The setting should suggest that only one poor slob lives there.

TIME

Early evening. Present day.

ACT I

(Lights up on a man who is setting a chair under a noose hanging from his ceiling. His flat is torn apart a little bit, but altogether rather nice. It is a studio apartment so everything he owns is essentially in one room. He does not have a bed, but rather a lone mattress which is leaning against a wall so that he has the floor space to actually hang himself. The man then moves over to a camera which is sitting on top of a makeshift tripod on a small table as he obviously doesn't have one. He adjusts the camera to the chair which he then sits at to begin his speech to the camera.)

CHRISTOPHER

All right, how to start this? I have never been good at saying goodbye. Alright. *(He composes himself)* Here we go. Hello, my name is Christopher Thoskin. Since you are seeing this, it means that someone, possibly you, found me right here. Hanging from my own ceiling. I am not sure exactly how suicide notes should be written, but I think that normally, at some point I am to address the people I knew while I was here on Earth. To those of you who actually know me...hi *(beat)* bye. I don't have a standing will, but I would like to leave all of my belongings and financial assets to...I don't know. Pick a charity that really deserves it. I'm not sure what good a few sweater vests and a broken television will do, but I know it is important to give back. I know people are supposed to have meaningful last words...*(really searching for impactful words)* Let. No. Day. Be lived. In. Vain.

(He realizes that he isn't going to do any better so he steps up on the chair and starts to get the noose around him when there's a knock on the door. CHRIS takes a beat and looks at the door. A second knock. Then a third until finally it will not seem to go away.)

Just...Just a second.

(In a mad dash, CHRIS takes the noose off of his neck and jumps from the chair. He quickly shuts off the camera and studies his apartment. He notices the noose. The knocking continues)

I'm coming

(CHRIS takes the noose and tries to pull it down, but he tied it too well and it will not fall. After a few quick attempts, he decides "to hell with it" and decides to answer the door but avoid the noose.)

CHRISTOPHER

(Opening the door) Hello?

(The door is burst open by an overly chipper woman who moves about with such a pace as to drain other people. She is holding a bright pink Tupperware cake container as well as a bright purse which, while matching her outfit, still manages to catch the eye)

SUNNY

Hello, I'm Sunny! I'm your new neighbor and I just could not imagine tonight ending without me coming over to say hello. And bring you a piece of cake. Do you enjoy cake? I love cake! What's your favorite kind?

(SUNNY forces her way inside the room and is easily able to push past the weak CHRIS. SUNNY then goes about making herself at home and starting to set up the cake, making a B line into the small kitchen area. She still has not seen the noose in the middle of the room)

CHRISTOPHER

Um...Hi? *(Trying to process what has just happened)* Who did you say you were?

SUNNY

I'm Sunny, my parents named me that because they said that I brightened up their lives! I'm your new neighbor. And that's as great an excuse as any for delicious cake!

CHRISTOPHER

Well, not that I'm not flattered by the gesture, but...Why me? There are at least ten other people on this floor alone.

SUNNY

Well, silly. I knocked, but no one else really seemed to want to open the door. I even heard some very strange words from what seemed to be an Italian family down the hall. You are the first person to open the door and that makes you special. What's your name?

CHRISTOPHER

Christopher.

SUNNY

Sounds like a boring old professor's name. Ooh, What about Chris? Or C-Man? Or maybe Topher? TOPHER! You know, so many people use only the first part of their names, but you can rebel and use the second half! That's it, it's settled. I'm going to call you Topher!

CHRISTOPHER

Just Christopher. I've never been one for nicknames.

SUNNY

Oh, Tophy, you're so funny.

CHRISTOPHER

(Fighting a losing battle) Christopher. And fine, one piece of cake, *(looking at the noose which is still just in the middle of the room)* and then I really have other things to attend to tonight.

(SUNNY has finished setting out two plates, along with two forks and pulls out a bowl from her bag)

Wait. What's the bowl for?

SUNNY

Well, we need something to mix it in obviously

(SUNNY then opens the Tupperware container revealing a box of cake mix, a water bottle filled to a precise line, a small carton of eggs, and a carton of frosting)

CHRISTOPHER

You didn't make it yet?!

SUNNY

Well making it is half the fun, Tophy. What better way for us to get to know one another, than for us to bake. Like my mother always said, you can learn more about a person from how they crack an egg than how they dress.

CHRISTOPHER

(Trying to get her to leave) Forget it, just head on home, bake the cake, and then bring it over

SUNNY

A-ha! I knew it! You did want cake. See? No one can resist a good opportunity to bake.

CHRISTOPHER

I am just trying to have a moment alone. May I please just have some peace and quiet?

(SUNNY takes a beat to study CHRISTOPHER and consider his plea)

SUNNY

(Laughing) You're funny Tophy! *(She turns her attention to the recipe on the back of the box.)* Now let's see here. We have everything we need except for the pan to bake it in. *(Rummaging through her bag)* Annnnnndd...I forgot that so I guess we just have to improvise. Do you have a baking pan?

CHRISTOPHER

I don't know. I don't bake much.

SUNNY

Well we won't know unless we search. Help me find something, Tophy.

(SUNNY starts rummaging through the only set of drawers in the entire room which is somewhat close,

but only contains some clothes. CHRISTOPHER meanwhile is searching out of some compulsion to follow SUNNY's orders)

SUNNY

(Turning around to notice the noose hanging in the room) TOPHY! What is THIS!?

CHRISTOPHER

(Wanting to avoid any kind of confrontation) Well... You see...

SUNNY

(Suddenly Laughing quietly to herself) Halloween was three months ago. Honestly, Tophy how have you managed so long without me? Oh well, I understand. Sometimes I leave my Christmas decorations up til July if nobody stops me. I just love the way that the tree can liven up my bedroom.

CHRISTOPHER

You put your Christmas tree...in your bedroom?

SUNNY

(Completely oblivious) Where do most people put it?

(SUNNY moves over and tries to pull the rope from the ceiling, but it is stuck.)

Oh well, I guess a few more days can't hurt. What's the worst that could happen?

(She then takes the chair from under the rope and moves it over to the oven which she opens in her search)

A-Ha! *(Pulling it out of the oven)* I have found you a pan! *(Looking into the pan)* And it appears that I also found some of your dinner from quite a while ago? *(Showing him the pan)* Is this fish?

CHRISTOPHER

Right. I was wondering what happened to that.

SUNNY

Wow, your oven's filthy! How often do you use it?

CHRISTOPHER

(Muttering to himself) I tried to use it this morning, but the damn thing's electric.

SUNNY

What?

CHRISTOPHER

No I guess I'm just not a good cook.

SUNNY

(Moving the pan into the sink) Well we certainly cannot bake in this pan right now, it is filthy. *(She turns on the water, but nothing comes out).* Tophy? Where's your water?

CHRISTOPHER

Oh, I had a disagreement with the Super. I thought I paid my bill and he thought that I didn't after my bank decided that my checks enjoy being bounced every time they're written. Luckily I was allowed to stay here for a few nights until the repo guys come to kick me out due to a loophole in my housing agreement.

SUNNY

Wow, your super sounds like a mean guy.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, you might want to beware of him. He isn't the most compassionate of people.

SUNNY

Why would I have to beware of him?

CHRISTOPHER

Believe me, your disposition will do nothing but annoy him and probably cause more problems for you living here.

SUNNY

But I don't live here.

CHRISTOPHER

You said you were my neighbor.

SUNNY

Oh! Yeah. Well...I am. I live across the street.

CHRISTOPHER

Where?

(SUNNY points across the street through the window)

SUNNY

There! See, just like back when I was a kid and I would go across the street to see my friends.

CHRISTOPHER

(Still taking it all in) So you decided to bring over a cake, sorry, bake a cake, with your new neighbors, who are not your neighbors, up on the fifth floor of the apartment across the street from where you live.

SUNNY

Yep! Oddly enough, no one was willing to answer the door for me. I can understand that though. There are some real nutcases in this town. I met some peculiar homeless people when moving into my place last week.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah...They're the nutjobs.

SUNNY

But it looks like the cake is a wash, and I was looking so forward to having red velvet tonight.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, a shame.

SUNNY

Say! Why don't you come over to my place and we can bake it there together!

CHRISTOPHER

I'd rather not. I'd prefer to just hang around here.

(SUNNY thinks for a second and then suddenly)

SUNNY

I know. Why don't we go and search for more neighbors. As they say, "Too many cooks makes for some delicious conversation."

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, that's not the saying

SUNNY

You sure?

CHRISTOPHER

Yes, the saying goes, "Too many cooks spoil the broth"

SUNNY

That's a stupid saying. How can you spoil broth?

CHRISTOPHER

It means you shouldn't put too many people on a single task

SUNNY

But if the task is to have fun and talk the night away while enjoying sweets there can never be too many people. If we get more people we can just add more batter.

CHRISTOPHER

You don't let anything get you down do you?

SUNNY

Well once, when I was a little girl, I was left home alone by my parents. I had the afternoon to myself so I decided to turn on the television to make myself not feel so lonely. Unfortunately at that time, a lightning storm knocked out the power and I was left to look at a ghostly image of some man's face staring back at me from the television. I was so frightened that I immediately threw my plastic dolly at the face and it went clean through the TV. The sparks from the crash caught my doll

on fire and soon the entire wall behind the TV was lit up with the flames. I couldn't react. Just me, frozen, hiding behind my couch as the flames overtake my home and I just cry and cry and cry. The neighbors called the fire department, and when my parents came home to find me wrapped in a fire blanket, I tried to explain through my tears what happened but no real words came out. So my dad took me and my mother out for some ice cream while the firefighters did their job.
(Beat)

CHRISTOPHER

Oh, I'm sorry to hear that.

