

BENJAMIN & ABBY

ABBY. Is this my punishment? For those arrest reports?

MARILYN. It's not punishment, Abby. He's your *family*, and / I thought —

SCOTTY. (*Firmly.*) Let's go, Marilyn. (*Beat.*)

MARILYN. Scotty's right, we should let you two talk. (*To Benjamin.*) I'm glad you're here. Stay awhile. (*They exit. Benjamin and Abby are silent for a few beats.*)

START

BENJAMIN. I didn't realize she was sick.

ABBY. In the head, you mean? Oh, she's not sick. She's diabolical.

BENJAMIN. She seems so sweet.

ABBY. That's what makes her so diabolical. (*After a moment, Benjamin looks around.*)

BENJAMIN. So this is nice. It's a nice place. I would've come to visit sooner, but I had no idea where you were.

ABBY. Well, I wanted to leave a forwarding address, but you were otherwise engaged. (*Beat.*)

BENJAMIN. You look good.

ABBY. I *am* good.

BENJAMIN. Me too. Much better than I was. And I'm working. Odd jobs mostly. Drywalling and things like that. Nothing big, but it pays the rent. I think you'd be proud.

ABBY. Where are you living?

BENJAMIN. In Freehold. With Zoe.

ABBY. I don't know who that is.

BENJAMIN. No, I know. She's, uh ... pretty great actually. You'd like her.

ABBY. Well I hope it sticks, because if it doesn't work out in Freehold you can't live here. Too many people in this room as it is.

BENJAMIN. I know, Mom.

ABBY. I wanted a private room but there wasn't enough money for that. Actually I wanted to stay in my own house, but it was hard to make those payments with an empty bank /account.

BENJAMIN. Okay, you don't need / to —

ABBY. Are you clean, Benjamin? (*Beat.*)

BENJAMIN. Yeah. Almost two years now.

ABBY. Well that's good. If you are in fact / clean.

BENJAMIN. I *am*, Mom.

ABBY. Good. That's good. But you'll forgive me for not patting you on the back. If that's what you came for, then you're out / of luck.

BENJAMIN. That's not what I came for.

END