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Older Than Dead
A Comedy about Life and Death as Deadheads
by
Lynn Snyder
Older Than Dead
by Lynn Snyder

CHARACTERS:

DORIANNE; romantic, seductive, feisty, sixty-something. She plays lead guitar.

KATE; realistic, smart, sixty-something. She plays drums.

SAUL; Kate’s partner, pessimistic, late 60’s. He plays bass guitar.

ANDY; Dorianne’s partner, late 60’s to early 70’s. Like the others, he appears in excellent physical condition for his age. The upbeat Andy is a pianist and the only professional musician in the band.

MICHAEL; 65, a determined police officer with a guilty conscience.

SETTING:
The Living room, dining room and kitchen of a Victorian home in San Francisco. The house is furnished haphazardly in nineteen sixties commune style. In addition to the usual sofa, chairs and coffee table, there is a life-size cardboard replica of the Grateful Dead, as well as sophisticated stereo equipment and exercise equipment such as a treadmill, a lifecycle, a set of weights and a large exercise ball. In an alcove, there are two guitars, a set of drums and a piano. Over the alcove is a sign, reading, OLDER THAN DEAD. During Act II, there is a minimal representational set for a brief scene in a nursing home.

TIME:
The action takes place between New Year’s 1995, and later that summer.

ETC:
DORIANNE, KATE, SAUL and ANDY are Deadheads and dress accordingly. ANDY’s costume should include a plaid shirt and a French beret. Except for ANDY, they are not musicians. They air-play the instruments and try to synchronize “performing” with Grateful Dead tapes.
Older Than Dead  
by Lynn Snyder

ACT I; Scene 1

(AT RISE: New Year’s Eve, 1994/95. A video of The Grateful Dead’s 1978 Winterland New Year’s Eve concert is playing; the volume turned up high. KATE, DORIANNE, SAUL and ANDY, on drums, lead guitar, bass and piano, respectively, synchronize with the tape.)

ANDY

Midnight!

DORIANNE, SAUL, ANDY

Happy New Year!

(DORIANNE, SAUL and ANDY stop playing, kiss, hug each other, and dance to the music. KATE continues to play drums, in an obsessed frenzy. SAUL opens a bottle of champagne and pours a glass for each.)

SAUL

Come on, Kate! It's 1995!

DORIANNE

Once she gets started.

ANDY

Don't stop her! She's into it!

DORIANNE

We aren't The Grateful Dead, Kate! You're not Mickey Hart!

ANDY

A few minor strokes of fate and she might have been. Go, Kate, go!

KATE

Don't do the toast without me!

SAUL

Then, come on.

(THEY raise their glasses. KATE hurries over to join them.)

ALL

To The Grateful Dead!

(THEY drink.)
To Older Than Dead!

(THEY drink.)

KATE
To the best of all possible worlds!

(THEY drink. ANDY rolls a joint, passes it around.)

ANDY
Who said that about ‘the best of all possible worlds’? Someone famous, wasn’t it?

KATE
“This is the best of all possible worlds”? I forget. Voltaire used it in Candide, but he didn’t say it, first.

SAUL
Henry VIII.

KATE
No.

SAUL
He did.

DORIANNE
Duke Ellington.

KATE
No! It was some philosopher.

DORIANNE
The Duke’s a philosopher.

KATE
I mean the kind who writes books. The man who said it first was a German philosopher.

DORIANNE
It wasn't any German. It was The Duke.

SAUL
No. It wasn’t Henry VIII or Duke Ellington. It was Jerry Garcia!

(SOUND: The doorbell rings. THEY give each other wary looks. ANDY looks through the peephole.)
ANDY
(Whispers) The police!

(DORIANNE exits with the joint. SAUL brings air freshener from the kitchen; sprays. KATE opens windows and fans the air. SOUND: The doorbell rings again.)

ANDY, Continued
(Shouts) Be right there!

(When SAUL has finished spraying and DORIANNE enters, ANDY opens the door. MICHAEL, a policeman, enters.)

MICHAEL
You'll have to turn down that music.

DORIANNE
Turn it down?

SAUL
On New Year’s Eve?

KATE
Don’t you know who used to live here?

MICHAEL
It doesn’t matter who used to live here. The music is too loud.

KATE
The Grateful Dead.

MICHAEL
Huh?

KATE
The Dead used to live in this house.

MICHAEL
Yeah, sure.

KATE
They did!

MICHAEL
This house?

KATE
That’s why we bought it.
MICHAEL
Well, I guess they could have. I knew they lived around here, somewhere.

ANDY
This is it. This is the house.

MICHAEL
(Impressed) The Dead! Here! What do you know? It doesn’t matter. People still have to sleep.

ANDY
(Turns down volume.) Okay. But no one on this street sleeps through New Year’s Eve, Officer.

MICHAEL
No. They clean house. (Sniffing) With air freshener.

ANDY
Pine. Nice, huh? Like living in a pine forest, with all the comforts of home.

MICHAEL
Pine is the air freshener of choice among illegal substance users. They flush the joint down the toilet and then spray like hell with pine.

ANDY
Some routine.

MICHAEL
You think so, huh?

ANDY
You’ve got to admit, they have good taste. At least, they don’t use bug spray or cheap perfume.

MICHAEL
Just keep the volume down, okay? (Turns to leave; sees video) Wait a minute! Is that...? That's Winterland! The Dead's 1978 New Year’s Eve concert at Winterland!

ANDY
We play it every New Year’s Eve.

MICHAEL
What a concert.

ANDY
You weren't there?!
MICHAEL
The last concert at Winterland! Where else would I be?

ANDY
You're a Deadhead!

MICHAEL
I am not a Deadhead.

ANDY
He's a Deadhead!

MICHAEL
Look at me. Short hair. Clean teeth. I wash with soap, launder my clothes, drive a 1992 *American* car. I have car insurance, life insurance, house insurance, and I don't fuck. I make love. Do I look like a Deadhead?

KATE
It’s nothing to be ashamed of. Queen Elizabeth is a deadhead. So was Freud and every American president since the Civil War.

ANDY
Have a glass of champagne, Officer.

MICHAEL
I'm on duty, which wouldn't matter to Deadheads, but I take my responsibilities seriously.

KATE
You shouldn't have to work on New Year’s Eve.

MICHAEL
I didn't have to. I volunteered so the young guy on this beat could go out with his new girlfriend.

KATE
Just the kind of sweet, generous thing a Deadhead would do. I bet you were at the Dead's Winterland New Year’s Eve concert in 1977, too.

MICHAEL
So what?

KATE
And '72

MICHAEL
I took my daughter.
SAUL
You went every year!

MICHAEL
They didn't play Winterland every year. Nineteen sixty-six they were at the Fillmore. Sixty-seven and sixty-nine, they were in Boston. *Sixty-eight*, they were at Winterland.

And you were there.

MICHAEL
My daughter couldn’t miss it. She was nuts about these guys, and where did it get her? I never see her anymore.

ANDY
That’s probably your fault, not hers.

MICHAEL
How the fuck...how the hell would you know?

ANDY
I hear it in your voice and I see it in your eyes. She took off in a direction you didn’t plan for her and don’t like.

MICHAEL
Took off in the *wrong* direction.

ANDY
Who says?

MICHAEL
*I* say!

ANDY
You sure you know what’s right for her?

MICHAEL
I’m her *father*!

ANDY
And she’s herself, so maybe she knows better than you who she’s supposed to be.

MICHAEL
Who do you think you are, telling me—

ANDY
Hey, man. No offense intended. I bet you’re an A-number one dad.
MICHAEL

No, I’m not.

ANDY

Well, you’re close.

MICHAEL

I’m a rotten father. I almost put her in jail!

KATE

Your own daughter!

MICHAEL

You don’t know what she did. No one’s above the law, including my daughter.

SAUL

Unload. Tell us about it.

DORIANNE

Sit down, Officer. Have a New Year’s drink with us. Nineteen ninety-five is the Dead's 30th birthday.

MICHAEL

Not until November. November 12, 1965 is when they changed their name from The Warlocks to The Grateful Dead.

KATE

Only a Deadhead would know that.

MICHAEL

My daughter.

ANDY

And you took it all in.

MICHAEL

Tell you the truth, I enjoyed those concerts, the music and the whole...I don’t know. All those kids? They didn’t care how old I was. Once we all got into it, no one cared how old anyone was.

ANDY

There’s no age at a Dead concert. There’s no anything except what’s happening.

DORIANNE

If November 12th is their birthday, November 12th should be a national holiday.