SUNNY

Why? Didn't you hear? I got taken out for ice cream after all of that. See? There's always a bright side.

CHRISTOPHER

...Uh-huh. Of course there is.

SUNNY

Now, tell me the real reason you don't want to have fun with your neighbors. The people on this floor seem so lively. I'm sure the two of us could get at least one other person to come out. I mean no one's this opposed to friends...*(Gasp)*
Tophy, are you just trying to be alone with me?

CHRISTOPHER

What? No. I don't even know you. Besides, who would have fun with complete strangers? I don't know any of them. I believe you're the first person in this last month to come through that door other than myself

SUNNY

You must have been one lonely kid on the playground. That's just ridiculous; everyone who's ever been a friend has started off as a stranger to someone.

CHRISTOPHER

I was an extremely integral part of the playground growing up, thank you.
Without me, how would the other kids know who to target first in dodgeball?

SUNNY

Stop being overdramatic, Tophy. It doesn't suit you very well. Fine, I won't force you to invite anyone else over. It might be more fun my way, but this way I at least get to know you better. *(Beat)* So come on, what's one of your favorite stories to tell?

(SUNNY gets uncomfortably close to CHRISTOPHER who tries his best to avoid her because he doesn't like discussing his life to anyone)

CHRISTOPHER

I don't really like to tell stories.

SUNNY

Theeeeeennn what's a very telling story?

(CHRISTOPHER sighs knowing there is no way out of this. He tries his best to come up with a story to just satisfy her. When he gets one he begins)

CHRISTOPHER

Well once, when I was eight, before my braces, but after my first pair of glasses...

SUNNY

(Prodding him onward) Yes...

CHRISTOPHER

There was this big oak tree in the middle of this park. I would see it all the time when my dad took me outside. It was the largest tree I had ever seen and it had limbs twisting and turning creating this large pool of shade for the area where I played as he left to attempt to pick up women. I used to enjoy just lifting myself up to the first branch and looking out over the small patch of soft ground as I lay against the limb. One day, I was at my usual post when I saw a cat had been treed by a dog. I climbed and climbed until I was near the very top of the tree and reached out both my arms for the cat. There weren't too many leaves blocking my

view of the sky and I stood up on the thick branch and just let the wind run along my body as it seemed to lift me up into the clouds.

SUNNY

See now, Everyone has a good story to tell. Even people like you who say that they-

CHRISTOPHER

And then the cat jumped at me with his claws. I was scratched, knocked off balance, twisted my ankle in the crook of the tree, and fell thirty feet with the cat to be greeted by the ground I once thought to be soft. I broke all the bones in my right arm and left leg and landed on the cat. Some time later when my dad returned, he made me get up and lead me by the arm back home. I never found out what happened to that cat

SUNNY

(Angry) TOPHY! Why did you have to go and ruin such a nice story?

CHRISTOPHER

It's the truth! Plus my story has a good moral; never overreach, know your limitations, and you can't save everyone. Better than becoming an arsonist and rewarding yourself with Rocky Road.

SUNNY

(Correcting in a happy way) Peppermint Swirl! I've never been a fan of Rocky Road. Too many little bits of stuff. But it is fun to say. *(Grinning)* Rocky Road!

CHRISTOPHER

You were the one who asked for a telling story.

SUNNY

Well what exactly was I supposed to learn from that? Oh! I get it! A tree climb cost you an arm and a leg *(genuinely laughing at the joke)*.

CHRISTOPHER

It wasn't meant to be a joke. And you can learn plenty. I'm afraid of heights, and I've had problems with being in control from an early age.

SUNNY

Tophy, you've gotta relax and take life for the party that it is. They say that the present is a gift and that's why it comes in a little box on your calendar.

CHRISTOPHER

I feel like I need to know who taught you these sayings just so I can prevent them from teaching anyone else.

SUNNY

Stop teasing. Come on. Any other stories?

CHRISTOPHER

(Not wanting to share anymore) Uh...what about the cake?

SUNNY

(Gasps) You're right. I almost forgot. I'm sorry. Sometimes I need some time to sprint up to my memory. Besides, you can tell me your story while we mix these ingredients.

CHRISTOPHER

(Sighing) Okay. Now we really need to finish this up. I've got a *(looking at the noose)* meeting with some old family members to get to.

(They approach the very small kitchenette that seems intimate in an awkward way)

SUNNY

Oh don't worry, you'll make it in time. I have this big bowl that needs all of these ingredients in their proper amounts so it shouldn't take long if you help me.

CHRISTOPHER

I still say this is a one person job. But fine, What's first?

SUNNY

Well first we need to take this cake mix and put it in the bowl.

(SUNNY tries to open the package, but it is proving too difficult for her. She glances around trying to find something to help her open them)

I can't open this. Do you have a knife or something?

CHRISTOPHER

No a doctor said that it would not be a good idea to have any kind of cutlery here.

SUNNY

What, like, you have a metal allergy?

CHRISTOPHER

Sure, let's go with that.

SUNNY

Cool. I love to improvise.

(SUNNY grabs one of the plastic forks that she set out earlier and pokes it through the bag, opens the bag, and dumps its contents into the bowl.)

There. Now, I've already measured out the water since that is the boring part and so we can just add that now. *(She does)* Now all that is left is to add the egg.

CHRISTOPHER

Okay, I can do that.

(CHRISTOPHER takes an egg from the carton as SUNNY watches intently as if it were the one thing she had been waiting for the entire time she has been in this apartment. She is focusing so hard that CHRISTOPHER takes notice and is visibly uncomfortable by this)

Uh, Sunny? Do you mind?

SUNNY

(Smiles at CHRISTOPHER) Oh no, not at all.

(SUNNY immediately trains her eyes right back to the egg. CHRISTOPHER realizes that she is not going to stop, takes a deep breath and finally cracks the egg against the table and into the bowl)

SUNNY

(As if putting together the pieces of a puzzle) Hmmmm.

CHRISTOPHER

What?

SUNNY

(Still serious) Nothing. I just never took you as that kind of man.

CHRISTOPHER

What kind of man?

SUNNY

(Back to her usually cheery self) Doesn't matter. Now we need to mix this bad boy. And I believe I have a spoon around here somewhere.

CHRISTOPHER

(Still in the earlier conversation) What kind of egg-cracking-man-thing-behavior did you see?

SUNNY

(Digging a wooden spoon out of her purse) Found It! And see you can even stir it allergy and worry free.

CHRISTOPHER

*(Hesitantly taking the spoon and mixing the contents of the bowl)*Umm okay. But what kind of a man did you think I was?

SUNNY

Don't worry about it. It was probably nothing and- *(Notices CHRISTOPHER mixing the bowl)* Huh, you never told me you were such a Republican.

CHRISTOPHER

Wait, What? I voted Democrat last election.

SUNNY

(Indicating to the mixing) That's not what you're telling me there.

(CHRISTOPHER continues mixing but tries very hard to analyze it and see what SUNNY sees.)

CHRISTOPHER

You caught me; I am an independent who leans Republican. The candidates sucked last year so I flipped a coin. What's the problem?

SUNNY

Nothing's a problem, silly. I just didn't expect that to come from a man who regularly diets and is more of a cat person.

CHRISTOPHER

(Putting the bowl and spoon down as quickly as he can) Okay, how are you doing this?!?

SUNNY

Tophy, Tophy, Tophy. You'll be amazed what you can learn about the world and all the people in it if you just open your eyes.

CHRISTOPHER

(Grabbing the bowl and holding it out) Fine then, you mix it.

SUNNY

*(As if asked to hold a puppy)*Tophy! You're sharing!

(SUNNY takes the bowl and starts mixing the ingredients. CHRISTOPHER tries his hardest to study her but just can't. Before he can even make a statement, SUNNY remarks)

Done!

CHRISTOPHER

Finally, and now it is time to bake it, right? No more soul-sharing or psychic readings?

SUNNY

Nope. Baking is all we need to do right now.

CHRISTOPHER

*(Struggling with his decision)*Well then, you might need to take it over to your place and bake it.

SUNNY

Okay. We'll just pack up and head on over. It's like our own little moving party.

CHRISTOPHER

(Immediately) No! *(Composing himself)* I mean, I can't go over there since I'm expecting....A plumber.

SUNNY

A plumber?

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, to fix the sink. Remember, it wasn't working properly?

SUNNY

I thought the water was shut off.

CHRISTOPHER

Right. I actually didn't exactly remember the reason, but I just remembered that I had something to do today and that was the plumber, but we can't let that batter go to waste. You better just go back to your place and cook it.

SUNNY

Okay. Ooh, Why don't I go put the cake in my oven and then come back here to stay with you while it bakes?

CHRISTOPHER

You don't wanna do that. What if the cake burns? If you aren't there watching it the entire time it is baking That is a very real possibility.

SUNNY

Well true, a watched pot never burns. But why don't I bring it over here to cook in this oven?

CHRISTOPHER

My oven's too messy, remember? No it should be yours. Just, you know, bring it over here when it's done. It will be helpful when you get back and see my...plumbing is fixed.

SUNNY

Like a celebration!

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, a celebration.

