

Scene 1

BENNY, a man in his forties, sits at the kitchen table watching TV. He has long hair, but it's matted and gnarled into a mass. MA, a woman in her 70's ENTERS from the hallway carrying two full grocery bags. She is addressing someone in the hall.

MA

Yes, Mrs. Heinemann. Yes. Yes, I'll have a talk with him....Of course... I understand. I'll see you later.

MA closes the door with her behind.

MA

Uh! You're going to have to cut your hair. You're scaring the neighbors.

She sets the groceries on the table. She takes out a prescription bottle and squints at the label.

MA

Here. These are yours.

She sets the bottle down in front of BENNY. She begins pulling her own prescription medication out and filling up a large pill planner.
BENNY takes his bottle and tosses it in the trash.

MA

Don't do that! Don't throw them out. Those pills cost a lot of money. Don't take them if you don't want to, but don't insult me by throwing them out!

She pulls the pills out of the trash and sets them on the counter.

MA

I don't know what the hell is wrong with you. Two pills a day. Believe me, two pills is not such a chore. How many pills do I take a day? Eight, sometimes twelve. You don't see me complain.

BENNY

You complain.

MA

Shut up. The point is, I do it. I take the pills because I'm supposed to. I don't waste them.

BENNY

I told you not to buy them.

MA

That would be...that would be... What do they call it? Aiding and abetting. That's not right. Co-dependent. No. What's the word I'm thinking of?

BENNY ignores her, watching TV. She puts groceries away.

MA

You could be well. You could be just as normal as anyone. As me, if you'd take two pills a day.

BENNY

I never felt normal.

MA

You didn't give it a chance.

BENNY

You don't know.

While she talks, she makes two identical sandwiches. As she works she takes a dish rag from a hook by the sink and flings it over her shoulder.

MA

I never should have been so easy on you.... You were always so difficult and I let it slide. Your sisters are right about that. I treated you better. Obviously, a huge mistake. But I will not give in to your unwillingness to help yourself. I won't do it. Fine if you won't take your pills. You can let them sit on a shelf and stare back at you. Remind you that it's no one's fault but your own that you're like this. You know some things they don't have a cure for. Some things they can't fix at all. You at least, you they have medication for, and what do you do? Waste it. Here's your sandwich.

She sets a sandwich in front of him. He picks it up and begins to eat without acknowledging her. MA takes her own sandwich and sits down in her armchair. BENNY gets up, grabs the dish towel off her shoulder and carefully puts it back on the hook,

then returns to his sandwich. MA shakes her head.
Pause. She looks at her sandwich.

MA

Ethelyn Goodman died last night. Stroke. Only 73. You remember her? The one with the bubble voice?

No response, though he does glance over at her.

MA

She's one of my only friends who wasn't afraid of you.

LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK as they eat in silence.