ANDY

No one goes to work that day. Anyone who works should be fined.
SAUL
The Dead should be invited to the White House.

DORIANNE
They should be living in the White House, running the country. No more wars.

SAUL
Straighten out the economy, too. Consumer confidence just needs love and music.

ANDY
We'd have national health care.

DORIANNE
And clean air.

KATE
Jerry Garcia for president!

DORIANNE
And that sexy Bob Weir for vice president.

ANDY
He's not so sexy.

DORIANNE
Not like you, Baby, but give him forty years.

MICHAEL
(Starts to exit) Wait a minute! Are they playing Casey Jones? (Turns up volume.) It's Casey Jones!

KATE
C'mon, everyone. The first Casey Jones of 1995.

(THEY sing with the tape.)

KATE, SAUL, DORIANNE & ANDY

(Singing)
Driving that train, high on cocaine,
Casey Jones, you'd better watch your speed.
Trouble ahead, trouble behind,
And you know that notion just crossed my mind.

ANDY
You, too, Officer.
MICHAEL

I can't sing.

DORIANNE

Your whole body's singing, Honey. Just open your mouth.

(MICHAEL sings, hesitantly at first, then with increased vigor and volume.)

ALL

(Singing)

This old engine makes it on time,
Leaves Central Station 'bout a quarter to nine.
Hits River Junction at seventeen to;
At a quarter to ten—you know it's trav'lin again.

Driving that train, high on cocaine
Casey Jones you better watch your speed.
Trouble ahead; trouble behind,
And you know that notion just crossed your mind.

(THEY continue to the end of the piece, then shout and applaud as though at a Dead concert.)

ANDY

Happy New Year, everyone!

ALL

Happy New Year!

(THEY hug and kiss, pulling MICHAEL into the scene. ANDY pours a glass of champagne for MICHAEL.)

ANDY

Here you go, Officer.

MICHAEL

Well, just one.

ALL

Happy New Year!

SAUL

You're a Deadhead, Man, whether you like it or not.

DORIANNE

He loves it!
I gotta admit...their music—

We know, Man! We *know*!

Drink up, everyone. Refills coming!

No! I’ve got to get moving.

Come on. Just one more.

Honestly, I’d like to but I better not.

Come back for New Year’s Day brunch, tomorrow. We’re having my special oatmeal pancakes with blueberry syrup.

Wow! That sounds good!

Bring the whole family.

I don’t...exactly have a family, anymore.

You’ve got one now.

You really want me to come back?

We don’t say anything we don’t mean, Baby. Once you start really hearing The Dead – I mean deep, like it takes over and you’re one with the music – once that happens, you don’t ever say anything you don’t mean.

Okay. I’ll come for brunch. What time?

Whenever we’re all ready to eat.
I mean, what time?

You’ll know.

How will I know when—

Whenever you get here is the time to be here. You start getting hung up on clock time, you can’t tell when you really want to be somewhere.

What if you’re not up, yet.

Come in and hang out. Listen to The Dead tapes. Smoke some pot. Help yourself to whatever’s in the fridge. Someone will be up soon. Meanwhile, just hang loose, man.

Okay. Okay, I will. Hey! They’re playing *Friend of the Devil!* One of my favorites. Turn it up. Turn it way up.

(ANDY turns up the volume. THEY all dance and sing to the music, until ANDY suddenly collapses.)

Andyyyyy!

**END OF SCENE**

**ACT I: Scene 2**

(*At Rise: August, 1995. SAUL sits in the living room, ready to take ANDY, who is now paralyzed by a stroke, to a nursing home. KATE tucks a blanket around ANDY, who sits in a wheelchair; a packed suitcase stands at the door.*)

He’s ready.

We can’t go until Dorianne gets back.

He has his coat on and everything.
We have to wait for Dorianne.

She's not coming back.

Sure, she's coming back.

I don’t think so. She's gone for good, Saul.

She wouldn’t just take off like that.

It’s exactly what Dorianne would do.

Where would she go?

Denver.

Denver?

Or New Orleans. Or Nairobi, for all we know.

She said she was going for a short bike ride and we should wait for her.

She can't face sending Andy to that home.

Neither can we.

But we're doing what has to be done.

We can't go without her.

We might have to.
SAUL
She wouldn't walk out on Andy like that.

KATE
She does anything she wants.

SAUL
Not that. She wouldn't do that.

KATE
You don't know her.

SAUL
I've lived in the same house with her for as long as you have.

KATE
She gets an idea in her head, she just takes off with it.

SAUL
That bugs you, doesn’t it?

KATE
Doesn’t care how it might affect anyone else. Don’t tell me that doesn’t bug you, too.

SAUL
No. It's okay with me. Wherever she is, it's got more going for it than taking Andy to a nursing home.

KATE
None of us wants him to go. We talked about it. We agreed.

SAUL
Anyway, Dorianne loves Andy too much to walk out on him. She wouldn't do it.

KATE
She would tell herself it's okay because she can't stand to see him go. Dorianne doesn't have any trouble talking herself into doing whatever she decides to do.

SAUL
We'll give her another half hour.

KATE
I'm not going to call the nursing home again to tell them we'll be late.

SAUL
We don't have to call. They know we're coming.
KATE
I don't want to get off on the wrong foot with them.

SAUL
I'd rather be on the wrong foot with them than with Dorianne.

(DORIANNE enters in cycling gear, complete with helmet and walkman.)

DORIANNE
Unpack that suitcase! The Dead are coming!

SAUL
The Dead? Coming here? When?

DORIANNE
(Kisses ANDY) Jerry Garcia and the Dead are coming, baby! You don't have to go anywhere.

SAUL
They're coming here?

KATE
Like you and I are going to Mars.

DORIANNE
(To ANDY) Turns you on, doesn't it, lover man?

SAUL
When, Dorianne? When are they coming? Who told you?

DORIANNE
Look! Andy's smiling!

KATE
He is not smiling.

DORIANNE
Look at him!

KATE
He doesn't understand a word.

DORIANNE
You can see it in his eyes.

SAUL
Dorianne! Who said the Dead are coming?
KATE
His eyes haven't changed since the stroke.

DORIANNE
Take a good look.

KATE
(Looks) They're the same.

DORIANNE
(More insistent) Look, Saul.

SAUL
(Looks) There might be something going on, but then again, there might not. Dorianne! Are The Dead really—

KATE
Do you know who I am, Andy? Wiggle one finger if you know who I am. Or smile. Or frown! Anything!

DORIANNE
You can't trigger any reaction from him, Kate. There's nothing surprising about you.

KATE
We're already an hour late for our appointment.

DORIANNE
Call the nursing home. Andy's not going.

SAUL
When, Dorianne? When will they be here?

DORIANNE
Listen to this. I'm on my bike, riding down to the ocean, okay? And I'll tell you now, I had decided I wasn't ever coming back. Once I got there, I was going to walk into the ocean and keep going. That's what. So, I'm on my bike, listening to the radio, when I hear about this woman in Fresno. She's paralyzed by a stroke. Couldn't move anything, not one finger! The daughter she hasn't seen in twenty years walks into the room. The woman gets up out of her wheelchair, lifts her arms that are supposed to be paralyzed and hugs her daughter.

(DORIANNE stares at KATE and SAUL.)

KATE
Andy's children have been here! They could be lamps or tables or corn flakes, for all he knows.
DORIANNE
You don’t get it! His kids are in and out of here all the time! The Dead aren’t! Put the Dead together with the paralyzed woman and see what you get.

KATE
What I get is that Andy has to go to a nursing home, and we are late for his registration and orientation, and they’re going to call and tell us to find another home for him.

DORIANNE
Put them together, Saul.

SAUL
The paralyzed woman and the...?

DORIANNE
Andy's sitting there, just like he is now, not expecting anything but his applesauce, when who walks in that door? Jerry Garcia and the Dead. Wham! Just like that woman, he gets a jolt, like you jump-start a car.

KATE
You think that’s what happens when someone has a stroke, their brain starts working like a car battery?

DORIANNE
That woman was paralyzed by a stroke. She got a shock. She moved. Facts! On the news!

KATE
We've done everything we can, Dorianne. Four of the best specialists in town say he can’t recover.

DORIANNE
All these big specialists we’ve had for Andy don't know what would happen if the band that turned Andy's life around suddenly walks in the door and starts playing the music that changed his life. Andy would have sold insurance all his life if a Dead concert hadn't inspired him to go back to the piano where he knew he belonged. We’re going to make a big 30th birthday party, invite the whole neighborhood, and it’s going to jolt Andy right out of that stupid stroke.