SUNNY

But I can't have you hanging around here all afternoon waiting on the cake to bake.

CHRISTOPHER

Oh, I was planning on hanging around here the entire afternoon anyway.

SUNNY

You sure?

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, just go ahead and enjoy the rest of the afternoon. And I'll leave the door unlocked so you can get in should I be indisposed.

SUNNY

Alright, but we are going to decorate it together, right? I mean, that is even more fun than baking it.

CHRISTOPHER

Sure, just...I need some time alone.

SUNNY

Ok. I'll be over just as soon as the cake is done and we can decorate it then. If the plumber guy comes early and finishes up, just come on over. I'm in apartment five-three-two.

(She is just about to leave before she turns around)

You know? I've had some hang ups about people before, but I get the feeling like this is the start to a great long friendship. Don't you think so?

CHRISTOPHER

(Not really in the moment) Yeah you could say that I'll be your friend for the rest of my life.

SUNNY

(Very excited) You mean it?

CHRISTOPHER

(Realizing what he has said) Uh..Absolutely.

SUNNY

(Squeals) Tophy, You know just how to make a girl smile!

(SUNNY exits out the door. CHRISTOPHER takes a beat to take in what has happened before he starts to gather the chair and recreate the tableau from the beginning. He is about to put the noose around his neck before he stops himself. He nervously looks around the room and then tries to do it again. Again his conscious seems to get the better of him. Finally he gets off the chair and goes for the camera. He points it toward the chair and sits down in front of it turning it on and setting it to record.)

CHRISTOPHER

I have a slight addendum to this video note. Sunny. I just want you to know that I am not doing this because of you. There were quite a number of factors leading up to this decision and I...I just can't get rid of them any other way. It's not that I didn't enjoy talking with you. I...I just can't see my problems being solved by anyone. They are not going to go away in a single afternoon unless I go along with them. You can't just barge in all smiles and think that I am going to be okay. You weren't there when I lost my faith. You weren't there when my best friend died in his terrarium because the sitter I hired lost my apartment key. And you can't even hope to fix the twelve years I spent alone with my father with a packet of Betty Crocker. I just...*(He loses his train of thought)* Why is this so hard? *(Exasperated noise)*...that cake! Well it was one of the last things I did in this world and you can either eat it in my memory or smash it into my face for leading you on. Quite frankly, I think the latter would make this an interesting crime scene. *(Beat)* I'm sorry for what I said earlier. I felt like I should include this because I don't want to seem like too big of a jerk. You've been nothing but nice to me on my last day, and for that I should at least be able to say that you will be my friend until my last breath. Easily my best friend in a while.

(Satisfied with his message but still visibly nervous, CHRISTOPHER shuts off the camera this time and

makes sure that it is easily noticeable from the door. He picks up a marker and notecard from a counter and writes "Play me" in big letters and leans the card up against the camera. He then stands on the chair and readies himself letting out some nervous air as police sirens are heard faintly in the background. He grabs the noose in both hands and is just about to put it around his neck when all of a sudden the door bursts open. In run SPORK and ALEX. SPORK is dressed in a prison jumpsuit, wielding a gun and has a knife in a holster strapped to his belt and ALEX is dressed up as if going to a fancy party but his/her clothes got wrinkled on the way over and carries a large book which (s)he brandishes like a weapon but very timidly as if (s)he was forced into a fight and just grabbed the first thing (s)he could find. (S)He also has a small rucksack on his/her back)

SPORK

(Flailing around with the gun) Alright nobody move. We are taking over this apartment and anyone who says otherwise will find themselves-((S)He locks eyes with CHRISTOPHER who still has the noose framing his face. Almost trailing off.)-Dead.

(They are just staring at each other for a brief moment)

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT I

ACT II

(The noose that hung near the center of the room is now gone and instead the rope has been used to tie CHRISTOPHER to the chair he was standing on at the end of ACT I. It is only maybe ten minutes later in the same day and the police sirens have grew in noise, but die down a little after the scene starts up. SPORK has made him/her-self quite at home and ALEX nervously paces near the window, checking outside every now and then to make sure that they have gotten free. SPORK has a gun trained on a visibly confused CHRISTOPHER. As the police sirens die down, CHRISTOPHER speaks.)

CHRISTOPHER

So what exactly are you planning on doing with me?

SPORK

You Shuddup or I'm gonna have you learning what flavor my bullets are today.

ALEX

Hey, Come on. There's no need to mean. He's tied up, it's not like he can call the police or anything.

CHRISTOPHER

I don't believe you understand exactly what I was trying to do when you interrupted me.

SPORK

I said SHUDDUP! *(To ALEX)* Those cops gone yet?

ALEX

(Checking out of the window) Yeah. It looks as though they're all leaving. *((S)He lets out a massive sigh of relief)* Oh thank you Saint Kolbe.

SPORK

(Relieved but not one to easily show it) Good. *(Gestures to CHRISTOPHER)* So what are we gonna do with 'im?

CHRISTOPHER

You could leave the room for three minutes and let the problem sort itself out.

SPORK

YOU SPEAK WHEN SPOKEN TO! I don't like the look of this guy.

ALEX

Hey, no! We can't. I don't want to give them any more reason to throw you back in jail.

CHRISTOPHER

Really think you are missing out on a wonderful opportunity here.

SPORK

(In the private conversation at a point where CHRISTOPHER can't easily hear.)

Look, I don't want to do anything that drastic either, but when push comes to shove I will always pull through. Remember that? I will get us away from here!

CHRISTOPHER

I mean, just a few small knots and all your problems go away.

SPORK

Oh for the love of...*(SPORK gets uncomfortably close to CHRISTOPHER)* Listen man, I get that you were raised better than us, but do you really think I'm that stupid. I bet you saw us coming up and figured that the best way to avoid dying was to make it seem like you were planning to do it anyway all along. Well I

wasn't born yesterday. We untie you thinking you are gonna retie your little rope to that beam and then BAM! You call the police and we get thrown to the law dogs. Well it ain't gonna happen. Not on my watch.

CHRISTOPHER

Okay. If you are going to hold me here can I at least know the names of my captors?

SPORK

(Sneering) And why should we tell you anything?

CHRISTOPHER

(Beat. Then, offering a hand from his tied up state) Hi, I'm Christopher I'll be your hostage for the evening.

ALEX

(Very amiable) Hi, I'm Alex. I'm just passing through. This is-

SPORK

(Pulling ALEX back) What the hell are you doing?

ALEX

I was just trying to be friendly.

SPORK

You never give out your real name. What if this guy happens to be an FBI agent in disguise and has a SWAT team move in as soon as he knows our names. Or maybe he's some sorta martial arts master who will flip you over his back and break your spine when you go to shake his hand

ALEX

(Defeated but trying to make a case) But we tied him up pretty easy and he doesn't seem to have any kind of headset or anything to call in a back-up crew or I'd imagine he'd've done it by now.

SPORK

They're hypotheticals. You always gotta watch your prey or soon it'll be hunting you.

(Beat)

CHRISTOPHER

(Shaking ALEX'S hand) Hi Alex, it is a pleasure to be held hostage by you this evening.

ALEX

Oh really, the pleasure's all mine.

SPORK

Alex!

ALEX

What? He seems nice.

SPORK

Now he may seem nice but you never know what this man or any man for that matter might be capable of doing. You have to stop treating everyone like they're a member of your family.

ALEX

(Feebly) You're right.

CHRISTOPHER

And what am I supposed to call you with the exquisite jumpsuit? I could try and memorize the numbers on the back but that would be a mouthful anytime I wanted to address you.

SPORK

(Trying to be as intimidating as possible) Well why don't you call me what all of the other inmates used to address me by. Cause when you go to jail for murder,

you do away with all those fancy titles that the rest of the world uses. So just this one time, you can call me Spork.

CHRISTOPHER

Spork? Like the flimsy plastic utensil normally reserved for picnics and elementary schools?

SPORK

(Threatening with the gun) You got a problem with that?

CHRISTOPHER

No I just... Why Spork?

SPORK

Well I told you that I had killed someone. I never said what I used to take their last breath.

CHRISTOPHER

I highly doubt that.

SPORK

Are you challenging me? I have a gun.

CHRISTOPHER

And I was going to hang myself. Clearly death isn't the thing that frightens me.

SPORK

Keep it up smart guy and we'll see just how painful I can make this situation for you.

ALEX

Please calm down.

SPORK

He started it!

CHRISTOPHER

I didn't go busting into your house and try to threaten you two into calling me spatula.

SPORK

(Holstering the gun, but brandishing the knife) Okay. I'mma make this real simple for you. Shut your mouth and give us some time to think, respect our being here, and you will not have a painful open wound to slowly bleed out from. Understand?

CHRISTOPHER

Perfectly.

SPORK

Good!

(SPORK plays with the knife and moves away from CHRISTOPHER allowing ALEX to approach CHRISTOPHER as if meeting a new friend)

ALEX

I'm sorry about him/her. (S)he gets angry when things aren't working out well for us. Chris, was it? That's an interesting name. One of my old professors was named Chris. I'm very sorry about barging into your home. I know you probably weren't expecting too much excitement tonight.

CHRISTOPHER

Well honestly I suppose it could have been worse. But still, why did you guys tie me up if you were just going to take over my place and threaten me with death.

ALEX

Oh, that was me. I'm not really one for seeing anyone get injured or worse. I just couldn't let you do something like that while I was here.

CHRISTOPHER

Oh, so it was more for your own beliefs rather than logic.

ALEX

Well, actually I do believe in things like Euthanasia if the circumstances are necessary. I just don't want to see anything.

CHRISTOPHER

So what's the plan then? Just keep me tied up and live here for the rest of your days?

ALEX

Oh, no not at all. We hope to be gone as soon as possible. We just can't leave right now due to being on the lam.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, about that...Is it true? I mean did (s)he really-?

ALEX

Well the story changes every time I hear it, but yeah someone actually died. But, but, it's not...Spork's fault. I mean I don't really remember it since I was passed out when it happened, but I don't believe that (s)he's a bad person. I mean, just look. *(They look at SPORK who is in the process of cleaning his/her nails with the knife while studying the situation.)* (S)He would never hurt a fly.

CHRISTOPHER

I'm sure. But it still doesn't explain just what happened. Like. Why are you running from the law anyway?

ALEX

I may have broken him/her out of prison because I believe in Spork's innocence.

CHRISTOPHER

So...You're a criminal?

ALEX

No that's not it at all. I just-

SPORK

Alright. I let you flap your lips for long enough, but I finally figured out just what we're gonna do. We're gonna sit here and wait til morning. Making sure that smart ass here don't go rattin' us out to any of his friends.

CHRISTOPHER

You are aware that I am physically restrained. It would be quite hard for me to go about contacting anyone right now.

SPORK

You playin' smart again? (*Brandishing the knife*) Didn't we have this conversation earlier?

ALEX

Alright now. Everyone just calm down. I'm sure that Chris didn't mean anything by it and I know that Spork is just being a little over-sensitive, but that is no reason to be losing our cool.

SPORK

Chris, huh? (*Sneering*) What kind a sissy boy name is that?

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, you're right. If only I had the opportunity to name myself I wouldn't be stuck with such a lame name. Thanks for the info, Spork.

SPORK

Hey if I did all that damage with a flimsy plastic tool, just imagine what I could do with this (*holding out his/her knife*).

ALEX

(*Intercepting*) Now hold on. Don't go and do something you'll regret. We just barely got you out of there and now we have to try our hardest to avoid increasing the possible risks. Okay?

SPORK

He just keeps on pushin' my buttons and I only have about three more of them left before I've gotta push back on him.

ALEX

Okay, okay. Maybe you just need to get a little air. Why don't we just step out in the hallway very quickly and just take a moment to calm down.

SPORK

But what about him?

(They glance over and see CHRISTOPHER still tied to a chair. CHRISTOPHER makes an attempt at shrugging his shoulders. ALEX turns back to SPORK)

ALEX

Come on, Chris is a good guy and we'll only be outside for a few seconds. The police are miles away. Here, some space might do you some good.

(ALEX drags SPORK by the arm toward the door and ushers him/her out before turning back in to say)

We will be right back.

(They leave and the door closes. CHRISTOPHER takes a brief second to try and survey his situation better.)

CHRISTOPHER

So, how was your evening, Christopher? Oh, you know I hosted a nutjob party to enjoy my last day on Earth, and wouldn't you know it, all the guests showed up! Lucky me!

(CHRISTOPHER has given up hope and pushes himself back in the chair, but when he does the chair moves and he realizes that while bound to the chair,

the chair itself is actually only bound to him. So he sets off to try his best to dislodge the chair from against his back by struggling and kicking and any number of ways that he can think of as it is the only real important goal he has had all night. He finally manages to knock the chair out of the bonds and the rope, now having more extra room, simply falls to the floor around him)

Yes!

(The door opens and ALEX and SPORK come walking back in.)

Shit!

(SPORK immediately pulls the knife and runs up to CHRISTOPHER. Any peace achieved outside is now lost and now SPORK sees CHRISTOPHER as a threat. ALEX sees this and immediately sets about trying to correct the situation for everyone.)

SPORK

Just what the hell do you think you're doing? You think this is some kind of game? Like I'm not gonna find out that my hostage is right behind the door. Oh sure I'm just some stupid convict who doesn't know anything that is going on in the world,(*etc.- feel free to improvise a bit until ALEX silences*)

ALEX

(Overlapping Spork's entire speech) Hey now, I'm sure it isn't what it looks like. Just calm down and focus. Remember? Breathe in, breathe out. Just find your center and go to your happy place. There is always some reasonable explanation and we want to handle this without anyone calling the cops, right? *(Silencing the commotion)* ALRIGHT!

(Everyone gets quiet)

Okay so let's just run through what exactly happened in a calm and peaceful way so no one else has to get involved. Chris. Why did you escape?

CHRISTOPHER

This is my apartment, why should I be tied up to my chair in my place with my own rope.

ALEX

Okay, that is a good point. And Spork, maybe you tied the rope a bit too uncomfortable for him. So now that you now longer have that to worry about everything should be fine, right?

SPORK

He might try and make a run for it. I say we just take out his legs and then we won't have this problem

CHRISTOPHER

You know what, I think I'm starting to see that gentle nature that you obviously see in him/her.

SPORK

(Grabbing CHRISTOPHER by his shirt) Oh keep it up! Just gimme a reason!

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, right there behind the bloodlust and boiling rage. He's definitely innocent.

SPORK

(At his/her boiling point) That does it. *(Holding the knife to CHRISTOPHER'S face)* I think it's about time I give you another mouth so that you can continue to be a sassy smartass even while brushing your teeth.

(The door bursts open to reveal SUNNY holding a cake, freshly made in a cake pan. She hasn't lost a beat in her blissful attitude and doesn't notice what is happening in the room at first. Her appearance is the

same except that she now is wearing colorful oven mitts which only she would own.)

SUNNY

I hope that you are very hungry because I just might have added a few extra ingredients right before popping it in the oven and it is-(*noticing the scene of the convicts and CHRISTOPHER with SPORK holding his/her pocket knife dangerously close to CHRISTOPHER.*)(*Horried*) WHAT IS GOING ON?

(SUNNY rushes over to the scene where everyone else is a little shell shocked and grabs the knife away from SPORK.)

(Scolding) Tophy has a severe allergy to silverware. Are you trying to kill him?

SPORK

I..I just.

SUNNY

*(Indicating CHRISTOPHER)*And you! Why didn't you tell me they were sending an extra plumber? I helped my dad fix sinks all the time, I could've been the assistant and saved you a whole bunch of money.

ALEX

Uh...I'm no plumber.

SPORK

Yeah, Why the hell'd ya think we're plumbers

SUNNY

*(Nervous)*You guys aren't plumbers?

ALEX & SPORK

No!

SUNNY

Ohmygosh! *(Beat)* Then you must be Tophy's friends! It is so good to meet you. I'm Sunny. *(Gasping)* And I see you helped to remove the Halloween decorations. You must truly be good friends. Tophy came across earlier as a Gloomy Gus who no one would enjoy hanging around.

SPORK

(To CHRISTOPHER) Hey! You told us your name was Chris! *(to ALEX)* See, I told you he was a no good liar.

SUNNY

Oh, I just call him Tophy cause it's short for Topher.

CHRISTOPHER

YOU ALREADY SHORTENED IT! I mean...my name is Christopher and I'd appreciate it staying that way. And Sunny these are not my friends, they're-

SPORK

(Interrupting and sliding his/her arm around CHRISTOPHER'S neck) Yeah, we're best friends. *(Threatening)* Isn't that right?

ALEX

Yes, Chris is such a nice guy and I can honestly say that we wouldn't have been here tonight without him.

SUNNY

(To CHRISTOPHER) I knew you were more friendly then you let on earlier. Oh, but I wish you would have told me. I only have enough plates and forks for two people.

ALEX

(Thinking on his/her feet) Uh, that's okay. I am used to sharing a plate with Spork and you and Chris can share a plate. We'll have the two couples together.

SUNNY

You two are a couple?

CHRISTOPHER

(At the same time as SUNNY'S line) We're not a couple.

SPORK

You got a problem with that?

SUNNY

No, I think it is sweet that you decided to include Tophy in on your couple's night fun. You must really care for him.

SPORK

(Joking to SUNNY but threatening to CHRISTOPHER) Well, you could say that "Tophy" is just compelled to be our friend. I mean, gun to my back, I would have to say he is just the best friend anyone could ask for.

CHRISTOPHER

(Picking up on the hint but realizing SUNNY didn't) Yeah. IIIInnnnnnn fact we were just in the middle of a great game named CALL THE POLICE.

SUNNY

Oh! How do you play?

SPORK

(Intimidating) Yeah how do you play!

CHRISTOPHER

Well...*(picking his words carefully)* one person is in "danger", let's say ME, and the other people need to HELP him by GOing through different scenarios in order TO deduce the exact problem so they can CALL THE POLICE!

SUNNY

So it's a guessing game?

CHRISTOPHER

YES!

SUNNY

Oh, then can we skip it? I'm never good at those. I can never figure out anything people are trying to get me to guess.

ALEX

Sure. How about...*(Checking with SPORK)* We get to know each other better?

SUNNY

Oh. That sounds fun. The cake has to cool down anyway and this sounds like a great way to pass the time. I love talking to new friends.

SPORK

Yeah. Why don't we start with how you know my good buddy here.

SUNNY

Well I just met him today so you don't have to worry about me stealing any of your thunder. I was looking for someone to bake with and he was the guy who answered his door. I guess he must always be like that, right?

ALEX

Well, we met Chris similarly. We just showed up at his door one day unannounced.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, it seems like it was just a few minutes ago.