KATE
Oh, forgodsake, Dorianne. The most famous band in the world isn’t coming here to celebrate its birthday.

DORIANNE
Cleveland, 1971! That’s the Dead concert where we met, which makes us the oldest Deadheads on earth. And we live in the house they were in when they started on the road to fame. Where else would they want to celebrate their 30th birthday?
KATE
Madison Square Garden. The London Palladium. The Coliseum. It’s not as though The Grateful Dead doesn’t have a choice.

DORIANNE
Those places don’t mean anything to them. They’re just famous public places. We’re *family!* This whole neighborhood is Grateful Dead *family*. I’ll make a big pot of jambalaya and a huge double-fudge chocolate cake.

KATE
Okay, Dorianne. Call The Dead. You have their home number, of course?

DORIANNE
Saul’s going to invite them.

SAUL
Me?

DORIANNE
Well, sure. You’re the one who knows Jerry Garcia.

SAUL
No! I don’t—

DORIANNE
Met him at a party. You told me.

SAUL
Well, yeah, but that was—

KATE
You met Jerry Garcia at a party? What party?

SAUL
A long time ago.

KATE
Where was I?

SAUL
I don’t know. Somewhere else, I suppose.

KATE
You never told me you met Jerry.

SAUL
He wouldn’t remember me.
DORIANNE
If Jerry met you, he remembers. You make an impression, Saul.

SAUL
Yeah. Well. That guy meets a lot of people.

KATE
Where was I when you met Jerry?

SAUL
We aren't together every minute of every day, Kate.

DORIANNE
You make a deep impression, Honey.

KATE
When was this party?

DORIANNE
You've got a way about you that people don’t forget, Saul.

SAUL
Jerry and I did share a joint.

DORIANNE
There!

SAUL
He was leaning up against the wall, smoking Columbian, and he asked me if I wanted a toke.

DORIANNE
He invited you, singled you out.

SAUL
Not exactly. I just happened to be passing by.

DORIANNE
So were lots of other people, I bet.

SAUL
Well, yeah.

DORIANNE
He didn’t ask them.

SAUL
We passed the joint back and forth and had a long talk.
DORIANNE
What did I tell you?

KATE
I want to know where I was when you—

SAUL
We finished one, and he lit up another, and we went right on talking.

DORIANNE
He liked you.

KATE
All these years, Saul, you never said a word about meeting Jerry.

SAUL
He said his feet hurt. I told him it was those boots he wears, with pointed toes. I said he should wear sandals or shoes with a round toe. Pointed toes will kill your feet, I said. Some nerve, huh, telling Jerry Garcia what kind of shoes to wear. But you know? He hugged me.

DORIANNE
Well, sure he did.

SAUL
A big bear hug.

DORIANNE
You saved his feet!

KATE
Jerry hugged you?

DORIANNE
He's a very warm person.

SAUL
I hugged him back, too.

DORIANNE
He'd be crippled without you!

KATE
Why wasn’t I at the party, Saul?

DORIANNE
Jerry blesses you every day of his life.
SAUL
Of course, this was a long time ago.

DORIANNE
In the back of his mind, you're right there, every time he puts on his shoes. Call him, Saul.

SAUL
You really think he remembers?

DORIANNE
No one forgets you, Honey.

KATE
Saul, you’re not falling for this—

SAUL
I can't just...pick up the phone and call Jerry.

DORIANNE
He owes you, baby.

KATE
Oh, come on.

SAUL
Well...he might remember me.

DORIANNE
Just tell him you’re the guy who saved his feet.

KATE
Yeah. Right. Just tell him—

SAUL
He might consider doing me a little favor.

DORIANNE
He would be grateful for the opportunity.

SAUL
Of course, this kind of thing, you don't do one, two, three. It's got to be worked out with someone close to him, someone who can get me invited to a party or backstage after a concert.

DORIANNE
You know someone who could do that, all the friends you have.
SAUL
I have made a few contacts over the years.

DORIANNE
Sure, you have. People like you.

KATE
He doesn’t need you to—

SAUL
I’ve made quite a few contacts, now that I think of it.

DORIANNE
People gravitate to you, like they do to Jerry. You and Jerry Garcia are a lot alike.

Yeah?

DORIANNE
Whole room full of people, and he picks you to share his grass.

SAUL
Saul, she’s just trying to—

DORIANNE
There were a lot of people.

He could have asked any ten of them, but he picked you.

SAUL
He did. Jerry picked me.

DORIANNE
Do it, Saul. If we can bump Andy back to the living, we have to do it.

SAUL
It's all contacts. You have the right contacts, you can get whatever you want in this world.

KATE
Where are you going?

SAUL
To invite Jerry and the band.

KATE
It took us two months to get Andy into the best nursing home in the city, and you’re going to—
DORIANNE
He doesn't need a nursing home.

KATE
Three specialists—

SAUL
Doctors! Ten years ago, doctors told my brother he had six months to live. Where is he now? In England! On a walking tour! (Exits)

DORIANNE
(Rolls ANDY to the piano) No nursing home for you, lover man. You're going to play that piano right into the twenty-first century.

END OF SCENE

ACT I; Scene 3

(AT RISE: The same, early the next morning. Multicolored balloons cover the ceiling; KATE, alone, plays drums to a tape of The Grateful Dead's “Turn on Your Love Light.” SHE stops, takes a poker from the fireplace, and begins bursting the balloons with the poker. DORIANNE enters from kitchen with a big chocolate cake.)

DORIANNE
Here's the cake! What the...? Stop!

KATE
The Dead aren't coming! (Pops a balloon)

DORIANNE
Give me that...!

KATE
(Pops another balloon) There isn't going to be a party!

DORIANNE
Cut that out!

KATE
And Saul isn't coming back. (Pops yet another)

DORIANNE
Sure, he's coming back.

KATE
He's gone for good.
DORIANNE

Who says?

KATE

He's been gone all night!

DORIANNE

Inviting the Dead to a birthday party takes all night and then some. You've got to mosey around, hang out with people. STOP busting my balloons!

KATE

You were at that party with Saul.

DORIANNE

Me?

KATE

The one with Jerry.

DORIANNE

Is that why you're busting my balloons?

KATE

It was you, wasn't it?

DORIANNE

No.

KATE

It was you.

DORIANNE

I did not go to a party with Saul. I have my own man.

KATE

You don't mind having someone else's man, too. (Pops a balloon)

DORIANNE

Cut that out!

KATE

The Dead are going to celebrate their birthday at The Arc de Triumph. Or on top of an Egyptian pyramid. They're not coming here! (Pops balloon)

DORIANNE

Yes, they are! I wouldn't melt twenty bars of genuine Belgian chocolate to make a double-fudge birthday cake if they weren't coming.
(KATE pops a balloon. DORIANNE tries to take the poker. KATE dodges her, popping balloons.)

KATE
You flattered Saul into thinking he could get them here to perform some kind of miracle, when what Andy needs is professional care, not day dreams.

DORIANNE
Professional care is just what Andy doesn’t need. (To ANDY) Makes you sick to even think about it, doesn't it, Baby? People feeding you and washing you and helping you potty! I know you don't want to live that way, Honey. And don't you worry. I'm not going to let you. The Dead are coming, Sweetie. (To KATE) Give me that poker!

(DORIANNE catches KATE. THEY struggle for the poker, fall, stunned but unhurt.)

KATE
Dorianne? Dorianne, are you okay? Don't move if anything hurts.

DORIANNE
I hurt in all the places Andy used to touch me.

KATE
If Andy could talk, he would tell us to let him go.

DORIANNE
He does talk. To me. (To ANDY) You want as good a chance as that woman in Fresno, right, Darling?

KATE
Was she cured, permanently? Did she move her arms again, after that one time? Was her stroke the same kind as Andy's? Where is she now? You don't know anything about her. You don't know if what you heard on the radio has a grain of truth in it.

DORIANNE
People aren't going to lie about something like that.

KATE
People lie about anything if it makes them feel better.

DORIANNE
Believe in good things, Kate, or they'll go and happen somewhere else.

KATE
I believe what my brain and five senses tell me.
DORIANNE
That's less than half of what goes on in the world. What if we could save Andy and we didn't do it? What I've got here is a war. That stroke is pulling Andy one way, I'm pulling him the other. I've got to win, Kate. I need Andy like I need air.

KATE
You could put that in a song.

DORIANNE
Next to being born, Andy's the best thing that ever happened to me.

KATE
Line two.

DORIANNE
I can't write songs.

KATE
Keep talking.