SUNNY

You mean like it was just this morning?

CHRISTOPHER

Oh yeah. That saying you know.

SUNNY

Well, Tophy? What are your friends' names?

CHRISTOPHER

Well, That's Alex, and (s)he's...Spork.

SUNNY

Spork? That's an interesting name. Do you mind if I ask where you got it.

SPORK

Camp. (*Without missing a beat*) So you don't really know...uh

CHRISTOPHER

Christopher

SPORK

I knew that. So you don't really know Chris at all?

SUNNY

Well I wouldn't say at all. I mean, I think I got to know him pretty well. We did make the cake batter together and I think that speaks for itself.

SPORK

Of course it does! (*To CHRISTOPHER in secret*) Get rid of her.

CHRISTOPHER

I spent a good amount of time trying to do that earlier. What makes you think that I can?

SPORK

Okay, I'm gonna make this very simple. Either you chase her out of here or I'll put a bullet in her head, torture you, and leave the gun for the police to find with your fingerprints on it, but no more bullets. Clear?

CHRISTOPHER

Crystal. (*Back to the rest of the group*) Uh, Hey Sunny?

SUNNY

Yeah?

CHRISTOPHER

Well if we are all going to eat the cake, don't we all need to have our own plates and forks?

SUNNY

Oh, I don't mind Alex's suggestion. I think it'd be a neat way to save on plates. I mean, it's not like trees make money!

CHRISTOPHER

Of course, but why don't you just bring some more plates just to be on the safe side?

SUNNY

Oh now you're just being silly

CHRISTOPHER

Why don't you take it back to your place and we can enjoy it tomorrow? You know? Make a day out of it?

SPORK

I agree. It is getting awfully late.

SUNNY

But the sun isn't even down yet.

CHRISTOPHER

But don't you have work tomorrow or something?

SUNNY

I just moved here silly, and either way we can all sit around and have a piece of cake while talking for a few hours right?

ALEX

Yeah, that sounds like a great plan (*SPORK glares and makes a low grunt*) I mean, ((*S*)*he grabs his/her stomach*) my stomach. Ow. It hurts. I think I ate some bad fish or something earlier today

SUNNY

Oh you don't have to worry about that (*She reaches into her purse and pulls out a bottle of medicine*) I always come prepared. Just take two of those and you'll be right as rain in only a few minutes.

(*CHRISTOPHER looks to SPORK who simply starts to reach for the gun until he blurts out*)

CHRISTOPHER

Hey, I have something to talk to you about Sunny. I didn't want to bring it up, but...

SUNNY

What?

CHRISTOPHER

Well, you see. You made a delicious cake and I cannot wait to try it.

SUNNY

Ah, ah, ah. We made the cake. I just put it in the oven.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah...Right. Well, We put all that effort in and unfortunately Spork can't eat it.

SUNNY

What? Why?

SPORK

Yeah, why?

CHRISTOPHER

Well you see, Spork has got a weird food allergy. (S)He's allergic to frosting

SUNNY

Well, that's no problem I haven't put any on yet

CHRISTOPHER

(Thinking fast) I mean, it would be. The only problem is that (s)he feels left out when everyone else has frosting on their desserts

SUNNY

Oh, no. I wouldn't want to make him/her upset.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, but I do know a way around it. You see, Spork loves fruit and especially loves the fresh selection from this late night fruit stand near the intersection of Main and Elm. So if you wouldn't mind running down there and picking up a good selection of the freshest fruit you can find. Don't be afraid to take a good long time to find the best fruits and we'll all have a good time later on when we finally do get to have dessert, okay?

SUNNY

You're not just trying to trick me so that you can have it all to yourself when I leave, are you?

CHRISTOPHER

We would never do that, would we?

ALEX

Oh not at all. You can count on me to make sure no one starts without you.

SPORK

Thanks, I hope it's not too much trouble.

SUNNY

Oh not at all, I want everyone to have a good time. I'll just go down to the market and be back before you can spell the word fast.

(She exits out the door)

SPORK

(Calling out to her) Take your time! *((S)He shuts the door)* Good thinking “Tofu”
Now she’s gonna come back.

CHRISTOPHER

Hey you told me to get rid of her, you never said for how long. It wasn’t like I
was given the most helpful assistance either.

ALEX

I didn’t want her to leave; I had fun talking with her. She just seemed to brighten
up the room.

SPORK

Yeah, well more witnesses means more problems later on. You want the cops
called and me heading back to jail?

ALEX

No, I just thought maybe once we could act like a Lennon and Yoko instead of a
Bonnie and Clyde. You know like the good times.

SPORK

We will. We just have to get out of the country. They can’t extradite us if no one
knows who we are. That’s why she had to leave. She was asking too many
questions.

CHRISTOPHER

Well if you don’t want any witnesses then I believe that we are on the same page,
because I will be sure not to tell anybody. And in exchange for my silence, I’d
appreciate having my apartment empty.

SPORK

Shutup! You’re lucky you still have the right to talk. *(Motioning to ALEX)* Come
on, we gotta take advantage of what Chris here and his place has to offer.

(SPORK starts to ransack the house while ALEX has no idea how to proceed. Christopher just sits bemused.)

CHRISTOPHER

Best of luck, I haven't had anything of value in here for at least four months.

SPORK

We'll find some use for it.

ALEX

(Still stuck in the last conversation) Sometimes I wonder if you are ever going to be your real self again.

SPORK

I am who I am. Stop worrying. It's not that I don't care, it's that we have more important issues to deal with right now.

ALEX

What could be more important than our relationship, our intimacy?

SPORK

We are standin' in some stranger's apartment with a gun, a knife, a book, a bag of random crap and not a dollar to either of our names like some messed up game a' Clue and you really think that there aren't more important things to talk about.

CHRISTOPHER

Well, I see that you guys are busy. I will just show myself out.

(CHRISTOPHER starts to walk out but gets thrown to the floor by SPORK)

SPORK

Siddown. We still haven't decided what to do with you.

CHRISTOPHER

Come on. Why not just let me go, no harm no foul?

(SPORK considers this for a moment and then kicks CHRISTOPHER in the stomach. CHRISTOPHER then doubles into his pain while on the ground)

SPORK

Now there's harm. Any more questions?

CHRISTOPHER

(Barely managing to get the air) I'm good.

ALEX

See? What's with stuff like that? A year ago you wouldn't have done anything like that.

SPORK

A year ago I didn't have a rap sheet that included vehicular homicide.

ALEX

And you still don't. They obviously were just looking for someone to blame and you happened to be there. A piece of paper doesn't dictate your life.

CHRISTOPHER

Why do you believe that so much?

ALEX

Because the (wo)man I met would never harm anyone.

CHRISTOPHER

I think my organs would beg to differ.

SPORK

You stop right now Alex. Just drop it and move on. Help me find anything useful in this dump.

(SPORK turns back to the room and starts to systematically search through everything that CHRISTOPHER owns)

ALEX

Why don't you want to talk about it? We are a couple and we should be able to talk like the other couples do.

SPORK

Other couples don't have our problems. *(To CHRISTOPHER)* Where do you keep the valuables?

CHRISTOPHER

You think I look like someone who has any valuables?

(SPORK studies CHRISTOPHER before giving up on him and going back to searching)

And, I may have to side with the utensil on this one. Most relationships do not involve a candlelit dinner discussing the latest slaughter.

SPORK

(Kicking him again) Oh I'm touched by your support. *(Back to the hunt)* Three unlabeled cans of mystery food; must be our lucky day.

CHRISTOPHER

I'll have you know that many people would kill to have those.

SPORK

(Pointing the gun at CHRISTOPHER) I'm more than fine with that!

ALEX

Stop! Look, I'll give you that, but why, out of everything that's happened, why do you insist on keeping this one thing secret. Why don't I even know the specifics about that night?

SPORK

Three dirty shirts. Well I didn't know we were in the house of such a fancy gentleman.

CHRISTOPHER

What use could you possibly have for my shirts, they wouldn't even fit you right.

ALEX

But I...

SPORK

(Interrupting) Well, I could make them into bandages or stuff them in your mouth and watch you slowly choke.

ALEX

(Silencing) Enough! Look. Just look here. *((S)He grabs the book that (s)he was armed with when the couple entered)* Do you know what this is?

SPORK

A book? *(Knocking it to the floor)*

CHRISTOPHER

(Trying to stand) Not sure? I didn't think that would stump you.

(SPORK without looking, moving much, or saying a word just knocks CHRISTOPHER back to the ground)

SPORK

It's not important. A book won't help us survive. Search or get out of my way.

ALEX

It's the book I bought the day we met. How can you say it's not important? Do you even remember what the title is?

SPORK

Yeah. It's ... Oh look, a stained mattress, we are sure to get a lot of money for that.

CHRISTOPHER

Hooray, you came up with an insult all on your own.

SPORK

Shaddup!

ALEX

(A little disheartened) You don't remember

SPORK

I do, but it's hard to find the exact words. A lot of stuff's happened since then ya know.

ALEX

It's called, "Tao-ing what's right."

CHRISTOPHER

(Completely incredulous and deadpan) You're kidding.

SPORK

Don't you be laughing at other people's business.

ALEX

(Picking up the book) No. It's a stupid title. Completely ridiculous. *(To SPORK)* But, we both reached for it. Why?

SPORK

(Embarrassed by CHRISTOPHER's look) I needed something to balance my table.