DORIANNE
Without Andy, my dreams are black trees, stretched thin as ropes, and I forget to smell the morning air.

(KATE goes to the drums and strokes them softly to accompany DORIANNE'S narrative.)

KATE
Keep talking. Don’t stop.

DORIANNE
A hot September Wednesday night in Denver. Andy comes into the restaurant for a quick sandwich and a beer, gets a whiff of my jambalaya, orders it up, says he isn't leaving until he meets the cook. Out I come, my dress all stained with food, my hair a mess. He says he thought I'd look like a cook, not a wildflower. I say there's nothing bad about looking like a cook, and he says he's used to one good thing at a time and doesn't know if he can survive the best jambalaya he's ever tasted plus a wildflower woman.

KATE
That's the name of the song. *Wildflower Woman*.

DORIANNE
You really think I've written a song?

KATE
A beauty of a song, Dorianne.

DORIANNE
Wildflower Woman is what Andy used to call me, when we made love.
KATE
We'll make a record of that song, dedicate it to Andy.

DORIANNE
Kate, if we try to save Andy, and it doesn't work, I'll give up. But if we don't try at all, we're just losers.

KATE
I'm already a loser, if Saul never comes back.

DORIANNE
He wouldn't leave you.

KATE
I don't know.

DORIANNE
He's crazy about you.

KATE
I'm crazy about him. I don't think he would notice if I weren't here.

DORIANNE
Saul would fall apart without you.

KATE
What makes you think so?

DORIANNE
He's so careful not to let you know.

(DORIANNE takes a bright red balloon from the ceiling and bops it to KATE.)

DORIANNE
Here! This one's for you!

KATE
What am I supposed to...?

DORIANNE
Keep it in the air!

KATE
I can't...!

(But SHE does and bops it back. THEY volley the balloon.)
DORIANNE
Don't let it fall!

KATE
It's going to fall!

DORIANNE
Not if we keep it up.

KATE
We can’t!

DORIANNE
We're doing it.

KATE
It’s going to...! I’m going to miss it!

DORIANNE
Bet you a hundred dollars you won’t!

KATE
You don’t have a hundred dollars.

DORIANNE
Don’t need it!

KATE
I did read once that stroke victims sometimes do recover, even after this long.

DORIANNE
Keep it in the air!

KATE
It's rare, but it does happen.

DORIANNE
Don't let it drop! Now that we've got it going, we can keep it up forever!

(THEY are volleying the balloon as SAUL enters singing The Grateful Dead's "Uncle John's Band".)

DORIANNE
They're coming! I can see it on your face!

SAUL
I'm going to see Jerry tonight. Pete Rhodes said he remembers me.
DORIANNE
I told you! Andy! You hear that, baby? They're coming!

SAUL
I don't know for sure, Dorianne.

DORIANNE
You're going to see Jerry!

SAUL
Tonight. Pete's setting it up.

KATE
Pete doesn't know Jerry.

SAUL
But he has contacts who do.

KATE
Pete's contacts are in drugs.

SAUL
That gives him access to a wide range of people.

KATE
Jerry Garcia told Pete he remembers you?

SAUL
No. Jerry told Frank and Frank told Pete.

KATE
Frank who?

SAUL
I didn't get his last name.

KATE
So, Pete didn't talk to Jerry.

SAUL
Not directly.

KATE
This Frank somebody or other is...what? Pete's contact?

SAUL
Indirectly.
KATE
Pete doesn't know Frank?

SAUL
Not directly. He knows Lori, whose brother does business with Frank, who is one of Jerry's main suppliers.

KATE
Wait a minute.

DORIANNE
I knew it! If I put up the balloons and made the cake, they'd have to come. *(To ANDY)* Didn't I tell you, Honey?

*(DORIANNE puts on a tape of The Grateful Dead's “Uncle John's Band”. DORIANNE and SAUL sing with the tape.)*

DORIANNE & SAUL
*(Singing)*

Well, the first days are the hardest days;  
Don't you worry anymore.

KATE
Lori who?

DORIANNE & SAUL

Cause when life looks like Easy Street,  
There is danger at your door.

KATE
Which Lori?

DORIANNE & SAUL

*It's a buck dancer's choice my friend;*  
*Better take—*

KATE
*(Turns off tape)* Saul!

What?

SAUL

Which Lori?
SAUL
The one who used to be active in Gray Panthers.

KATE
Do you know why she isn't active in Gray Panthers anymore?

SAUL
I suppose, she got tired of the in-fighting.

She died.

SAUL
Lori...?

KATE
We all went to her funeral.

Lori...?

KATE
Scattered her ashes at sea.

SAUL
When–

KATE
Couple years ago.

SAUL
Couple–

DORIANNE
Slipped your mind. Happens to the best.

SAUL
Omigod! Lori! Now, I remember!

DORIANNE
More like about four years ago.

SAUL
We all went out on the boat to scatter her ashes. We played a tape of the Grateful Dead's "One More Saturday Night".

KATE
We played "St. Stephen".
I have not forgotten every single detail.

“St. Stephen”, because Lori was Catholic.

Lapsed Catholic. We played “One More Saturday Night”.

The funeral was on a Saturday. Afternoon! We played “St. Stephen”. I'm the one who wants “One More Saturday Night” when my ashes are scattered.

I'd want “Sugar Magnolia” if I was ever going to die.

“Sugar Magnolia” it is, Dorianne. I promise.

What's going to happen to me is, I'm going to metamorphose into the biggest, most blossomest magnolia tree in the world and get my picture in National Geographic with a whole color page to myself.

I've got Alzheimer's.

You do not.

I forgot! God is punishing me.

You don't believe in God.

Sometimes, yes and sometimes, no.

If there were a God, no one would have Alzheimer's.

God made Alzheimer's to punish people like me for walking out on my family at age forty-four to become a middle-aged hippie. Following the Dead all these years, I forgot I was becoming an old man.
DORIANNE
You're not old where it counts, Saul.

KATE
How do you know?

SAUL
Getting on a motorcycle and roaring across the country to a new life. Who did we think we were?

KATE
In love.

SAUL
Try to erase the past, it sneaks up behind you and waits, with a sly grin.

DORIANNE
You don't have Alzheimer's, Saul.

KATE
How does she know you aren't old “where it counts”?

SAUL
A man doesn't get away with stealing his brother's wife.

KATE
You didn't steal me. I decided to leave. We were in love.

SAUL
We had no right to be in love.

KATE
Ask Jerry Garcia who has the right to be in love. (To DORIANNE) How do you know where he isn't old?

SAUL
Oh, what the hell, Kate. It was a long time ago.

KATE
What was?

SAUL
Nothing.

KATE
(To DORIANNE) What was a long time ago?
DORIANNE
At our ages, almost everything. I'm going out to buy a new dress for the party. *(Throws helmet to KATE)* Get your bike and come with me, Kate. You need a new dress.

*(Throws helmet back)* I do not.

KATE

DORIANNE
Come on! A sexy black dress for you and a red one for me. *(Puts on helmet)* I'll be at the Clothes Exchange if you want to meet me. *(Exits)*

You and Dorianne? In our bed!

SAUL

There was no bed.

KATE

Standing up? You never did it with me standing up.

SAUL

Not standing. On the beach.

KATE

What beach?

SAUL

Some beach. What's the...

KATE

Not our cove!

SAUL

It's still ours.

KATE

Our cove?

SAUL

It wasn't the same sand as ours, Kate. Wind! Tides! Sand changes. Our sand will always be ours.

KATE

You went with Dorianne to that party where you met Jerry.

SAUL

No.
Tell me the truth.

I did not go to the party with Dorianne.

Then who?

Lori.

Lori?

I went with Lori.

You asked Lori to...?

I don’t think I actually invited her. She seemed to turn up.

Out of the blue.

That’s the way it seemed. She turned up out of the blue.

You were on your way to this party where Jerry Garcia would be, and Lori floated around a corner and fell into step with you, took up your stride, ended up where you were going. You had nothing to do with it.

She seemed to be there with me, and no one thought anything about it. No one made a fuss in those days, Katie.

I supported Lori for Gray Panther president. I helped her get elected!

She was a good president.

I wrote her speeches.
SAUL
It was just what happened at the moment, Kate.

KATE
It hurts.

SAUL
I'm sorry.

KATE
Betrayal hurts, Saul. Even this far from the fact.

SAUL
I didn't mean to hurt you.

KATE
Do you love me, Saul?

SAUL
Sure.

KATE
I mean, really?

SAUL
Yeah. Really.

KATE
You're not sorry we left home?

SAUL
No, but to go off like that? With my brother's wife!

KATE
I didn't love him anymore. You didn't love Betty. Our children were in college or married.

SAUL
Broke up two families.

KATE
You don't have regrets.

SAUL
What's done is done.

KATE
But you love me.
SAUL

I gave up everything for you.

KATE

I gave up everything for you, too.

SAUL

Are you sorry?

KATE

No. Never.

SAUL

I'm not, either. I would have sold groceries for the rest of my life and rotted like an old cabbage. We were each other's destiny, Kate.

KATE

I looked up love in the dictionary the other day.

SAUL

You know words I never heard of, and you look up a word every child knows?

KATE

The dictionary says a person who's loved arouses delight, admiration and tenderness. Do I delight you, Saul? Do you light up when you see me?

SAUL

I see you all the time.

KATE

When I'm out alone, are you delighted to see me when I come back?

SAUL

I don't think I...light up.

KATE

But you're happy?

SAUL

Sure.

KATE

You delight me, Saul.

SAUL

I think it's something else for me. What were those other things?
Admiration. Tenderness.

Yeah.

Admiration and tenderness, but not delight?

Two out of three is better than most people do in life. (Tenderly) Hey, Kate.

What.

You still turn me on, Sweetie.

I do?

You always have. Not just because you’re sexy but because you’re you – smart, honest, loyal.

(DORIANNE enters.)

Jerry...!

Is he here?

Jerry’s...gone!

Gone!

He...Jerry died!

No!

That’s impossible! Jerry couldn’t—
DORIANNE
He died in his sleep, early this morning. The streets are full of people.

KATE
No! No! NO!

SAUL
Jerry...!

DORIANNE
Andy! Honey! What’s going to happen now?

END ACT I

ACT II: Scene 1

(AT RISE: The same; some months later; ANDY now in the nursing home.)

SAUL
No! No! You can’t do that!

DORIANNE
It's what he wants.

No!

SAUL
It is, Saul.

DORIANNE
Andy can’t tell anyone what he wants.

He's begging us!

SAUL
He can't talk!

DORIANNE
I see it in his eyes, when we visit him. He's mad as a trapped tiger. He wants me to get him out of that nursing home.

SAUL
He doesn't look mad to me.
KATE
Dorianne's right, Saul.

SAUL
Andy's eyes aren't talking to you, too?!

KATE
We know Andy. He doesn't want to live that way.

DORIANNE
He can't play the piano, can't hold me in his arms. He can't go to coffee houses and hang out with his friends. He can’t feed himself or even take himself to the bathroom. He used to be a man, Saul. Everything called, life, is gone. He wants it to end.

SAUL
Looks to me as though he sits there not wanting anything.

DORIANNE
He wants everything and then some, like the rest of us.

KATE
Like Jerry Garcia. You don't think Jerry would sit around vegetating for who knows how many years. Live it up or turn it off. That's what Jerry would say. What if you couldn't make love or listen to music or lift weights or buy exotic cheeses to sell in your store? You wouldn't want to go on.

SAUL
I don't know if I would or not. And you don't know if Andy does or doesn’t. Andy's the only one who can tell us what's on his mind.

DORIANNE
Remember when Marty Newton found out he was dying of cancer? Who do you think got him the stuff that took him out?

SAUL
Not Andy.

DORIANNE
Andy.

SAUL
Andy? Gave Marty that stuff?

DORIANNE
Left it in a place he could get to it. Andy said if anything like that happened to him, that's what he wants.
Marty had cancer, pain that was getting worse! And he could say so. Andy isn't in pain.

He’s in worse than physical pain, the worst kind of psychological frustration. He can’t say what he wants and he knows we know what he wants.

My man is telling me what to do and I'm going to do it.

How? Kidnap him from the nursing home?

No. Do it there. He's on the ground floor, so it's easy to climb in a window in the middle of the night.

You're going to climb in his window in the dead of night with a needle full of smack!

Something along those lines.

Okay, old Deadhead hippies aren't supposed to be mainstream pillars of society, but sneaking in a window and giving someone a lethal dose of smack is way off the deep end.

How would you suggest we do it?

We don't do it! We can't! We love him! The whole neighborhood loves him. He goes into a coffeehouse, he's a celebrity. Walks down the street, people call out their windows.

Where have you been, Saul? He can't do that anymore!

Maybe he'll get better.

I wouldn't talk about helping him get out if there were any chance he would get better. Nothing’s changed since the stroke, and every specialist we've called in says it's hopeless.

But we can see him, hug him, talk to him. They let us feed him.
KATE
He hates being fed, and if he knows what we're talking about, he can't stand not being able to say a word.

SAUL
Give him another few months.

DORIANNE
He doesn't want more time and he doesn't want us coming in there, hugging and kissing him, talking to the man he was.

SAUL
We'd never see him again, Dorianne.

DORIANNE
I'm Andy, and Andy's me. As long as I'm here, Andy's here.

SAUL
Remember when we decided we were going to live until the youngest of us got to a hundred?

KATE
At which point, we were going to decide whether we want to keep going or go out together on an overdose of smack.

SAUL
But we would have decided, together. We go in there and give him an overdose...that's us, murdering him!

DORIANNE
An overdose that puts him to rest in sweet bliss is saving him, not killing him.

SAUL
Try to convince a jury of that.

KATE
There won't be a trial. We're not going to get caught. We'll plan it down to the last detail.

SAUL
Jails are full of people who planned to the last detail.

KATE
We find out when the nurses make their rounds at night and go in between the rounds. That nursing home is a tight ship, everything right on schedule.

SAUL
If we go in a window and give Andy an overdose, they're going to know who did it.
KATE
They'll think they know.

SAUL
Who else would it be?

KATE
That's for them to figure out. The three of us were here the whole night. We're going to agree on exactly what we were doing so we all say the same thing.

SAUL
They'll take us to the police station, interrogate us separately.

KATE
Yes. That’s why our stories have to match right down to the smallest detail. We had dinner at seven, did the dishes, I read a book, Saul watched TV, Dorianne made a pie. I'll pick a specific book, you'll watch a specific TV program, and it'll be a certain kind of pie.

DORIANNE
Peach is Andy's favorite.

KATE
Okay, peach. Just so we all say the same thing.

SAUL
They'll take us to the police station, into separate rooms, ask us questions, and we'll tell these specific lies?

KATE
That's right.

SAUL
It's called *perjury*.

KATE
That's why we have to remember all the details and practice saying it as though we did it. We have to convince ourselves that we did it. That way, it will sound true.

SAUL
You think like a criminal!

KATE
Good! Because we’re going to commit a crime!

END OF SCENE
(AT RISE: 2:00 AM inside ANDY’S room at the nursing home; ANDY is in bed, asleep. KATE’s head and shoulders appear outside the window to his room. Slowly SHE raises the window and climbs into the room, followed by DORIANNE, who wears a small backpack. THEY go to the bed. DORIANNE bends close to ANDY, is about to kiss him, when KATE pulls her back. THEY speak in whispers.)

KATE
No! You'll wake him!

DORIANNE
Look at him.

KATE
Shhhhh.

DORIANNE
Look at him, Kate.

KATE
We need to concentrate, follow the plan and get out.

DORIANNE
He's beautiful, isn't he, Kate?

KATE
Yes, Dorianne. He's beautiful.

DORIANNE
Look at him.

KATE
Come on, Dorianne.

DORIANNE
I can't do it.

(KATE draws DORIANNE away from the bed.)

KATE
He wants you to.

DORIANNE
I can't.

KATE
Then, I will.
I'll never see him again.

As long as you're here, so is he.

I love him so much.

That's why you're here.

Maybe he still loves me.

Sure, he does.

But, if he still loves me, he feels something. He's still...here.

We don't know.

You just said.

If he feels anything, he loves you, and he wants you to do this.

You don't know, for sure, Kate.

We've been through all this.

He looks so helpless, like a baby.

He is helpless. That's what he can't stand.

You're right. That's what he can't stand.

(DORIANNE takes out a syringe and other paraphernalia. THEY move toward the bed.)
What if he wakes up?

If he does, he won't be up for long.

Don't say that.

That's why we're doing it.

But the way you say it.

What way?

Like you want to get rid of him.

Oh, forgodsake!

He won't be up for long.

I didn't mean...!

Shoot him up with smack and he's gone! You're heartless!

This was your idea!

Just don't say, he won't be up for long.

Okay.

Not like that.

Okay.
DORIANNE

Look at him.