ALEX

(Pleading) No. We both wanted to learn how to live in the moment and become better people. It's that belief that brought us together!

CHRISTOPHER

I see you've embraced that philosophy head-on.

SPORK

(Grabbing CHRISTOPHER by his hair) One more word and I will not only knock you down to the floor, but outta the window, and all the way to the damn pavement.

(CHRISTOPHER makes an OK gesture with his hands and then SPORK throws him to the ground again)

ALEX

When did you forget? This book represents us and all the hope we had for the future. *(Sinking into his/her own world)* I brought it because...because I felt that both of us might want to read it to remember who we were when we fell for each other.

SPORK

Stop pushing me. I can't be that person again. The system changes you.

ALEX

But I know you. The Dara I know would never let something like that get him/her down. The Dara I know 's a lover and not a fighter

CHRISTOPHER

Well this guy/gal is clearly a fighter. I mean have you seen how (s)he...Dara?

SPORK

It's Irish, it means "star", and didn't I say one more word?

(CHRISTOPHER motions that he is silent)

ALEX

I keep waking up each day and pulling and pulling but you give me nothing in return. Why won't you let me close to you? Did I do something wrong? Was I supposed to just let you rot away in prison? You didn't belong there. I mean, you told me you were innocent, and I believed you with all my heart. I still do, but lately it has become hard to even get you to look at me. I just want the old Dara back. But you...you just keep putting up walls. Why won't you let me in?

SPORK

Stop preaching to me. I don't want to, but I will push back.

ALEX

I'm not preaching, I'm just trying to talk to you.

SPORK

I don't need to be talked at.

ALEX

Then tell me what's wrong.

SPORK

It doesn't concern you.

ALEX

Why wouldn't it concern me?

CHRISTOPHER

Should I just give you two some time alone?

ALEX and SPORK

NO!

CHRISTOPHER

(Returning to where he was) Alright then.

ALEX

Are you upset or believe I'll think any different of you?

SPORK

It's not that, I-

ALEX

Are you scared of what I might think?

SPORK

No, I just-

ALEX

Just tell me!

SPORK

(Blurting it out) It was you! You! Happy now?

(A long silence)

I never said anything.

ALEX

What?

SPORK

I said nothing. *(Threatening CHRISTOPHER)* What'd you hear?

CHRISTOPHER

Uh...Nothing?

SPORK

Damn right.

ALEX

You said it was me.

SPORK

No I Didn't!

ALEX

What Happened?

SPORK

I can't remem-

ALEX

(Pleading) DARA!

(SPORK takes a deep breath in. looking for a way to stall, (s)he glances at CHRISTOPHER who is trying his hardest to understand what has just happened)

SPORK

What? No smart little jokes?

CHRISTOPHER

I don't think any of my material works for this situation.

SPORK

You're so helpful. *(Taking a big breath)* Okay, maybe I said something like that, but it isn't what you think.

ALEX

What?

SPORK

I wasn't the one driving that night... You were.

ALEX

But...but I was drunk. Remember? I blacked out.

SPORK

(Beat) Yeah, that's true.

ALEX

But then I...*(piecing it all together)* and they?... You let me drive drunk?

SPORK

You seemed to be handling yourself better than I was. I mean, wasn't 'til we hit the freeway I realized how drunk you really were. *(Beat)* Don't give me that look. I tried to get you to stop, but you insisted on staying behind the wheel cause, well, cause I wasn't feeling up to it.

ALEX

So, Glen's and Carl's deaths...they're my fault?

CHRISTOPHER

Wait. You knew the people who died.

SPORK

Yes. And thanks to that, the prosecutor was able to argue that I intended to kill em.

ALEX

Oh my god *(collapsing)* I'm a monster.

SPORK

(Grasping at straws) No, they were the ones who wanted to race. They took it too far by getting behind you and flashing their lights. And the rain. Without that rain we wouldn't 've started skiddin'.

ALEX

But I...I would never. It doesn't make sense. Why were you arrested then?

SPORK

After the crash, I may have switched which seats we were in. I didn't want any trouble, and outta the two of us, I didn't have any rap sheet. I didn't think that I'd get ten years with no bail.

ALEX

Then why didn't you tell me? You never had to set foot in jail. You're innocent, just like you always said.

SPORK

Do you really think that you could survive prison? Hell, I barely survived it and I'm much tougher than you. No, it had to be me.

ALEX

Liar.

SPORK

Look, I did what I thought was best because it was what was best. I figured that I would do my time and just leave and put it all behind me until you broke me out.

ALEX

Then why did you follow me? Why did you let me break you out? Why are we in this dump? *(To CHRISTOPHER)* No offense.

CHRISTOPHER

None taken

ALEX

You begged me to come get you. If you were going to back out then why take my place at all?

CHRISTOPHER

Maybe the other kids didn't play as nice as our dear Spork.

SPORK

(Stopping ALEX from talking again) I care about you. *(Beat)* Prison...It changes you. All day, every day, people call me things that I'm not. They scream it in my face to shame me. And I started to feel no better than the other criminals. It broke me, but I still felt a little good knowing you weren't there.

ALEX

(Offering the book) But I know you're better. You know you're better.

SPORK

(Taking the book) This? This is just a stupid book with an even stupider title. There is no deeper meaning in it that says I'm a good person. All it says is I've got horrible tastes in reading. In all that shaming I started believing them. That I belong there cause I killed my friends. *(Throws the book)*

ALEX

I killed them.

SPORK

Yeah well, I let you. That's even worse. Don't even think that anything changes from here cause you were never locked up. *(Beat)* You wanna know how prison was? Imagine the worst day of your life were you are scrutinized for every tiny mistake you make. Now have a worse day tomorrow and every day after that. So yeah, I escaped, but can you blame me? I had to get out of there. I didn't want to believe I followed when you broke me out and took over when you weren't puttin' enough distance behind us. *(Beat)* Are you happy now? Is that what you wanted to hear?

(ALEX takes it all in and gets into a panic. In this state, (s)he runs out of the door, leaving it open.

SPORK runs to the door to try and stop him/her.)

Alex, stop! You know I can't leave. Alex! The police know my face! Get back here!

(SPORK slams the door in anger)

Damn.

CHRISTOPHER

So things are going well then?

SPORK

(Regaining composure) Alex will be fine. Probably just needs ta get some air.

CHRISTOPHER

If you really care for him/her at all, go fix this?

SPORK

(Defeated) Just shut up.

(SPORK grabs the book and starts reading it.)

CHRISTOPHER

Can I leave, too?

(SPORK glares at CHRISTOPHER, pulls out the gun, and cocks it)

I'll heat up some iced tea.

(CHRISTOPHER moves to open a jug of iced tea and pour some into some mugs)

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT II

ACT III

(CHRISTOPHER and SPORK are sitting on the floor in the middle of the room. CHRISTOPHER is playing with the rope and SPORK is much further along in the book. They both have tea mugs that are almost empty. Some time has obviously past and while no real words were shared, the two seem to at least know each other a little better.)

CHRISTOPHER

So...Are you doing any better? You haven't really said anything.

SPORK

Like you care.

CHRISTOPHER

Well, let's just say I'm compelled to help the (wo)man with the gun.

SPORK

(Lowering the book) Okay. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to kick you or threaten your life. Now that that's done, leave me alone.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah, you did. But I'll forgive you all the same. So are you finally willing to get up and go after him/her?

SPORK

The police are probably swarming by now. I wouldn't make it more than three steps outside this building. And even if I did, what good would it do? I don't know where (s)he is.

CHRISTOPHER

And you have no way to get in contact?

SPORK

No. When (s)he grabbed our phones, I worried that the government might spy on our conversations and yelled at him/her.

CHRISTOPHER

Of course you did. Well, there's no need to worry. I'm sure that Alex is fine.

SPORK

(Defensive) I'm not worrying! Alex will come back!

CHRISTOPHER

Okay. Okay.

(SPORK finally calms down and CHRISTOPHER decides to try his hand at approaching SPORK calmly)

So...why don't you tell me what happened?

SPORK

(Getting angry) What?

CHRISTOPHER

(Quelling SPORK) Well, you know. I am getting ready to kill myself. Who cares what I know? I'm just a lonely cynic who barely lives in a crappy apartment. I just think it might do you good to get it off your chest.

SPORK

(Looks him up and down) You tell no one. You got that?

CHRISTOPHER

Cross my heart. Hope to die.

SPORK

Not your mom, not that little girl friend of yours, and especially not Alex.

CHRISTOPHER

I get it. Who am I going to tell? The rope?

SPORK

Fine! (*Sighing*) You heard most of it, but there are some things you don't know. For starters, I'm...I'm not always good at showing my feelings.

CHRISTOPHER

No!

SPORK

It's true. I've only really been able to tell Alex how I feel, and even then not every day.

CHRISTOPHER

So you have problems expressing what you feel. Most people have that. I mean I have tried multiple times to hang from my freaking ceiling. (*Studying where the rope was hanging*) Honestly it didn't seem like it would be this complicated. (*Back to the conversation*) What does self-expression have to do with anything?

SPORK

I'm getting to it. (*Beat*) The night that our friends died, I originally didn't want to go, but Alex felt that we should as a peace offering. The thing is, they invited us so they could make fun of me. After five or so drinks, Alex decided to get back at them. That's how we ended up racing.

CHRISTOPHER

So. It really was all Alex's fault?

SPORK

No. Yes. I don't know. It's probably everyone's fault, but I've feared and hated him/her just a little ever since that night. I mean, we were allowed to go to the funeral before the trial began and (s)he didn't cry or show any emotion at all. Everyone was cryin' even me. I just couldn't get over the thought that maybe somewhere deep down, (s)he knew. (S)He knew what had happened and that

(s)he was the primary cause of it. And it didn't make him/her sad one bit. The truth is that I wasn't forced into signing any kind of confession. I did it on my own to keep a wall between us because we'd been fightin' around the same time. I did what needed to be done. (S)He was safe and sound not having to deal with prison and I was safe to be alone with my thoughts.

CHRISTOPHER

Thoughts?

SPORK

(Chuckling) You know, I might still have a few good swings in my leg for the hell of it.

CHRISTOPHER

So if Alex is that bad, why were you the tough one when you burst down my door? Why even bother to break you out of prison.

SPORK

I went a little mad in prison and pretty much made him/her choose between bustin' me out or me bustin' my head open.

CHRISTOPHER

You threatened that?

SPORK

Yeah. There was no hope for me and I couldn't find any other way to escape the constant death threats other than taking the power out of every other inmates' hands.

CHRISTOPHER

So I guess the two of us do have one thing in common, Dara.

SPORK

You got a death wish?

CHRISTOPHER

Well, now that you mention it.

(The two break out into a bit of laughter)

SPORK

Well, I guess you got me. Good job smart ass.

CHRISTOPHER

So you're really upset because of the fact that Alex didn't cry?

SPORK

Can you believe that?

CHRISTOPHER

Well, forgive me for asking, but... What's the big deal?

SPORK

What?

CHRISTOPHER

Have you even seen Alex? When the two of you came in here, it wasn't you caring whether or not I was dead or hurt.

SPORK

I said I was sorry.

CHRISTOPHER

I'm not trying to guilt you. My point is that death is strange for everyone. You ever wonder just how many people die each day?

SPORK

No.

CHRISTOPHER

Well it's...Maybe around...A large number, okay? If we took into account the whole world at least one person is gone every second.

SPORK

What's your point?

CHRISTOPHER

Well, why doesn't the world stop each day? It's because it can't. The human body is capable of some extraordinary things, but it still has an expiration date.

Sometimes it gets cut short and we are sad for all the wasted time we could have had, but it happens all the same. You may not like it, but it's going to happen one way or another.

SPORK

So you think death is just somethin' to be ignored?

CHRISTOPHER

No, you can grieve, mourn, take as much time as you need to in order to feel like you can re-enter the world. My point is. You can't tell other people when they have to. Otherwise a death in the family could be planned on a calendar to take up a specific block of time and be forgotten all too quickly.

SPORK

For a man who normally would be hanging from the ceiling by now, you've got a funny way of thinkin' about death.

CHRISTOPHER

I may have had a number of experiences leading up to today.

SPORK

I'm still gonna be nervous around him/her. I mean now that (s)he knows the truth, Who knows what Alex might...

(Alex enters holding a newspaper with a whole bunch of Permanent marker bleeding through the pages.)

Alex!

ALEX

Dara? You're still here? I thought you would have left after what you said...

SPORK

Why'd you leave?

ALEX

Aren't you allowed some time when you find out that you murdered two of your best friends?

CHRISTOPHER

Well that is true. The law is very adamant about that.

SPORK

I...I didn't know what to do. I was shocked.

ALEX

YOU were shocked?!?

SPORK

You never left the house when we had a big fight before. At worst you would leave a room

ALEX

No offense to Chris, but this room is the house.

CHRISTOPHER

Stop saying no offense. We all know what it is.

ALEX

Besides, I needed some air and I sure as hell wasn't about to let that little man with the big horn-rimmed glasses keep yelling at me for leaning against the snack machine.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah...That's, Mr. Ribber the super to the building.

ALEX

I may have punched him in the face.

CHRISTOPHER

And you didn't invite me? Alex I am very disappointed in you.

ALEX

Stop being so nice to me. Didn't you hear that I'm nothing but a murdering drunk?

CHRISTOPHER

Hey, only thirty minutes ago I thought Spork was and I have more respect for you, now, than I ever did for him/her, then.

SPORK

Hey!

CHRISTOPHER

I said then.

SPORK

(Noticing the paper) What's that?

ALEX

I...I decided to make a statement...about the case...I stole a marker in a café and a newspaper off the sidewalk. I decided to turn myself in.

CHRISTOPHER

Wait...

SPORK

(At the same time as CHRISTOPHER) NO!

ALEX

Yes. We can't truly be free if I know that you took three years out of your life for something I did. I at least have to make it up to you.

SPORK

You can do that some other way. The entire reason that I went there was to make sure that you would never have to.

ALEX

Dara, Please! *(Beat)* You took a bullet that was clearly meant for me. How am I supposed to just walk around knowing that I owe you three years; three years I can never make up to you. You may walk around thinking that everything is fine, but deep down in my mind it will be clawing at me, scraping my heart, eating me alive from the inside. It isn't much but I have to do something. Maybe everything will fall into place. Maybe you will be released since you didn't do anything wrong and we can pick up right where we left off in about ten years or so-

SPORK

(Interrupting) Just shut up.

(Alex grows quiet)

Stop and think for a moment, will you? Did you ever stop to think just what you'd be doing? If you turn yourself in that means that the three years I spent in prison will mean nothing. They will have just been wasted years.

ALEX

Why can't you see that I am trying to set things right? I have been nothing but supportive of you and I only wish you'd support me too.

SPORK

You want me to just accept this and do nothing?

ALEX

No, I want you to accept this and be there beside me when I go down to the station.

SPORK

You realize that you have absolutely no proof, right? You only have my testimony and I won't give it.

ALEX

That's why I want you to be there with me.

SPORK

You're insane

ALEX

I love you!

SPORK

Well I love you too, but you don't hear me using it to win an argument.

CHRISTOPHER

(Stopping them) Finally you agree on something.

(SPORK and ALEX just stare at each other unsure of what to do next)

Look. I may not know much about love. As a matter of fact, there is a whole line of women who would probably scoff at me giving you two advice, but why don't you try and look past each other and do what's best for the both of you?

(Beat)

SPORK

No, I'm right.

ALEX

I'm right!

CHRISTOPHER

I tried.

(SPORK grabs ALEX by the hand and starts to pull him/her toward the door)

SPORK

Come on. I'm not letting you ruin your life for me. You're the one who actually had a future. Chris, grab the rope!

CHRISTOPHER

I think I'd rather stay out of this.

SPORK

(Grabbing the gun and pointing it against his/her head) Fine! I order you to rip up that piece of paper right now or I'll end it all right here!

ALEX

DARA DON'T!

SPORK

(Shaking) I'll do it, I swear it. Rip up the paper. Now!

CHRISTOPHER

Don't you think you're taking this a little too far?

(Police sirens are heard. Faint at first, but growing louder. SPORK runs to the window and looks outside.)

SPORK

(To ALEX) You went to the cops? How could you?

ALEX

No, I was going to wait and go with you together after I got my statement down. Honest.

SPORK

(To CHRISTOPHER) Was it you? You've had plenty of time while I was reading to make a quick phone call.

CHRISTOPHER

I haven't paid my phone bill in over three months. I have no way to call anyone from here. Maybe the super finally snapped and made good on his threats. I don't know.

(SPORK goes back to the window and looks around outside.)

SPORK

They stopped right at the bottom of this building.

ALEX

Maybe it's a sign that it's time to throw in the towel?

SPORK

Why you are ready to give up. When we met it was us against the world and we would always be ready for a fight. Look at yourself. You're not the scrappin' type anymore. And it's me who did this to ya. You would have gotten so far if it weren't for me. I should be dead. I killed your spirit. The only way to bring you back is to sacrifice myself.

ALEX

It's not a sacrifice if it's all in vain!

(SPORK, stunned, lowers the gun)

I'm sorry I'm not the tough (wo)man I was when we met, I am. But this is who I am now. You spent three years without learning any more about me, choosing instead to hide in your memories of what was. Dara, I need you to see what this is doing to me. You are pulling me every which way, but I cannot keep this up. It's exhausting and I just want it to end. But even if it ends with me trapped behind

bars I would still prefer it to losing you completely. If you shoot yourself now, that's all this was, just a longer and more complex suicide. If you choose to go downstairs with me, I can promise at least a few more bright days in all of the storms to come.

CHRISTOPHER

(Looking out the window) You might want to hurry up with that decision. I think that Mr. Ribber's running out of ways to yell at the policemen.

ALEX

(Offering a hand) Well are you coming?

SPORK

What are you expectin' to happen?

ALEX

I have absolutely no idea.

SPORK

Chris?

CHRISTOPHER

Hey, don't look at me. I've never turned myself in before. Honestly you have the most experience.

SPORK

(Chuckling) Smart Ass 'til the end, huh? *(Beat)* What are you gonna do?

CHRISTOPHER

Oh you don't have to worry about me. I'll be sure to kick myself in the ribs any time I miss you guys.

SPORK

No, I mean...*(Indicating to the rope which still lies on the ground by the chair)*

CHRISTOPHER

(Getting the idea) Oh. I...well...*(Sighing)* You don't have to worry about it.

ALEX

You sure?

CHRISTOPHER

(Hesitant) Yeah, of course.

SPORK

You better. Cause If you aren't there to greet us whenever we get released, I will use your skeleton as a punching bag.

CHRISTOPHER

As comforting as ever, Dara.

SPORK

Don't go pushing your luck. And along the same line, don't ever let me find out you told someone I cried or I will bring you a whole mess of tears.

CHRISTOPHER

I promise.

ALEX

Come on. We need to hurry before they get the clear to fire on sight.

(They start to walk out)

CHRISTOPHER

Uh, guys?

(They stop)

You were probably the nicest convicts I have ever had over. At least in the top twenty.

(SPORK laughs and ALEX smiles as the walk out leaving the door wide open. CHRISTOPHER then

turns to see his apartment and decides to clean up a little starting with the book and then the camcorder. He looks around solemnly as he tries to take in everything that has happened.)

Three years apart and never truly losing hope? I envy you guys. Now it's back to square one, me and my apartment. No job. *(Beat)* No family. *(Beat)* No friends. I guess you can treat all of the symptoms, but the root cause still remains if it isn't cured. *(Picking up the rope)* And now it is just you and me. So where do we go from here? *(A long beat and then CHRISTOPHER starts to gently laugh to himself)* Why is this so hard to do? A few hours ago and it would have been over by now. All I would have to do is make a terrible video of my final words and kick this stupid chair, but now...now...I mean, do I even want to go through with it anymore?

(He takes a good long time to study the rope and his surroundings before standing on the chair and throwing the rope into the air as if to catch it on a ceiling beam. As he is doing this, SUNNY appears in the doorway. She still seems very cheerful at times, but she is more realistic in how she handles CHRISTOPHER this time.)

SUNNY

So you're still going to try and go through with it?

(CHRISTOPHER, startled, stumbles off the chair and hides the rope behind him)

CHRISTOPHER

What the-

SUNNY

(Crossing into the room) You know, I always thought that there was the chance that you would change.

CHRISTOPHER

Sunny, what are you talking about? When did you get here?

SUNNY

Just now, I had to wade through a field of policemen keeping some mangos from getting bruised (*Indicating a bag she is holding*).

CHRISTOPHER

Look, this isn't what you think it is.

SUNNY

You're trying to tie the noose again before you actually make up your mind because part of you still wants to die.

CHRISTOPHER

(*Stunned*) How did you know?

SUNNY

I've always had a habit of looking out windows. They always seemed to offer a world of possibilities even when I was stuck in the most boring rooms. In school, every day, you could bet that I'd be staring outside at a tree or a cloud or the rain on days when we were forced to be inside for recess. In college it only got worse and I had to close the blinds in my room in order to get any work done at all. I can't help it. My mind is just meant to drift outside and be with nature. So when I moved here and got all my stuff into my new apartment, you can imagine what I would do first. I lifted the blinds to get a great view of the city, but what captured my attention wasn't the lights or the cars as they zoomed by or the people as they walked throughout the street in little crowds. I looked across the street and saw a man, trapped in his own little world, tying a rope to his ceiling beam.

CHRISTOPHER

You knew all this time.

SUNNY

(Giggling) Fooled you didn't I?

CHRISTOPHER

And the cake?

SUNNY

I just grabbed the Tupperware container my friends prepared for me for the move. I thought it was a cake too until I opened it up. They just know I love to bake.

CHRISTOPHER

Why? I mean if you knew why did you bother to come over and not call the cops.

SUNNY

Because cops are slow and ineffective for things like this. They're not good about fixing the problem, they just cut you down and scold you leaving you feeling worse and isolated, or, worse yet, they arrive too late, shrug their shoulders, and move on to the next call.

CHRISTOPHER

That sounds too specific to be off the top of your head.

SUNNY

(Beat) My dad and I were close for years, but I started feeling a small bit of distance between us. That fire I caused set him and my back so far in debt and they struggled for years with it. My dad had a life insurance policy that would have saved our family from poverty and he decided to take the easy way out instead of tell me or my mom. I walked in on my dad swallowing pills when I was fourteen. The police ruled it an accident due to a forged prescription, but I knew that it happened because of me. *(Beat)* I still remember his eyes and how they stared back at me as I tried to wake him up.

CHRISTOPHER

(Beat) I'm so sorry.

SUNNY

I won't lose someone else so long as I can help it. So why don't you just put down the rope and we can enjoy some food back at my place.

CHRISTOPHER

I don't know if that's such a good idea.

SUNNY

Okay, fine we can go out somewhere to hang out. Do you like bowling?

CHRISTOPHER

(Quietly) Stop it.

SUNNY

I know a great bar chain that has Karaoke. I think I saw one while driving in a few days ago. We could-

CHRISTOPHER

(Silencing) JUST STOP!

(SUNNY stops talking and notices CHRISTOPHER who seems as if he was hurt by something that was said.)

The entire reason why I want out of this world is because every single significant moment of my life has been out of my control. I mean take tonight for instance, I had three unexplained visitors into my house and had to wait until they were ready to leave. The only thing I can do to reclaim any semblance of order in my life is to force myself to do this. But no, I can't. Why? Because you had a father who, once upon a time, tried something similar. Well, I'm not him. I know you may think it is your duty to save those who are too far gone, but it is my choice. I didn't even know you before tonight, so any assumptions that whether I live or die is based on you is just egotistical. Because the truth of the matter is that you're not doing this for me; you are doing it for yourself.

SUNNY

That's not true!

CHRISTOPHER

It is though!

SUNNY

SHUT UP!

(CHRISTOPHER and SUNNY have both unloaded and take a long beat to recover)

SUNNY

You know, what?...You had fun tonight. I know you don't want to say it, but you did. And I'm betting that at least part of that was due to me. I mean, you seemed happier when I first left and then when the convicts showed up you seemed to actually be worried for yourself. I mean, just because of that will, I took an extra ten minutes to find a payphone that was working to call the police. *(Reverting a little to her airhead self)* Did you know that payphones are almost extinct?

CHRISTOPHER

Wait, you called the police?

SUNNY

(Matter-of-factly) One of them pulled a knife on you.

(CHRISTOPHER thinks back and realizes that this did actually happen)

Anyway, I hadn't charged my cell phone and the fruit stand owner wouldn't let me use his since he was expecting an urgent call. I then came back here. I expected to come up here and see you trying to talk your way out of a hostage situation or maybe just sitting in silence with a new perspective on how much you are worth. I at least expected a slice cut from the cake. I left the whole thing here for you after all.

(CHRISTOPHER looks at the counter and realizes that the cake is still there)

CHRISTOPHER

Oh yeah. I had forgotten that was there.

SUNNY

But instead you are right back where you started. So...you're right. It isn't any of my business and it isn't my decision to make. I just hope that you see there's so much more that life has to offer and just get rid of the rope.

CHRISTOPHER

Why do you care?

SUNNY

Because we're friends, silly. *(Beat)* and, I'd feel partially responsible.

CHRISTOPHER

I just said that it would all be my choice, why would you think it's your fault.

SUNNY

I wouldn't...well, not really. Deep down I know it is your decision, but I care about you and just throwing that away makes me feel like I did something wrong to lead you to this. If you were to hang yourself, it wouldn't be just you, but everyone who cared for you would feel even the tiniest bit responsible. It's just what people do.

CHRISTOPHER

People are stupid.

SUNNY

(Mocking a little bit) Yeah, how dare they care for each other?

CHRISTOPHER

I think I'm supposed to make the sarcastic comments.

SUNNY

Well your head is buried so far up its own little black raincloud it's hard to hear you.

(CHRISTOPHER laughs and starts to warm up a bit)

See? I knew that you enjoyed today.

CHRISTOPHER

It was just one day. When I wake up tomorrow, nothing will have changed

SUNNY

Not with that attitude it won't. Start by waking up every day laughing like that and before you know it you will be up and enjoying yourself with all the normal people.

CHRISTOPHER

You don't really get depression, do you?

SUNNY

I understand it. And it's difficult. But all I can offer is advice and the comfort in knowing that there is someone right across the street that cares about you.

CHRISTOPHER

Are you sure you're not seeing your father in me?

SUNNY

You are the first friend I've made since moving and I'd have a pretty crappy track record if you were to die before I'd known you for 24 hours.

CHRISTOPHER

Yeah. I suppose that's true. But I'd still be a burden.

SUNNY

(A little annoyed) You'll quickly become a burden if you keep talking like that.

CHRISTOPHER

Sorry. Sorry.

(The two calm down and have a quick conversation without saying a word)

SUNNY

So, what are you going to do now?

CHRISTOPHER

I'm not sure

(SUNNY sighs and starts to gather her stuff during her next line. She picks the rope off of the floor with one hand and picks the cake up with the other hand which still has the bag of fruit on it.)

SUNNY

I'm not going to say that I know what's best because I don't know you all that well. I'd like to, but I don't. All I can say is that if you do this, I'm not going to watch. If you decide not to, great. I am in apartment 352 next door and would love to have you over to have some delicious cake and mangos since it's the only food that's prepared. *(Handing him the rope)* I just want you to know that I really enjoyed getting to know you. Even if it was only for a few hours. And while it is true that no one moment can make a lifetime, it certainly can change it. I'll be at my place with the blinds shut.

(SUNNY exits. CHRISTOPHER is conflicted looking at the rope and then out the window and then out the door. He sighs and plays with the rope a little before laughing to himself a little)

CHRISTOPHER

(Very earnest and sincere) It would be a shame to let my amazing baking skills go to waste.

*(CHRISTOPHER drops the rope and runs out of his
apartment)*

BLACKOUT

END OF SHOW