KATE

Any, you're wise and fun, honest and caring. My life is richer because of you.

DORIANNE

You're a good friend, Kate.

KATE

So are you.

DORIANNE

I betrayed you, and you stick by me, anyway. I don't know. Nothing makes sense, anymore.

KATE

What makes sense is the home you and Saul and Andy and I made for ourselves, deciding how we wanted to live and doing it.

THEY freeze at the sound of footsteps in the corridor. KATE pulls DORIANNE into a closet. The footsteps move past the door. A moment later, SAUL appears at the window, climbs into the room.

SAUL

What the...? Where...?

(SAUL crosses to ANDY, peers at him, listens to his breathing, moves away from him, and then speaks in loud whisper.)

SAUL, Continued

Kate! Dorianne!

(DORIANNE and KATE enter from closet.)

SAUL

What are you...?

KATE

Shhhhh!

SAUL

You were supposed to be out by now. I have the motor running, ready to go.

DORIANNE

Say goodbye to him, Saul.

SAUL

(Kisses ANDY) Rest in peace, my friend.
(DORIANNE administers the dose.)

KATE
(Kisses ANDY) In our hearts forever, Andy.

(KATE and SAUL exit out the window.)

DORIANNE
(Hugs and kisses ANDY) I’m your wildflower woman forever, Sweetheart. Forever and ever.

(DORIANNE exits out the window.)

END OF SCENE

ACT II: Scene 3

(AT RISE: a week later; at the house. There is a knock on the door. It is repeated several times. The door opens. MICHAEL enters.)

MICHAEL
Hello! Anyone here? (Calls up the stairs) Is anyone home?

(MICHAEL studies the room for a few moments, then searches a few drawers from one of which he removes a small packet, opens it, smells it, puts it back in the drawer, continues searching, until DORIANNE enters through the kitchen door, carrying an armful of vegetables from the garden.)

MICHAEL, Continued
Hi. Remember me? Michael Taylor, San Francisco Police Department. I was here when Andy...

DORIANNE
(Drops vegetables) We already talked to the police.

MICHAEL
(Starts to pick up the vegetables) Here, let me help you...

DORIANNE
I don't need help! We were at the police station practically the whole day Wednesday. All three of us. They took down everything we said.

MICHAEL
I read the reports. We're still working on the case.

DORIANNE
Kate and Saul aren't here.
MICHAEL
I'll talk to them, later. Can we sit down?

DORIANNE
Why? You tired?

MICHAEL
To talk.

DORIANNE
I've said everything I have to say.

MICHAEL
You're Andy's wife...widow. Right?

DORIANNE
More than.

MICHAEL
Excuse me?

DORIANNE
I was more than his wife.

MICHAEL
In what way?

DORIANNE
That's not police business.

MICHAEL
In a homicide, everything is police business.

DORIANNE
We already answered all the police questions.

MICHAEL
I've never been on a case in which all the questions were answered, and I've been a policeman more than forty years.

DORIANNE
In forty years, you must have found out a policeman can't walk into someone's house without a search warrant.

MICHAEL
I knocked several times. Then, I tried the door and found it unlocked. It's not a good idea to leave your door unlocked.
DORIANNE
It isn't an idea. It's a way of life. We don't lock doors in this neighborhood.

MICHAEL
Back in the sixties, you thought you could turn the world into a place where people didn't have to fight and scramble to survive, so no one had to lock anyone out. But you did not change the world. It's worse than it was then. People have to fight harder and scramble more viciously than ever, so I would advise you to lock your door at night and in the daytime. If you don't mind, I would like to sit down.

DORIANNE
Don't get too comfortable, because I don't know any more than I told them on Wednesday.

MICHAEL
You and Andy were together a long time.

DORIANNE
An awfully short time.

MICHAEL
About twenty-five years.

DORIANNE
Went like the wind. Know what I mean?

MICHAEL
Not exactly.

DORIANNE
If you don't know, you've got no business asking questions about love. You ever loved anyone, officer?

MICHAEL
Of course, I...everyone loves someone.

DORIANNE
Not that kind. The kind that goes like the wind, the kind that keeps you falling in love over and over.

MICHAEL
I have a wife. I have a daughter. I know about love.

DORIANNE
I have a daughter, too. She's nothing like me. She's ashamed of me. How about yours?

MICHAEL
Diane?
DORIANNE
Is she ashamed of you, Officer Taylor?

MICHAEL
She doesn't have the right to judge me.

DORIANNE
Bet that doesn't stop her.

MICHAEL
I'm a better father than she deserves. Let's get on with the business at hand.

DORIANNE
We're on it. You and Diane don't get along.

MICHAEL
She’s none of your business. You say you were more than a wife. I never heard of that. What’s it supposed to mean?

DORIANNE
He was more than a husband, too.

MICHAEL
But you never got married.

DORIANNE
When you have more, why sign a contract for less? A contract is just words, made up by someone Andy and I never met. The kind of love we had can't be written in a contract or spoken at a ceremony and doesn't need to be signed for.

MICHAEL
I see.

DORIANNE
No, you don't.

MICHAEL
Right. I don't get it.

DORIANNE
You have a contract with your wife?

MICHAEL
We're divorced. Which is not germane to the subject at hand.

DORIANNE
Everything's connected. You go deep enough into things, you find out they're connected to things you didn't know had anything to do with them. Like losing Diane.
MICHAEL
I didn't say she's lost.

DORIANNE
Lost to you.

MICHAEL
Your more-than-husband, Andy, was given a fatal overdose of heroin, and I'm going to stay focused on finding out who did it.

DORIANNE
I suppose your wife blames you for what happened to Diane.

MICHAEL
I am not to blame!

DORIANNE
It's too complicated to blame anyone.

MICHAEL
You don't know the first thing—

DORIANNE
Except that you think you're a better father than she deserves.

MICHAEL
I'm going to find out who killed Andy, and I won't be thrown off course.

DORIANNE
Call me Dorianne, and I'll call you Michael.

MICHAEL
I don't think so.

DORIANNE
Law and order won't break down if we call each other by our first names. We're connected. You called the ambulance for Andy.

MICHAEL
It's better if we abide by the formalities.

DORIANNE
You've been abiding by the formalities and the result is that you warn us to keep ourselves under lock and key, day and night, because things are worse than ever. So tell me what the formalities have got going for you or me or anyone else in this worse-than-ever world?

MICHAEL
Let's get back to Andy.
DORIANNE
We're talking about Andy. I don't talk about anything else, these days. Everything I do and say is about him. Please help me pick up these vegetables, Officer Taylor. I need to get them washed and steamed for my vegetable lentil soup.

(THEY pick up the vegetables. DORIANNE washes a carrot and hands it to MICHAEL.)

DORIANNE
Try one of these and tell me if it isn't the sweetest carrot you've ever tasted.

MICHAEL
No, thank you.

DORIANNE
Not that you would do anything to harm Diane if you could help it, but—

MICHAEL
I didn't harm her!

DORIANNE
(Offers carrot again) Organic. We grow them right out there, and if you don't think they taste different from commercial store bought...

MICHAEL
I think you're trying to dodge the issue, and you're not going to get away with it.

(DORIANNE continues to wash vegetables and prepare the soup.)

DORIANNE
Andy's not an issue. He's my man and he's gone, and the world has emptied out. He loved me and he played the piano and he got sick and now he's gone and I can't sing anymore. I can't even listen to The Grateful Dead.

MICHAEL
I'm sorry, but I have a job to do here. What time are you expecting your housemates?

DORIANNE
We never know when to expect each other. Unlike the police, we don't go in much for procedure. We come and go pretty much at will. Look at that spinach. Some worm got to it. What do you think, snails, slugs, worms?

MICHAEL
I'm going to solve this crime, whether you like it or not.

DORIANNE
Forty years. You must have caught a lot of bad people in forty years.
MICHAEL
Not everyone who commits a crime is bad. Some of them might even commit a crime thinking they are doing good.

DORIANNE
Takes all kinds.

MICHAEL
Someone might have given Andy an overdose because they thought he wanted to die.

DORIANNE
You think so?

MICHAEL
Someone he knew.

DORIANNE
Everyone who knew Andy loved him. No one would want to hurt him.

MICHAEL
Unless they thought they were doing him a favor.

DORIANNE
By taking him out? Doesn’t make sense.

MICHAEL
Unless they thought he didn't want to live.

DORIANNE
Maybe he didn't.

MICHAEL
You think he didn't?

DORIANNE
I don't know.

MICHAEL
You and Andy never discussed it.

DORIANNE
We figured on living until at least a hundred.

MICHAEL
If you weren’t paralyzed in a wheelchair.

DORIANNE
We didn’t talk about that.
MICHAEL
You know anyone Andy might have talked to about that?

DORIANNE
No.

MICHAEL
If you think of anyone, give me a call.

DORIANNE
Yeah. Okay.

MICHAEL
If you thought he would rather not live, would it be all right to kill him?

DORIANNE
It is never all right to kill.

MICHAEL
No, it isn't.

DORIANNE
Once people start taking the law into their hands, where are we?

MICHAEL
You tell me.

DORIANNE
In a jungle. We’d be living in a jungle. Wars. Riots in the streets. Random shootings. Payoffs. Kickbacks. Corruption. Cheating. Government lying to people every which way. That’s what we would have if everyone went around doing what they want. Not to mention police, coming into a person's house with the excuse the door was unlocked. You need a search warrant even if the door was unlocked, Officer Taylor, unless you think you're above the law.

MICHAEL
I have a warrant. I even did a little searching before you came in, found some marijuana.

DORIANNE
Okay. Arrest me.

MICHAEL
No. I didn’t take it, and I won't even report it.

DORIANNE
Want to try some? Humboldt Red, best stuff on the market.
MICHAEL
Humboldt Red isn't the best. Ever try Alaskan Thunder?

DORIANNE
No. Is that your favorite?

MICHAEL
Don't tell anyone.

DORIANNE
You trust me to keep your secret.

MICHAEL
I've got something on you. You've got something on me.

DORIANNE
The start of a beautiful friendship.

MICHAEL
The profile of you from the police report doesn't do you justice.

DORIANNE
I suppose it said I'm a demented sixty-something hippie.

MICHAEL
Not quite, but it missed a lot of who you are.

DORIANNE
Who's that?

MICHAEL
A woman any man would be lucky to have.

DORIANNE
Go ahead. Try one of these carrots.

MICHAEL
(Bites into carrot) It's good. You're right. It's delicious.

DORIANNE
Wait 'til you taste the soup. Stay and have supper with us.

MICHAEL
I wish I could, but I'm on duty.

DORIANNE
Come back when you're off.
MICHAEL
Scientists are working on a way to reverse the effects of strokes. I suppose you read about it.

DORIANNE
Do what? Reverse...?

MICHAEL
New technology that can reverse paralysis.

DORIANNE
Un-paralyze a person?

MICHAEL
It's in the early stages of development, but it looks very promising.

DORIANNE
You mean, they start talking again?

MICHAEL
Science is working miracles, these days. Cures are being found for some of the most crippling diseases.

DORIANNE
Wait a minute. They can talk? And walk?

MICHAEL
Early experiments indicate that they can do everything they did before, live normal lives.

DORIANNE
Play the piano?

MICHAEL
Amazing things are happening in medical science, Dorianne. I'll leave my card, in case you think of anything that might help us in our investigation. (Exits)

END OF SCENE

ACT II: Scene 4

(AT RISE: The next morning. SAUL is preparing breakfast; KATE enters in bathrobe.)

KATE
Where's Dorianne?

SAUL
Still asleep, I guess.
KATE
No. Her door was open. She isn’t in her room. Looks like she hasn’t slept in her bed.

SAUL
Hasn’t...are you sure?

KATE
Her door is wide open, and the bed is still made.

SAUL
Where the...when we left the coffeehouse, she said she would be back later. Didn’t she?

KATE
Yes. Frank and Sally were going to walk her home. I’ll call them.

(KATE exits. SAUL continues breakfast preparations. KATE enters.)

KATE, Continued
Yes. They walked her home around midnight. Sally said she was pretty stoned, so they came in with her and said they would hang out if she wanted them to. But Dorianne said she was all right and was going to bed.

SAUL
We better call the police, Kate.

KATE
I don’t know if we want to do that, given our somewhat precarious position with them right now.

SAUL
We can’t worry about that. Something’s happened to her. She didn’t sound like herself last night.

KATE
It will be a long time before Dorianne sounds like herself again. I bet she just got up early and went out for a long bike ride, which is the best thing she could do right now.

SAUL
I don't know. I’m worried.

KATE
Don't worry about Dorianne. She always lands on her feet.

SAUL
We ought to go out and look for her.

KATE
Where are we going to look?
SAUL
The coffeehouses, Ocean Beach, anywhere she might be.

KATE
That’s a wild goose chase, Saul. We could be out looking for her while she’s on her way home. If anything had happened to her, someone would have called us.

SAUL
She feels guilty. So do I. Even if they never find evidence against us, we'll be suspects all our lives.

KATE
That was the chance we took.

SAUL
I wish life were as easy for me as it is for you. When we left our families and practically all our worldly goods, you just got up on my motorcycle, put yours arms around my waist and never looked back. Now, we take the law into our hands, and you go right on playing drums. No doubts. No bad dreams.

KATE
I didn’t do anything wrong. Then or now.

SAUL
I know, but you’re always so sure of yourself.

KATE
Neither decision was easy, Saul. I wrestle with myself. I wrestle hard, but once it comes clear, that’s it. I just do it. Twenty-five years ago, I knew I couldn't live without you, so I didn't have a choice. This time, I knew just as clearly that I couldn't live with myself if I let Andy down.

SAUL
You keep surprising me, Kate.

KATE
But not delighting you.

SAUL
I didn’t say that.

KATE
I do delight you!

SAUL
Well—
KATE
I do! You just can’t say it!

SAUL
Sometimes, I think I don’t know a thing in the world about you.

KATE
I’m going for a swim. Come with me, get to know me better.

SAUL
What about Dorianne?

KATE
We’ll leave a note, tell her to meet us at the pool. As a matter of fact, she might be there.

SAUL
Tell you what, I'll wait for her, and we'll both meet you there.

KATE
You really do love me, Saul?

SAUL
So much that I've wasted an awful lot of time wishing I didn't.

KATE
I'll let that romantic thought warm my lonely laps.

(THEY kiss. KATE exits with swimming gear. SAUL is taking food from the grocery bags when the doorbell rings. HE opens the door. MICHAEL stands in the doorway wearing rumpled jeans and a t-shirt.)

MICHAEL
Hi. Remember me? I was here when Andy had his stroke. I called the ambulance.

SAUL
The cop!

MICHAEL
Right. I'm off duty, now.

SAUL
We already talked to the police.

MICHAEL
I know.

SAUL
We talked to the police almost a whole day.
MICHAEL
Is Dorianne here?

SAUL
What do you want with her?

MICHAEL
I just want to know how she is.

SAUL
How she is?

MICHAEL
She's had a terrible shock.

SAUL
We all have.

MICHAEL
Yeah. (Beat) I...uh...if you want to smoke some grass, feel free.

SAUL
If I...do you want to smoke some grass, officer?

MICHAEL
Well, I...I was here, yesterday. Did Dorianne tell you?

SAUL
No.

MICHAEL
Yesterday afternoon.

SAUL
You...were here?

MICHAEL
Around four or five in the afternoon. Dorianne was...making soup.

SAUL
Yeah?

MICHAEL
Vegetable, lentil soup.

SAUL
Uh-huh.
MICHAEL
I've been up all night.

SAUL
You look a little done in.

MICHAEL
Thinking. Couldn’t sleep. Do you know when Dorianne will be back?

SAUL
No.

MICHAEL
Where can I reach her?

SAUL
I don't know.

MICHAEL
But you saw her last night.

SAUL
Sure, we saw her. We all live here.

MICHAEL
And she was okay?

SAUL
None of us is okay. We've lost part of our lives.

MICHAEL
I want to wait for Dorianne. That okay with you, Saul? I've been up all night.

SAUL
You already told me.

MICHAEL
I'm not the kind of guy who stays up nights, thinking. I do my thinking during the day. Comes time to go to sleep, I sleep.

SAUL
You didn't come here to tell me about your sleeping disorders.

MICHAEL
"No free government can survive that is not based on the supremacy of law." You know where I read that?
SAUL
The Constitution?

MICHAEL
It’s written on the building that houses the United States Attorney General's office in Washington. And, Saul, I believe that. I believe in the supremacy of law.

SAUL
So do I.

MICHAEL
You do?

SAUL
The supremacy of law? Sure.

MICHAEL
U unequivocally.

SAUL
You either believe it or you don't.

MICHAEL
Nothing is as simple as you think it is. Yesterday, my life and the laws I uphold made sense. Today, I'm not sure of anything.

SAUL
That's enough to keep you awake, all right.

MICHAEL
I've never looked at police work as just a job. The way I see it, if we don't enforce the law, we don't have free government.

SAUL
I agree one hundred percent.

MICHAEL
Yeah?

SAUL
Who could disagree?

MICHAEL
Whether to enforce the law is not an open question. It doesn't matter if it's your own child or anyone else.

SAUL
Right.
It isn't as easy as that.

You're the one who can't sleep.

What if the law doesn't make sense? What if there's a set of peculiar circumstances, some glitch that makes it necessary to break the law?

You didn't come to arrest Dorianne?

No! No! I told you! I'm off duty!

What did you and she talk about last night? Why do you want to see her?

She's a remarkable woman. Don't worry. She didn't spill the beans.

We're not hiding anything.

Saul, please. I haven't slept in twenty-four hours. I need a cup of coffee.

You want to smoke some pot?

I'm a law enforcement officer. You could report me if I did.


But you could. And you might want to, because I can't walk away from this and say, Okay, they can get away with murder under these unusual circumstances.

No one's trying to get away with anything.
MICHAEL
I'm talking about an innocent, helpless man, asleep in his bed, given a fatal dose of heroin. If I let that pass, I spit at the law which is like spitting in the eye of free government.

SAUL
I don't know.

MICHAEL
If one person can get away with murder, everybody else can, too.

SAUL
Yeah. Okay.

MICHAEL
I can't do that. You see that I can't walk away.

SAUL
You’ve got to do what you’ve got to do, Man.

MICHAEL
You can’t walk away, either. You either believe in the rule of law or you don't.

SAUL
I believe in it.

MICHAEL
We live in a democratic republic! If we don't respect the rule of law, what do we have? What, Saul? Tell me!

SAUL
Hitler.

MICHAEL
Yes!

SAUL
Stalin.

MICHAEL
Yes!

SAUL
Kate and Dorianne didn't do anything! I did it!

MICHAEL
What...?
I did it.

You gave Andy the overdose of heroin.

Yes.

You did it?

I just said so.

You're confessing?

Who did I think I was, running away on a motorcycle to become a Deadhead at forty-four years of age? I had a family, a circle of friends, a partner in a thriving grocery store. All of a sudden, I'm in love with my brother's wife, and Jerry Garcia is my hero.

You're confessing, Saul?

No one has the right to decide whether a man lives or dies.

Wait a minute. Just a—

Kate and Dorianne are innocent. They didn't know anything about it.

Wait. Wait.

I'm trying to tell you.

Stop! Don't tell me.

We took the law into our hands.
MICHAEL

We.

SAUL

No. I. I did it.

MICHAEL

You said, “we”.

SAUL

I meant, I. They had nothing to do with it.

MICHAEL

You gave Andy an overdose of heroin?

SAUL

How many times do I have to tell you?

MICHAEL

You? Alone?

SAUL

Am I going to be executed?

MICHAEL

No.

SAUL

Life in prison without possibility of parole?

MICHAEL

I think there are extenuating circumstances here.

SAUL

What circumstances? I'm confessing.

MICHAEL

I don't want your confession.

SAUL

What the fuck! You're a policeman!

MICHAEL

I can't arrest anyone, with my head full of questions.

SAUL

I said, I did it. I had no right to take Andy's life into my hands. On the other hand, I owed it to him.
MICHAEL
That doesn’t make sense.

SAUL
If the law doesn’t make sense, and I’m not above the law, that means I don’t have to make sense, right?

MICHAEL
You’re the definition of logic, Saul.

SAUL
What I did for Andy was right. I loved the man. He needed me to help him, and I couldn’t let him down. Go tell that to your rule of law. And I might add that I’d make the same choice today as I did then.

MICHAEL
Help me, Saul. What am I supposed to do?

SAUL
I confessed. That’s as much help as you get from me.

MICHAEL
Coffee. I need a cup of coffee.

SAUL
We don't have coffee. We have herbal tea. Organic apple juice. Organic pear juice—

MICHAEL
Something that will give me a buzz. How about a carrot?

SAUL
A...carrot?

MICHAEL
An organic carrot from your garden.

(SAUL exits to kitchen, enters with a carrot, which MICHAEL eats voraciously.)

MICHAEL
The thing is, Saul....the thing is this: you did not want Andy to die.

SAUL
Of course not! I'm in the worst grief of my life! I can't listen to music. It reminds me of Andy. I can hardly go into a coffee house where he...or walk on the streets where he...this was a friend like no other. More than a friend.

MICHAEL
More than a friend.
SAUL

Yes.

MICHAEL

More than a friend. More than a wife. More than a husband. This carrot is delicious.

SAUL

Thank you. My specialty.

MICHAEL

You grow the carrots?

SAUL

It turned out, over the years, that when I planted the seeds and tended to the carrots, they came out better than when Dorianne or Kate did it. None of us understands it.

MICHAEL

This carrot is more than a carrot, Saul.

SAUL

You want another one?

MICHAEL

Yes and some of the soup Dorianne made yesterday, if you have any left.

SAUL

I’ll warm some up for you.

(SAUL exits to kitchen and moments later enter with another carrot.)

SAUL, Continued

The thing about Dorianne—

MICHAEL

If a man won't let his daughter get away with committing a crime, is he more than a father or less?

SAUL

Whose daughter?

MICHAEL

Less. I suppose you would say he's less than a father.

SAUL

Not your daughter?

MICHAEL

I would have let her go to jail.
SAUL

Your daughter?

MICHAEL

Which makes me less of a father.

SAUL

Your daughter is...in jail?

MICHAEL

She was in love with a guy who was wanted for questioning in a theft. She helped him get across the border into Mexico and she was arrested. I refused to pull strings to get her off, so she was charged and released on bail. My wife sold our stocks, put up the bail money and took Diane to Mexico.

SAUL

Good for her.

MICHAEL

I did what was right, and I'm less than a father and less than a husband.

SAUL

Your own daughter!

MICHAEL

The man was wanted for questioning. She—

SAUL

But you can't let your daughter—

MICHAEL

So, she's above the law, because she's my daughter?

SAUL

You knew that the day she was born.

MICHAEL

That she was above the law?

SAUL

Didn't you?

MICHAEL

I didn't think about it.

SAUL

Powerful love like that, Man!
MICHAEL
It was...something, all right. I guess I—

SAUL
You knew!

MICHAEL
Yeah. Yeah, Saul. I didn’t exactly know what to call it but I guess I...I have twin grandchildren.

SAUL
Twins!

MICHAEL
They look like me! You want to see a picture?

SAUL
Sure.

(MICHAEL takes photo from his wallet, shows it to SAUL.)

SAUL, Continued
They do look like you! Almost as cute as you, Michael.

MICHAEL
Cut it out, huh.

SAUL
Hey, Man.

MICHAEL
My fugitive daughter and her husband are cinematographers, making movies in Mexico. My wife is living with some American ex-patriot. That’s how cute I am.

SAUL
You must be lonely.

MICHAEL
Made my own fucking bed, Saul.

SAUL
I’ll get the soup.

(SAUL exits once again and returns moments later with a bowl of soup. MICHAEL eats gratefully.)

MICHAEL
Andy—
SAUL
Don't eat too fast. Chew the carrot. Don't swallow big chunks. Respect your stomach.

MICHAEL
Respect my—

SAUL
Finish chewing. Then, talk.

MICHAEL
This is the best soup I've ever eaten.

SAUL
In the best of all possible worlds.

MICHAEL
Did Andy tell you he didn't want to live?

SAUL
He had been a man, forgodsake! Suddenly, he was a vegetable – bathed, fed, humiliated, helpless.

(KATE enters.)

SAUL
Don't say a word, Kate! I confessed. You and Dorianne had nothing to do with it.

KATE
You did what?

MICHAEL
No one confessed to anything.

SAUL
He's the policeman from last New Year's Eve. And the one that called the ambulance when Andy had his stroke. I told him I did it alone. You and Dorianne didn't know anything about it.

KATE
Did what?

SAUL
It's too late for that. I told him that I gave Andy an overdose.

KATE
You—
MICHAEL
He didn't tell me anything. I came over to return your pot and...and have a bowl of Dorianne's
lentil soup. If you want to smoke some grass, go ahead. It's okay.

(DORIANNE enters, wearing ANDY'S shirt and beret.)

DORIANNE
(To MICHAEL) What are you...? I was at the police station, looking for you. Arrest me. Go
ahead.

SAUL
You didn't do anything. I already confessed.

DORIANNE
(To MICHAEL) Don't listen to him. He didn't do it. I did.

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes