

Iceland

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SETTING: THE APARTMENT OF THE CHADIWICK FAMILY

Character List - Iceland

Max Chadiwick

50ish. male. A failed revolutionary turned technical writer who enjoys strong drink. The father.

Eudora Chadiwick

50ish. female, Max's wife. A stay at home mom with a pill habit and a hazy belief that it's 1957.

Danielle Chadiwick

17, female, the daughter. An anorexia positive hellion who wants to be famous by any means necessary.

Preston Chadiwick

17, male, the son. A troubled young man who finds self empowerment by transforming into a Viking.

Sonja Henie

40ish, female. The 1940's skating sensation and movie star whose spirit lives in the Chadiwick's TV set.

Tad/Jeremy/Doctor Wittgenstein/Viking

Various ages. All these parts are played by a single 20ish male actor.

## 2 Plot Summaries - Iceland

### A Very Brief Summary

A troubled teenager finds empowerment by transforming himself into a Viking with the help of Sonja Henie who lives in the family's TV set.

### A Somewhat Longer Summary

PRESTON is a troubled, questioning youth dealing with all the issues that adolescence brings.

Alas, his loving family isn't as helpful as they could be. His father MAX is a failed revolutionary but an extremely successful tosspot. Mother EUDORA has a serious prescription medication jones and a hazy belief that it's 1957.

Adding to PRESTON's tension level is his sister DANIELLE. She's a 17 year old anorexia positive fashionista with a secret plan to become famous by making a sex tape. This is proving rather difficult because she can't bear to be touched.

Just as things look darkest for our young hero, help arrives in the person of SONJA HENIE. The 40's champion ice skater and movie star appears to him through the TV set and offers a glimmer of hope:

Embrace your inner Viking.

PRESTON agrees, seeking empowerment by assuming the guise of a Nordic pirate.

Difficulties arise as he transforms since even his family, whose concept of sanity is very loosely defined indeed, are considering having him committed. PRESTON is rescued from this dire fate by the timely appearance of his Viking horde and he sails away. In his wake he leaves his parents in a state of pharmaceutically reinforced denial.

The play ends with SONJA merrily calling for DANIELLE, beckoning her to come to the TV set...

ACT I

Scene I

An apartment.

A dining area is stage right, the living room is center. Doors lead off to the entrance and two bedrooms.

Elegant forty years ago, it's now a mite shabby. The space is overcrowded with sundry and odd mementos, books and cartons from various home shopping networks.

Sitting on a couch center stage, grasping a pill container in one hand and a phone in the other is EUDORA CHADIWICK, a middle aged woman.

She is staring at a TV set tuned to a home shopping network. The TV set has been muted. The light from the set illuminates her face.

Long pause.

Suddenly, a bell rings.

EUDORA  
(Urgently, into the phone.)

Yes...yes?

Pause. EUDORA looks at the phone. There is no response.

Yes?

EUDORA

A bell rings. EUDORA stares at the phone.

EUDORA  
(almost in tears)  
Yes? What? What, what, what?

Pause.

The bell rings again. EUDORA tears her attention from the TV and starts to look around frantically.

She spies the medication timer just as it goes off again.

EUDORA

Oh.

She opens the pill container and starts to count out pills.

EUDORA

One. No...two.

(Beat)

Oh...three. Three will be fun. Three is always fun.

She takes the three pills. Long pause. EUDORA seems instantly calmer.

EUDORA

Now...that's better. Huh?

(Beat)

Why, yes it is!

EUDORA arranges herself.

EUDORA

OK now....phone....

(She picks it up carefully)

Phone...check. Now...hmmm...TV. TV....

She searches around on the cluttered coffee table for the remote. Finding it, she juggles the phone, the remote and the pill container for a bit.

EUDORA

Wait, don't need these for a bit now, do I?

She drops the pill container haphazardly on the table.

EUDORA

There.

She stares at the TV set for a moment.

EUDORA

Ok now...now...wait...ah...

(Beat)

Anti-mute!

She presses a button on the remote and much to EUDORA's surprise and pleasure, the audio comes on. It's the voice of a female announcer.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

...why I do believe that's the quickest sellout we've had. A four times the size of life bust of Hermann Goring.

EUDORA

I love his music.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

One hundred and fourteen units sold in twenty seven seconds.

(Beat)

Of course, it's just so practical. This gigantic bust would make a perfect loveseat...

EUDORA

Awww...of course it would....

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

But now, the What Would Jesus Buy network is proud to offer the latest child rearing book by America's teenage tough love expert, the Reverend Dr. Lacey Merriweather Bacon!

EUDORA

Ooooooo....

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Dr. Bacon is the best selling author of several prizewinning books...

EUDORA

She's good...

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

...including "Spare the Rod, Raise a Terrorist" and "Swing and a Miss, Biblical Permissions For Beating your Teenaged Daughter"...

EUDORA

I have those.

(Looks around)

Do I have those?

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

...is today introducing her latest book, exclusively here on WWJB...

EUDORA

Oh!

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

...it's called "The Daddy Hammer, Bringing Fear and Faith to the Teenage Flock."

EUDORA mutes the TV.

EUDORA

Max will want that...

(Picks up the phone)

I would like a copy please. No...two copies...wait...

EUDORA looks at the phone then at the TV for an instant then back at the phone.

EUDORA (cont'd)

Oh. Hmmm...

(Beat)

Right, right...I call them.

The cuckoo clock on the wall chimes. EUDORA turns to face it for a moment. Suddenly the sound of someone coming up the stairs is heard.

Dropping the phone, EUDORA runs into the kitchen. Banging and clattering is heard, growing more intense by the moment.

Just as the footsteps approach the door EUDORA appears dressed in a 50's Donna Reed housewife ensemble. She's holding an elaborate tropical drink and a plate of very fancy looking canapes. EUDORA dashes to the door and puckers up.

The door immediately opens as she steps into place.

MAX enters.

MAX

Why...

(Smiles)

Mrs. Chadiwick...

EUDORA

Mr. Chadiwick.

They kiss chastely. EUDORA offers the drink.

EUDORA (cont'd)

How was your day, Mr. Chadiwick?

MAX slips off his coat, which he kicks into the corner. He takes the drink.

MAX  
Good, Mrs. Chadiwick. Productive.  
(Beat)

I wrote.

EUDORA  
You did?

MAX  
I did.  
(Beat)  
An entire chapter. Chapter 7.

EUDORA  
Concerning?

MAX  
Concerning the proper care, cleaning and maintenance of the  
700 series Samsung DVD/VHS/MP3 player.  
(Beat)  
I was trying to be pithy and bright but at the same time  
convey a gentle wisp of concern for the downtrodden souls who  
make these items.

EUDORA  
No doubt.

MAX  
Afterward I had planned to check the Internet for the  
absolute latest information regarding the condition of the  
laboring classes around the world but...

EUDORA  
But?

MAX  
I fell asleep.  
(Beat. MAX sips his drink.)  
Guava? With an infusion?

EUDORA  
(Happily)  
Yes!

MAX  
Of?

EUDORA  
You can't tell? You can't guess?

MAX  
Well...  
(Beat)  
I can taste the usual assortment of five different rums...



Of course. EUDORA

But... MAX  
(Beat. MAX sips his drink)  
You have perplexed me.

Passion fruit! EUDORA

Amazing. Well done Mrs. Chadiwick. MAX  
(Beat)  
What news of the children?

Ours? EUDORA

Indeed. MAX

Ah... EUDORA  
(Beat. She looks at the clock)  
Home presently.  
(Beat)  
Less than a minute, it appears.

MAX heads to the couch.

Good. MAX  
(Beat)  
I like a consistent regularity.

The front door is opening slowly and quietly. Presently DANIELLE and PRESTON's heads appear.

Well? DANIELLE

Shut up. PRESTON

You shut up. DANIELLE

No you. PRESTON

Are they here or not? DANIELLE

PRESTON  
I don't know, I can't hear. You won't shut up.

DANIELLE  
Shut up.

MAX  
Now what was the quote?

PRESTON  
They're here...

DANIELLE  
Damn!  
(Beat)  
I hate them.

PRESTON  
You hate everyone.

DANIELLE  
So what? I'm a teenage girl. That's my function.

MAX  
Wait, ah yes...  
(beat)  
"Regularity in the hours of rising and retiring, perseverance in exercise, adaptation of dress to the variations of climate, simple and nutritious aliment, and temperance in all things are necessary branches of the regimen of health."

EUDORA  
Who said that?

MAX  
Lord Chesterfield.

EUDORA  
Why?

MAX  
Why?

EUDORA  
Yes why? Why do people say these clever things? Do they have a club? Do they know they are going to get written down? Is there a central clearing house for clever sayings?

DANIELLE  
Oh Good God.

MAX  
I don't know dear. But thank the heavens we have them eh?

EUDORA is moving toward the door,  
unseen by DANIELLE and PRESTON.

The cuckoo clock chimes and EUDORA  
yanks the door open. DANIELLE and  
PRESTON tumble in at her feet.

DANIELLE  
(Hissing)  
Mother!

EUDORA  
(Happily)  
Children...

PRESTON  
(To DANIELLE)  
Get off of me.

They get up off the floor. EUDORA  
attempts to hug DANIELLE.

DANIELLE  
No, no, no, no, no, no, no ...  
(Beat)  
We have discussed this.

MAX  
Dani...  
(Beat)  
Kiss your mother.

EUDORA  
Don't bother yourself with this, Father. It's just a phase...

DANIELLE  
I'm like a fancy store, no touchie!

PRESTON  
(Archly. To DANIELLE)  
Excuse me.

PRESTON hugs EUDORA.

EUDORA  
Ah, that's nice...  
(Beat)  
And how's my little man today?

PRESTON  
Your little man is seventeen, eight inches taller than you  
and struggling to excel in a nightmarish educational system  
that doesn't give a damn about his talents or needs.

DANIELLE  
He said damn. You heard him say damn.

MAX  
Don't curse at your mother, son.

PRESTON  
I was referencing my educational situation, Papa.

DANIELLE  
He said damn.

PRESTON  
Plus, to make things worse, I believe I'm having my first  
existential crisis.

EUDORA  
That's nice dear.  
(Beat)  
Tell us all about it at dinner.

MAX  
Please do. Your mother and I love to hear all about your  
activities.

DANIELLE  
He said damn. You heard him.

MAX  
That's enough Dani, we have ears.  
(Beat)  
Were you planning to greet your mother or not?

DANIELLE  
No hugging. Not hugging. That's so gross. Can't I just wave  
or something? Like a cute Pope?

DANIELLE does a solemn Pope wave.

MAX  
No, that's completely unacceptable. She's your mother not  
your congregation. Now give her a kiss.

DANIELLE  
Ewwwwww.

MAX  
Danielle Delores Chadiwick...

DANIELLE  
(Petulantly)  
Oh alright...  
(Beat)  
But a...Hollywood kiss. Like they do in Hollywood.

EUDORA  
Like movie stars do?

DANIELLE  
Right. See we sort of get our heads close...  
(Beat)  
But not too close...  
(Beat)  
Then you kiss the air, kiss, kiss, kiss and then move your  
head to the other side and repeat...  
(Beat)  
Kiss, kiss, kiss...

EUDORA  
Well isn't that novel. Welcome home dear.

DANIELLE  
Thanks.  
(Waves)  
Papa...

MAX  
(Raises glass)  
Danielle, welcome home dear.

DANIELLE  
Thanks...  
(Beat)  
We done here?

EUDORA  
Done?

DANIELLE  
Finished? Through?  
(Beat. Then testily)  
May I go to my room please?

EUDORA  
Of course.  
(Beat)  
We'll be having dinner in a bit.

DANIELLE  
Great.

DANIELLE exits into her room, slamming  
the door.

MAX  
Does she seem a little...moody?

PRESTON  
No Papa, not really. Her major issue is that she's just a complete bitch.

MAX  
Prez, don't curse at your mother.

PRESTON  
I wasn't cursing at Mama.

EUDORA  
I thought I heard the B word...

PRESTON  
And my name is not Prez. I am not a Prez. Call me Press. Press. How many times have I asked you that?

MAX  
Press?  
(Beat)  
As in to act upon with steadily applied force?

PRESTON  
Yes.

EUDORA  
Not Preston?

PRESTON  
No!  
(Beat)  
Press. I like it. It's a good name. A strong name. A man's name. Just call me that please. Like I've asked you a bazillion times before.

MAX  
Ah...  
(Beat)  
Speaking of which...  
(Beat. Then to EUDORA)  
Darling, could you excuse us for a moment please?

EUDORA  
Oh...mantalk, eh? OK. I need to get dinner ready anyway.

PRESTON  
Oh God...

EUDORA exits to the kitchen.

PRESTON  
Yes...?

MAX  
I was wondering. Just pondering really. In an idle manner...

PRESTON  
What?

MAX  
Well, for instance, if you were looking at, say, a Victoria Secret's catalog...

PRESTON  
Huh?

MAX  
Do you think that you'd be more interested in the comely young women contained within or maybe, perhaps, the undergarments themselves?

PRESTON  
What?

MAX  
I've just been wondering...

PRESTON  
Exactly what are you trying to say?

MAX  
A father does start to wonder when his son turns your age and doesn't appear to be interested in...

PRESTON turns on his heel and marches toward the door to his room. Suddenly he turns to MAX.

PRESTON  
Ok. OK. Since you asked, since you're so interested, when I look at a Victoria's Secret catalog I don't notice the girls or the undergarments...

MAX  
No?

PRESTON  
No.

(Beat)  
You see I am busy in my mind translating the text into Serbo-Croatian.

(Beat)  
In my mind. In my head.

(Beat)  
Any other questions?

PRESTON exits into his room, slamming  
the door.

EUDORA enters from the kitchen.

EUDORA

So how did that go?

MAX

I'm not sure really.

(Beat)

Although he appears to be interested in languages.

EUDORA

That's good huh? You can do a lot with languages. You can go  
far.

(Beat)

Another aperitif, my darling?

MAX

Please...

(Pause)

Is it me or do the children seem a mite quarrelsome today?

EUDORA

Just let it go dear, they're teenagers.

(Beat)

It's a phase...

Blackout

END Scene 1



Scene 2

The family is eating dinner.

MAX has a large tiki bowl drink in front of him. EUDORA is eating daintily from a plate obscured by pill bottles. DANIELLE is pushing food around her plate while occasionally stuffing some under her napkin. Stacked next to her is a large and odd assortment of gossip magazines.

PRESTON looks preoccupied and stares into the middle distance.

MAX

(To EUDORA)

My darling, you have outdone yourself.

EUDORA

Thank you.

MAX

What is the name of this splendid feast?

EUDORA

It's called a Holiday Cheese Meat log.

DANIELLE gags a bit and starts shoveling more food under her napkin.

EUDORA (cont'd)

I found the recipe in an old LIFE magazine. 1953 I think.

MAX

Apparently a very good year.

DANIELLE

A good year? A good year? For what, cardiac arrests? It's all meat and cheese fat.

MAX

But good.

DANIELLE

Are you trying to kill me?

PRESTON

Who would want to do that?

(Staring at the food lumped  
under her napkin)

You're doing such a fine job yourself.

DANIELLE

Shut up.

PRESTON

(Indicating the lump under the  
napkin)

What is this thing you're constructing? Some sort of food  
igloo?

DANIELLE

Shut up, Mister Sexually Confused.

(looking at the food pile)

God I wish we had a dog.

MAX

We have a cat.

PRESTON

Had.

EUDORA

Well he's a cat.

Lights come up on the bookcase where  
HENRY sits. Stuffed. The family turns  
and glares at him.

DANIELLE

Except he's, well, sorta dead.

MAX

It's better this way. He liked to run away.

DANIELLE

Fat lot of good he's doing me like that. I wish we had a dog.

PRESTON

To eat your meals for you?

DANIELLE

Bite me.

EUDORA is sorting though her  
medications.

EUDORA

Hmmmm? Preston?

PRESTON

Press.

EUDORA

What did you mean, dear?

PRESTON

Let's just say that Dani thinks the orange powder at the bottom of a Cheetos bag is a major food group.

MAX

It's not?

DANIELLE

Excuse me. I like to be shapely. I like to be fashionable. Admittedly...I'm a picky eater.

(PRESTON snorts)

You don't get to judge me, Prez. Is it wrong to want to be popular and fun to be around?

PRESTON

Fun to be around?

(Beat)

Dani, you're a total bitch.

DANIELLE

Some guys like that.

(Beat)

But I'm not shuffling around all day moaning about life and meaning. I have goals and dreams.

PRESTON

Oh you mean like to be five pounds soaking wet?

DANIELLE

Oooooo value judgements from a guy with no girlfriend, no friends at all really, who spends way too much time in the stands mooning over the football players.

(Beat)

Right Prez?

PRESTON

Press...

DANIELLE

A manly name for a manly fellow. Football players like that.

PRESTON

Cut it out. I am not gay. How is it that all of a sudden everyone thinks I'm gay?

MAX

(looking up from his plate)

So you're gay?

PRESTON

No.

MAX  
It's fine son, your mother and I are fully accepting modern  
parents...

PRESTON  
I'm not gay.

DANIELLE  
(Smirking)  
You're so brave Prez. Coming out can be difficult...

PRESTON  
Press, Press, PRESS. And get this straight you. And everyone.  
All of you. I-AM-NOT-GAY. Got that? I-AM-NOT-GAY.

Long pause. Eventually EUDORA looks up  
from the table where she has been  
arraigning her medications carefully.

EUDORA  
Who's gay?

PRESTON  
I give up.

EUDORA  
Oh.

MAX  
Then, son, how would you define yourself, if I may ask?

PRESTON  
Cautious.

EUDORA  
Well I'm glad that's settled. Who's for dessert?

EUDORA heads toward the kitchen.

DANIELLE  
Dessert...  
(Beat. Then stretching out the  
words)

Desssssss-ert.  
(Beat, Then brightly.)  
Why Mother dear, I do believe I am full up.

PRESTON  
You're full up?

DANIELLE  
Yes.

PRESTON

On what exactly, Miss Anorexia Positive of the Year?

MAX

Do have some dessert baby girl. A revolutionary has to get her nourishment wherever she can. You never know when you will get called to the jungle to organize the people in an armed revolt against their oppressors.

DANIELLE

What?

MAX

You are looking a mite thin.

DANIELLE

So Papa...

MAX

Yes dear?

DANIELLE

(Brightly)

At the end of long day spent fomenting revolution, what do you think Che's favorite cocktail was?

PRESTON stifles a giggle.

MAX

Oh. Well...hm.

(Beat)

I do believe rum would be it eh? Running around near the equator, busy all day with social justice, a revolutionary builds up a powerful thirst. So rum I believe.

(Beat)

But I'll go look it up.

MAX leaves the table, taking his drink with him.

DANIELLE

(To PRESTON)

Viva la revolucion!

They laugh.

EUDORA enters from the kitchen carrying a tray of little orange jack o' lantern heads.

EUDORA

Dessert!

EUDORA passes the tray to PRESTON. He and DANIELLE look at the dessert dubiously.

Ummmm...huh....  
PRESTON

What is that, Mother?  
DANIELLE

These are iced pumpkin blondies, dear. Try one.  
EUDORA

(Pause)  
And it's shaped like a little pumpkin head why?  
DANIELLE

Because it's May. The traditional little pumpkin head season.  
PRESTON

What's in it?  
DANIELLE

Brown sugar, cream cheese, little colored sugar bits for the eyes and such...  
EUDORA

Oh god...  
DANIELLE

And lots and lots of butter.  
EUDORA

DANIELLE starts to retch.

Bon appetit.  
PRESTON  
(To DANIELLE)

MAX returns to the table with a large book.

Nothing yet but I'll keep looking.  
MAX

For?  
PRESTON

Favorite revolutionary cocktail recipes.  
MAX

(Beat)  
Oh darling, these look scrumptious. What are they?

EUDORA  
Iced pumpkin blondies.

MAX  
Brilliant. How do you do it? I'll have two dear.

DANIELLE  
Two? Just looking at them makes my arteries want to explode.  
And another thing, Mother, where's the pumpkin? And what the  
hell is a blondie?

MAX  
(looking at book)  
Hmmm? What dear?

EUDORA  
Mouth. You. Mouth.

Pause.

DANIELLE glares at her plate while the  
others eat. She then picks up the  
blondie and slides it under her napkin.  
The pile under her napkin is quite tall  
and substantial.

DANIELLE  
Done.

EUDORA  
Another dear?

DANIELLE  
Can't, can't, can't...gotta get ready. Tad's coming over.

MAX  
Tad?

DANIELLE  
Yes, Tad.

EUDORA  
He seems nice.

DANIELLE  
You've never met him, Mother.

MAX  
Then see? He starts with a clean slate with us. Wasn't that  
easy?

PRESTON  
(serving DANIELLE)  
Oh do have another.

I insist. (Beat)

Thank you. (Grimly) DANIELLE

EUDORA  
So you two young people are studying tonight, Dani?

DANIELLE  
Yes Mother...studying.

DANIELLE deftly palms the blondie and gets up from the table

Done. DANIELLE (cont'd)

DANIELLE moves behind PRESTON.

Seconds, brother dear? DANIELLE (cont'd)

DANIELLE slams the blondie into the side of PRESTON's head. It hangs there.

PRESTON sits there with a hangdog expression on his face.

DANIELLE exits with a smile.

EUDORA  
What was that? Was that another earthquake?

MAX  
(Looking at the book)  
Or that damn cat?

A light goes up on HENRY on the bookshelf. The family turns and glares at him.

EUDORA  
Mouth. Mouth. Mouth.

MAX  
My darling, I apologize.

EUDORA  
(Sweetly)  
Accepted, of course.



MAX  
I love you darling.

EUDORA  
I love you sweet prince.

They blow kisses to each other then return to their own worlds on either end of the table.

PRESTON looks at them incredulously.

PRESTON  
What about me?

MAX  
Hmmm?

PRESTON  
Me. Your son. "Oh Press, what are you up to this evening, good son?"

EUDORA  
Well dear, we just assumed you were going to spend the evening in your room doing what you always do.

PRESTON  
Oh? Such as?

MAX  
Sulking and scheming. Plus some homework, we hope.

PRESTON  
(Snidely)  
Wow, you've got me pegged.

MAX  
It is a foolish parent who does not know his own child.

PRESTON  
What does that mean?

MAX  
It's just one of those vaguely wise things parents say to make their teenage children go...Huh?

EUDORA  
We have all sorts of techniques like that.

MAX  
Because...that's how we roll.

PRESTON  
That's how you roll?

EUDORA  
Yes, dear. We roll mad deep...  
(beat)  
Yo...

PRESTON  
Could someone at this table say something that contains,  
maybe, just the slightest hint of something rational or sane?  
(Beat)  
Seriously...

MAX  
Probably not.  
(Beat. Holds up glass)  
I've had a very too many of these....

EUDORA  
(Hazily)  
I'm sorry...what dear?  
(Beat)  
Another blondie?

MAX  
They're so good. I'll eat it if Prez doesn't want it.

PRESTON looks back and forth between  
his parents, his expression a mix of  
rage and despair.

Pause.

PRESTON  
Do you ever get up in the morning and take a deep breath and  
wonder...why am I here? Do you ever stand in the shower and  
say to yourself what does it all mean? Ever walk to school or  
work and want something? Something different? Something  
better?

(Beat)  
Something like...anything but what I am now?  
(Beat)

I can barely get up out of bed in the morning anymore. These  
things, these issues are like giant stone pillars. Like those  
Easter Island statues. They loom over me. Sometimes I think  
my mind is crumbling, these pillars are crumbling and that  
they are going to fall down and crush me.

DANIELLE enters and listens.

PRESTON (cont'd)  
I feel like I'm not strong enough to fight anymore. I'm  
teetering on the edge of the cliff, circling the drain, going  
down for the third time.  
(Beat)  
And I feel like there's not a thing I can do about it.

Pause.

MAX

Good son.

(Beat)

I'm glad we had this talk...

EUDORA

Honey...

PRESTON

Did either of you hear a single thing I just said?

MAX

Yes.

(Beat)

Statues make you uneasy. I'm sorry.

EUDORA

Honey, it's just a phase...

Pause.

PRESTON

Yes, I see that now. Very clearly...

PRESTON drives his forehead into his dessert plate. He pauses there for a second, then turns his head to the side and does the same. Finally he turns again and finishes coating his head, banging his head against the plate repeatedly.

He stops.

EUDORA

(Not looking up)

Ah Prez, I'm glad you enjoyed your dinner.

PRESTON

It was delicious. Thank you.

(Beat)

May I be excused from the table?

MAX

(Not looking up)

Of course son.

The lights fade on the dining room table as EUDORA and MAX start to clear the table. PRESTON staggers grimly to the living room where DANIELLE is splayed out dramatically on the sofa.

DANIELLE  
It's...over. It's over. I'm not going to make it. I'm  
circling the drain, headed to oblivion with the dirty  
dishwater and the baby too! Save me. Help, help, help!  
(DANIELLE laughs)  
You are pathetic.

PRESTON sits down heavily on the couch.  
He stares straight ahead.

PRESTON  
Thank you for your support.

DANIELLE  
I like your new hair product. It smells...  
(Beat)  
Pumpkiny...

PRESTON  
Great.

DANIELLE  
Alright Prez, listen...

PRESTON  
Press!  
(PRESTON makes a weight lifting  
motion)  
PRESS!

DANIELLE  
Whatever....  
(Beat)  
Look here now. You've got to get a grip. Just face the truth  
about yourself and you'll feel better. The dam will break and  
the truth will set you free.

PRESTON  
What? What the hell are you talking about?

DANIELLE  
Two things really.

PRESTON  
What? What things?

DANIELLE  
First, come out of the closet.

PRESTON  
What?

DANIELLE  
Just come on out of the wardrobe, big boy.

I'm not gay.

PRESTON

Oh?

DANIELLE

No.

PRESTON

Not gay?

DANIELLE

NO.

PRESTON

Everyone thinks you're gay...

DANIELLE

Oh really? Well everyone thinks you're a raging annie positive bitch.

PRESTON

DANIELLE

(Smiles)

No they don't. And you know they don't.

(Beat)

It's ok for young girls to be thin. Society likes that. And as for my alleged bitchness, well...

DANIELLE doubles over, holding her tummy and wincing.

DANIELLE

(Dramatically.)

I'm...I'm having my period...

(Beat. Then with a wail.)

Why can't you understand that?

PRESTON laughs in spite of himself.

PRESTON

You've been having your period steadily for the last four years.

DANIELLE

Yup. Everyday.

(Beat)

Well not really. It stopped when I hit 95 pounds but just the idea of menstruating is a powerful, powerful weapon to use against the opposite sex.

DANIELLE thrust her pelvis in PRESTON's direction.

DANIELLE (cont'd)  
Feel my devastating power! Zing!  
(Beat, Then grinning)  
It's great. Especially against straight men. You can  
literally get away with anything. Gay men...well...they just  
want to see you suffer.

PRESTON  
95 pounds?  
(Beat)  
Dani...

DANIELLE  
90 is my goal.  
(Beat)  
Stop looking at me all scrunchie concerned face, Mr. Suicidal  
Depressive. I'm only going to 90.  
(Beat)  
Besides which, we are talking about you.

PRESTON  
(Wearily)  
Yeah, right...

DANIELLE  
And second...you need a plan.

PRESTON  
I do?

DANIELLE  
Yup.

PRESTON  
So...

DANIELLE  
Yes?

PRESTON  
Do you have a plan?

DANIELLE  
Of course I have a plan. A secret plan.

PRESTON  
Why?

DANIELLE  
A goal. A dream. You have to have one, it brings meaning to  
life.  
(Beat)  
"I have a dream today..."

PRESTON  
Doctor MLK. The man.

DANIELLE  
Yup. But my plan is better.

PRESTON  
You have a better plan than world wide peace and tolerance?

DANIELLE  
Well...yeah. A plan I need a gay brother for.

PRESTON  
Huh?

DANIELLE  
Ok, just a gay guy in general really. To head my posse. I gotta have a crew, right? And a gay brother would be so cool.

Pause.

PRESTON  
Now I just want to get this straight.

DANIELLE  
So to speak.

PRESTON  
You want me to be gay because it will fit into your secret plan?

DANIELLE  
Exactly.

PRESTON  
(Pause)  
I am losing the will to live.

DANIELLE  
See? You have no goal, no over arching dream. No secret plan. You are adrift. I feel for you, I really do.

PRESTON  
Great...

Pause.

DANIELLE  
So...

PRESTON  
So?

DANIELLE  
This is where you say, voice really down low... "So  
Dani...what's the secret plan?"

PRESTON  
I honestly and truly do not want to know. Ever.

DANIELLE  
Nice.

(Beat)  
Then get out. I need to use the living room.

PRESTON  
For?

DANIELLE  
Tad's coming over.

PRESTON  
Oooooo.

DANIELLE  
Get out.

PRESTON  
Let me guess, some sinister part of the secret plan?

DANIELLE  
Mister, everything is part of the secret plan.  
(Beat)  
And don't you forget it.

BLACKOUT

End Scene 2



Scene 3 - An hour later

DANIELLE is scurrying about, setting up a video camera pointed at the couch. The couch is framed in the TV set. There are also 2 small video lights arranged artfully around the couch.

They are off.

DANIELLE is dressed in a cute color coordinated skin tight outfit that covers her neck to ankle.

She is making last minute adjustments in the mirror when MAX enters. He is wearing a gaudy robe with an embarrassingly dramatic portrait of Che Guevera rendered in satin on the back.

MAX  
So where is this young man?

DANIELLE  
Daddy!

MAX  
Baby girl?

DANIELLE  
Please, if you don't mind...

MAX  
Not at all. I just want to meet this lucky young fellow.

DANIELLE  
We're doing homework. You're not giving me in marriage to the village chieftain for 10 goats.

MAX  
Only 10?

DANIELLE  
Do you mind? Please...

MAX  
Ah, like go away, you old embarrassment?

DANIELLE  
Exactly.

MAX  
Danielle!

DANIELLE

You said it, not me.

MAX

Still, a little respect if you please. I am the paterfamilias.

DANIELLE

Daddy, you are completely tanked and dressed like you're a member of some sort of revolutionary Las Vegas chorus line.

MAX

I'll have you know that this robe was crafted for me by the Orphaned Blind Children's Revolutionary Collective of Muy Muy, Nicaragua.

DANIELLE

Right...

(Beat)

Pick that up on your last organizing visit to the mountain highlands, did you?

MAX

No. Internet.

(Beat)

It's easier.

DANIELLE

And the orphans take Master Card?

MAX

Well, all major cards really I'm sure...

DANIELLE

(Muttering)

Viva la revolucion...

PRESTON enters from his room.

PRESTON

(Snidely)

For your information, I am currently wrestling with calculus homework and calculus is winning, three falls to none. Do you think you two could keep your father daughter bonding down to a dull roar?

(Beat)

I mean, as touching as this intergenerational display is and all.

DANIELLE

Oh God! Shut up Prez...

MAX  
(To PRESTON)  
Merely fulfilling my paternal responsibility. Someday, my son, you will see...

DANIELLE  
Mother!

As they talk over one another and squabble, the TV set clicks on.

The picture, in black and white, looks like it is coming from the 40's. On the screen a blond woman skates a lazy circle. She skates up to the camera, stops sharply and smiles.

SONJA  
(With a Norwegian accent)  
Preston...

PRESTON  
(To DANIELLE)  
What?  
(Beat)  
What did you say?

DANIELLE  
Nothing. I didn't say anything to you.  
(Beat)  
You two need to go, Tad is coming and you two need to get out..

SONJA  
Preston...  
(Beat)  
God dag a du!

PRESTON  
(To DANIELLE)  
Did you just say "goddam you" to me?

DANIELLE  
No...

MAX  
Children...

DANIELLE  
(Furiously)  
Mother!

EUDORA enters.

EUDORA  
What what what is going on here?

SONJA is spinning and gliding about on  
the screen.

SONJA  
Preston, God dag a du!

The family is arguing. PRESTON starts  
to stare at the TV set.

EUDORA  
Ms. Danielle Chadiwick. Mouth, mouth, mouth on you.

DANIELLE  
I didn't say anything!

MAX  
Now baby girl, I heard you.

DANIELLE  
You did not. You did not! I didn't say anything...

As the rest of the family argues,  
PRESTON slowly approaches the TV set,  
entranced. He stares at the picture on  
the screen.

SONJA  
Preston!

PRESTON  
(Slowly)  
Yes?

SONJA  
(Merrily)  
God dag a du!

PRESTON  
What?

SONJA  
God dag a du.  
(Beat)  
Hello to you.  
(Beat)  
Hello to you, Preston. Hello to you.

SONJA skates and twirls happily.

PRESTON  
God dag a du...

SONJA giggles.

MAX approaches PRESTON, who is crouched  
in front of the TV.

MAX

Son, what are you ...

The TV clicks off.

PRESTON

Wait... (To TV)

MAX

What, son?

PRESTON

Nothing...

EUDORA

Alright now, Dani, enough fuss potting...

DANIELLE

I didn't say anything!

The door bell rings.

EUDORA

Now Dani...

DANIELLE

That's Tad, that's Tad!

(Beat)

Get out! Get the hell out. Now.

EUDORA

Mouth!

MAX

Ladies now...

DANIELLE

Out!

PRESTON is still staring at the TV.

PRESTON

Dani, do you mind if I just sit here for a bit...

DANIELLE

Yes, I do mind.

And wait?  
PRESTON  
The doorbell rings again.  
DANIELLE  
Daddy!  
MAX  
Now...  
EUDORA  
(To MAX)  
You should discipline your daughter, the mouth on her...  
MAX  
Family, silence.  
(Beat)  
Silence.  
(They quiet down.)  
Your paterfamilias will rule now. Danielle is entertaining  
her young man in the living room...  
(To PRESTON)  
Ergo, you are going to your room.  
PRESTON  
Ergo?  
MAX  
Indeed. Go. Now.  
(Beat. Then to EUDORA)  
As for you my dear, to the bedchamber...quick march...  
EUDORA  
Ooo I love it when you're forceful, Commandante M...  
MAX  
Head off to base camp, revolutionary. Time for a little  
reeducation...  
EUDORA  
Ooooooo...  
Eudora exits.  
DANIELLE  
Oh God...ewww...  
The doorbell rings again.  
DANIELLE (cont'd)  
(Loudly, To the door)  
I'll be right there!

(Beat. To MAX)  
Daddy, daddy puleeze....

DANIELLE moves to the door.

MAX  
OK, OK...I'm off.  
(Beat)  
Remember to be reproductively responsible...

DANIELLE  
Go!

MAX  
Right, right...

MAX exits.

DANIELLE  
(Beat)  
As for you...

PRESTON  
Dani...

DANIELLE  
What?

PRESTON  
There...there's a blonde lady in the TV set.

DANIELLE grabs PRESTON by the ear and pulls him bodily to the door of his room.

DANIELLE  
Uh-huh. Right.

PRESTON  
And she's like, like Swedish or something.

DANIELLE throws him into his room.

DANIELLE (cont'd)  
Freak. Get some help.

DANIELLE arranges herself as she rushes to the door. She flings it open dramatically. TAD is standing there. He's a somewhat handsome high school jock boy.

DANIELLE (cont'd)  
Hi!

Yo. TAD  
(Beat)  
Got your note.

DANIELLE  
The one from your locker?

TAD  
Yup.

DANIELLE  
What did you think?

TAD  
Hot.  
(Beat)  
Nasty hot.

DANIELLE  
Yeah?

TAD takes a step toward DANIELLE.

TAD  
Yeah. So Darlene, what's up?

DANIELLE takes a step back.

DANIELLE  
Danielle.

TAD  
Who?

DANIELLE  
Me.

TAD  
You what?

DANIELLE  
I'm Danielle.

TAD  
Oh.  
(Beat)  
Whatever.  
(Beat)  
So what you got in mind baby?

Pause.



DANIELLE tries to strike a seductive pose.

Whatta you think? DANIELLE

About? TAD

Me... DANIELLE

Oh... TAD

Hot. Kinda skinny. But hot. (Beat)

Cool. DANIELLE

Yeah. TAD

TAD takes a step toward DANIELLE.

So uh, what's on your mind, beautiful. TAD (cont'd)

DANIELLE takes a step back.

A project. DANIELLE

A cool project... (Beat. Then huskily)

TAD takes a step toward DANIELLE.

Like...? TAD

DANIELLE waves her hand toward the couch and camera setup.

Like that. DANIELLE

Ummm...what? Video? TAD

DANIELLE takes a step forward.

DANIELLE  
Not a video. A movie...  
(Beat. Then seductively.)  
A porn movie.

TAD  
(Amazed)  
You're kidding.

DANIELLE  
Nope. Not at all.

TAD  
You and me?

DANIELLE  
Oh yeah.

TAD  
I gotta know...  
(Beat)  
I gotta know why.

DANIELLE  
Part of my secret plan.

TAD  
Which is?

DANIELLE  
A secret.

TAD  
Wow. Cool.  
(Beat)  
Never met a chick with a secret plan before.

Pause.

DANIELLE  
Trust me, we all have them.  
(Beat)  
So?  
(Beat)  
You in or what?

TAD  
Yeah. Hell yeah...

DANIELLE  
Ex-cell-ent. Then let's get started huh? Shirt off, on the couch.

TAD whips his shirt off and lays down.

Ready.

TAD

DANIELLE switches on the video lights and checks the focus on the camera.

Tad's image appears on the TV set in a head and shoulders shot.

Looking good...

DANIELLE

DANIELLE pulls her top down so that her shoulders are bare then launches herself on top of TAD.

PRESTON peers out of his bedroom door.

Holy shit. Holy shit!

PRESTON

Ok start.

DANIELLE

What?

TAD

Grinding and looking hot. Like this...

DANIELLE starts doing an elaborate pantomime of sexual ecstasy.

What are you doing?

TAD

Acting. C'mon and help me. Start.

DANIELLE

Well, how about a kiss?

TAD

No.

DANIELLE

No?

TAD

I don't kiss.

DANIELLE

What?

TAD

DANIELLE  
No kissing. It's disgusting.

(Beat)  
Now lets get to work here.

TAD  
Like sex, right?

DANIELLE  
Sex?

TAD  
Yeah.

DANIELLE  
Eww...God no.  
(Beat)  
What's the matter with you anyway?

TAD jumps up from the couch, leaving  
DANIELLE in a heap.

TAD  
The matter with me? What the hell is up with you? You ask me  
over here saying I'm gonna get some and I find out you're  
doing some sort of weird ass video show.

(Beat)  
What the hell is going on here?

DANIELLE  
(Defiantly)  
I am making a porn movie.

TAD  
Porn movies have sex in them.

DANIELLE  
It's called acting. Pretend. Ever heard of it? Acting.  
(Beat)  
Now let's get back to work. First positions please.

TAD  
I've got a first position for you...

TAD gets atop DANIELLE and kisses her  
forcibly. DANIELLE smacks him about the  
head. Watching his sister struggle,  
PRESTON enters from his room and pulls  
TAD off her.

The three of them stare at each other  
for a long moment, PRESTON obviously  
gunned up for a fight.

Thinking twice about it, TAD pulls on his shirt.

TAD

Stay away from me, just stay away from me. At school, on the street, in the whole damn universe. I don't know you, I don't want to know you. This never happened.

(Beat)

Freak...

TAD exits.

DANIELLE, in tears, sits up.

PRESTON

What was that...

DANIELLE

Ah...

DANIELLE starts to cry quietly.

PRESTON

Hey...

PRESTON comforts her. DANIELLE eventually collects herself.

DANIELLE

My brave warrior. Thank you.

PRESTON

Sure.

(Beat)

So...uh...what was that about?

DANIELLE

The plan. That was the plan or what used to be the plan. Now all ashes.

PRESTON

The secret plan.

DANIELLE

Yup.

PRESTON

Which was...what exactly?

DANIELLE

Porn.

(Beat)

Make a sex tape. Release sex tape.

(Beat)

Be famous.

(Beat)

Be happy...

PRESTON

A sex tape? Dani, you hate being touched...

DANIELLE

Ummm yeah, there is that. But I was working a sort of acting thing. Pretend, staged.

(Beat)

Tad didn't quite get that part.

PRESTON

No, he didn't.

DANIELLE

So now I need a new plan. But I'm tired now. Really tired.

(Beat)

I'm going to bed.

PRESTON

Dani?

DANIELLE

Yeah?

PRESTON

That's what you want? To be famous?

DANIELLE

That's all I want.

PRESTON

Why?

DANIELLE

Cause it's better than this.

PRESTON

Than what?

DANIELLE

Than this. Here. This place. And everything else too. I don't want my life to be invisible. And make no mistake about it, if you aren't famous nowadays, you are invisible. So...I've got to take my shot. And, frankly, I don't have a lot to offer...

PRESTON  
Now...

DANIELLE  
I'm cute. I'm thin. That's about it.

PRESTON  
Wait. That's not true.

DANIELLE  
No?

PRESTON  
You're...fashionable. You know about clothes and girl stuff and who designed what...

DANIELLE  
Yeah. Fat lot of good it does me.  
(Beat)  
Good night.

PRESTON  
Dani, you know what?

DANIELLE  
What?

PRESTON  
I want stuff too.

DANIELLE  
Yeah?

PRESTON  
I want...  
(Beat)  
I want to be powerful. I want to be confident. I want to be done being a teenager.

DANIELLE  
Me too.  
(Beat)  
And Press, you are confident.

PRESTON  
Huh?

DANIELLE  
You chased Tad out of here didn't you? He backed right down when he saw how mad you were.

PRESTON  
He did, didn't he?

Yup.

DANIELLE

I want...

PRESTON

(Beat)

I want to feel like that all the time. Every day for the rest of my life.

(Beat)

But I don't know how...

The TV set flickers on. Silent static appears on the screen.

DANIELLE leans over the couch and gives PRESTON a peck on the cheek.

DANIELLE

I really hope you find out. I wish I could.

(Beat)

Good night.

As DANIELLE starts to exit. SONJA appears on the TV set. PRESTON sits transfixed for a moment.

Dani...we

PRESTON

DANIELLE exits.

SONJA

Preston!

(Beat)

God dag a du!

PRESTON

Hello.

SONJA

Hello to you.

PRESTON

Um...who are you?

SONJA

(Giggles)

I am Sonja.

PRESTON

And why are you in the TV set?

SONJA

Because it is a good way to get your attention, no?



PRESTON  
Yeah. Yeah it is.  
(Beat)  
And why...

SONJA  
So many questions...

SONJA skates a lazy circle.

SONJA (cont'd)  
I am Sonja, I am a skating Sonja, I am a famous skating  
Sonja.

PRESTON  
Really? Hmmm...

PRESTON grabs a laptop and goes online.

PRESTON (cont'd)  
(Typing)  
Sonja, skating...  
(Pause)  
Wow...

SONJA  
Be om tilgivelse meg? (Excuse me?)

PRESTON  
You're like...a star. A superstar.

SONJA  
Ja...

PRESTON  
A skating star, a...a...three time Olympic champion and a ten  
time World Champion.  
(Beat)  
And a movie star...

SONJA  
That's me.

PRESTON  
But it also says here that you were obsessed by money and sex  
and had a vile temper.

SONJA  
Ja. What may I say? It is true. I was a driven person. But  
that was a long time ago.

PRESTON  
And it also says you're...

MAX enters staggering sleepily to the bathroom.

PRESTON

Hi Dad.

MAX

You're up late.

PRESTON

I'm talking to an ice skating Norwegian lady who's in the TV set.

MAX

That's nice, son.

MAX exits.

PRESTON

It says here that you're dead.

SONJA

I am. It happens. It will happen to you someday.

PRESTON

So when you die...

MAX enters.

MAX

Get some sleep son.

PRESTON

Hey Dad, the lady in the TV set? She's dead.

MAX

That's nice son. Good night.

MAX exits.

PRESTON

So when you die you go into a TV set?

SONJA

(Giggles)

No, Preston. It is much more complex than that, silly boy.

PRESTON

Yeah?

SONJA

Ja.

PRESTON  
How? Tell me...

SONJA  
Nei, nei, nei. (No, no, no)  
(Beat)

Everyone enters the mystery their own way. As I did. As you will.

Pause.

PRESTON  
So that's it isn't it? You've come to claim me.  
(Beat)  
I'm going to die...

SONJA  
Nei.

PRESTON  
This is so unfair! I'm 17, I haven't even lived yet. How could you do this to me?

SONJA  
Nei.

PRESTON  
Please don't do this, I beg you. Please....

SONJA  
Shhhh, shhhh, ung ettall. (young one)  
(Beat)  
Calm now, calm please. Here...do this please.

SONJA places both hands over her mouth.

PRESTON watches her for a long moment then imitates her.

SONJA (cont'd)  
That is good.  
(Beat)  
Preston, dum gutt (silly boy), you are not going to die. I am here to help you live.

PRESTON  
What...how...?

SONJA clamps her hand back over her mouth. PRESTON immediately does the same.

SONJA  
Because, you called me here. I hear you through all of everything and said here is a boy who wishes to be better. To be more, to be a man. To be...as good as a man can be.

PRESTON  
Which is what? What?

Pause

SONJA  
(Grandly)  
En Viking.

PRESTON  
A Viking?

SONJA  
Yes, en Viking...

PRESTON  
A Viking....

SONJA  
Strong, powerful, faithful. Self sufficient. Nordic masters of the sea. Sons of the god Thor.

(Beat)  
A man could do worse.

(Beat)  
Ligne en Viking, Preston. Be like a Viking

PRESTON  
That would be so...cool. A Viking.

(Beat)  
But they were raiders too. Plunderers. They were fearsome warriors. They were respected. And feared...

SONJA  
Ja.

PRESTON  
I want to be a Viking.

SONJA  
Nei, Preston, Nei. Ligne en Viking. Like a Viking Preston. Be like a Viking. Be brave. You are a Vik, one who lurks in a bay or an inlet in order to attack...

PRESTON  
Attack?

SONJA  
Ja, a Viking is a...what do you say them as? A...pirate.

PRESTON

(Beat)  
Yes. That is me. That is me now. I want to be a Viking, A  
Vik, a pirate.

PRESTON leans in to the TV screen.

PRESTON (cont'd)

But how?

SONJA

We start liten, we start little.

PRESTON

How?

SONJA

You must start to act like a Viking, Preston. How would a  
Viking act? If you were a Viking and you are also Preston,  
how would you act?

PRESTON

I would act....brave.

SONJA

Ja, good start.

(Beat)  
But you need more...

PRESTON

What?

SONJA

You need...

SONJA makes a gesture and the screen  
blacks out. Lightening plays across the  
living room accompanied by a rumbling  
of thunder. With a sudden flash and a  
loud bang, a hat, a toy Viking hat,  
falls from the sky into PRESTON's lap.

Pause.

PRESTON

A hat.

SONJA is visible on the TV screen  
again.

SONJA

Ja.

PRESTON  
But it's like, a toy or something.

SONJA  
It is a little hat, ja.

PRESTON  
What do I do with it?

SONJA  
You wear it. On your head, dum gutt.

PRESTON  
But it's a small hat.

SONJA  
You are a small Viking.

PRESTON  
(Pause)  
Yes, yes I am, aren't I?

SONJA  
Yet someday...a big Viking, ja?

PRESTON looks at the hat dubiously.

PRESTON  
Ja.

SONJA  
Ja.

Pause.

PRESTON  
Now what?

SONJA starts to skate away.

SONJA  
(Giggling)  
Now you will show me.

(Beat)  
På gjensyn snart, Preston! I will see you soon.

The TV set blacks out. The lights dim slowly around PRESTON as he stares at the hat. Slowly, he gets around to placing it on his head. As he does so, his face changes, becoming different somehow.

Fade-out.

End ACT 1

ACT 2

The breakfast table.

MAX, EUDORA and DANIELLE sit, eating quietly. MAX is drinking a mimosa.

Pause.

PRESTON enters from his room, and pauses to place the toy Viking hat on his head.

He strides to the table and sits down.

PRESTON

Family.

MAX

(Not looking up from his paper)

Son.

EUDORA looks up at PRESTON who has bowed his head and is praying fervently. DANIELLE takes in the whole scene with gleeful amusement.

DANIELLE

Hey Prez...

(Pause)

Nice. Hat.

EUDORA

Dear, whatever are you doing?

PRESTON

Praying, mother.

EUDORA

Praying?

PRESTON

Yes.

EUDORA

To?

PRESTON

Odin and his son Thor, god of war.



EUDORA  
 Well hmmm....  
 (Beat)  
 Any particular reason dear?

DANIELLE  
 Oh boy...

PRESTON  
 For courage in battle.

MAX  
 You do realize that religion is just a ruling class social  
 construct to give comfort to the exploited working masses,  
 don't you?

DANIELLE  
 Nice hat.

EUDORA  
 Yes, indeed it is.  
 (Beat)  
 Max darling, look at Preston's lovely hat.  
 (Urgently)  
 Max...

MAX looks up.

MAX  
 Hmmm...

(beat)  
 Nice hat.  
 (beat)  
 Seems a bit small tho...

DANIELLE  
 I thought so too.

PRESTON stops praying and begins to  
 eat. He is very focused on his food,  
 eating rapidly as if someone was about  
 to take it from him.

EUDORA  
 What does the hat mean dear? Are you going to a party? I love  
 parties.

PRESTON  
 No Mother, no party.

EUDORA  
 Or a play? Are you in the school play dear? That would be  
 nice. I was in my 7th grade school play.

PRESTON  
(Brusquely)  
No play.

MAX  
I remember you mentioning that darling, weren't you part of a  
food group?

EUDORA  
I was. I was yogurt.

MAX  
You were cultured.

EUDORA  
(Happily)  
Being yogurt, I was.  
(Beat)  
So what part are you playing, Preston?

PRESTON slams his fist down on the  
table.

PRESTON  
Silence woman!

Everyone, including PRESTON, is shocked  
for an instant.

MAX  
(Coolly)  
Excuse me comrade?

DANIELLE  
Uh-oh.  
(Beat. To PRESTON)  
You're getting comraded. Not good.

EUDORA  
I...I...

PRESTON  
I...I...

MAX  
What is going on?

EUDORA  
What did I do?

PRESTON  
Nothing, I...

EUDORA  
This is what I get for taking an active loving interest in my  
children's lives?

(Beat)  
They never tell you this in the books.

EUDORA reaches for her pills.

MAX  
I'm so sorry my darling.  
(Beat. Then to PRESTON)  
Explain yourself. Howling at your mother like that...

PRESTON  
I am...trying...something different. I am trying to be  
powerful.

MAX  
By screaming at your mother?

PRESTON  
No...

MAX  
Ah.  
(Beat)  
Then what?

PRESTON  
I just...I...I dunno...

DANIELLE  
The lady in the TV set told him to be a Viking.

MAX  
Hmmm?

EUDORA  
What?

PRESTON  
Yeah.  
(Beat)  
Right after she told you to make a sex tape so you could win  
Ms. Popularity at school

Pause.

DANIELLE  
(Getting up)  
Done.

PRESTON  
(Getting up)

Done.

They both scurry to their rooms.

MAX

Hmmmm...

EUDORA

Hmmmm...

(Beat)

So what is this all about dear? I'm so confused. I don't remember adolescence being this...complicated.

MAX

And complex too, eh?

EUDORA

Yes.

MAX

Let's review. Prez is now transitioning into a Viking and Dani apparently, according to her brother, is now creating cinema vérité at home.

EUDORA

See? It is complex. When we were this age it was about sex and drugs and rock and roll.

MAX

Oooo. And don't forget that apparently Prez is taking spiritual guidance from a woman in the television set.

EUDORA

In the set? Inside it?

MAX

I honestly don't know. Maybe coming through it? Being broadcast on it?

EUDORA

Goodness.

MAX

I do believe I shall have another tiddle while I consider these matters and prepare for work. Would you like one?

EUDORA

No dear, I'm good.

MAX

Odd way to start the day, eh? Vikings and sex tapes and what not.

EUDORA  
You know, when I think about it, I'm sure it's all just a phase...

MAX  
Oh.  
(Beat)  
No doubt.

EUDORA  
Children....school.

The doors to the bedrooms open.

DANIELLE  
Mother. No!

PRESTON  
President's Day.

DANIELLE  
Thank god.

PRESTON  
And Lincoln and Washington.

DANIELLE  
But Taft and Hoover and Bush one and two...

PRESTON  
Especially number two.

DANIELLE  
No thank you.

Pause.

MAX  
What is Presidents's Day? Is it like the old Great October Socialist Revolution day?

EUDORA  
More like Stalin's birthday.

MAX  
An obscure holiday but you ignored it at your own peril. Holidays of the revolutions were like that.  
(Beat)  
And with that, I depart to labor.

EUDORA  
Travel safely, mon cheri...

They kiss passionately.

The lights fade on MAX and EUDORA.

The doorbell rings. DANIELLE enters from her room.

Mine. Me. Mine!  
DANIELLE

DANIELLE flings the door open.

Hey you!  
DANIELLE (cont'd)

JEREMY enters. He is a very attractive, very fashionable young man.

*Note: TAD and JEREMY are played by the same actor.*

JEREMY  
Hello you. You look fantastic.

Do I?  
DANIELLE

Yes you do.  
JEREMY

Somedays....  
DANIELLE

JEREMY  
Hush you. The senior class women would kill for this figure. Now let's go drape it, shall we? The shops await us.

DANIELLE  
I'll be right back. Potty first.

DANIELLE exits.

Pause.

JEREMY looks around the apartment. PRESTON's door cracks open as he peers at JEREMY.

Pause.

JEREMY  
You can come out if you want to.

PRESTON  
(Sheepishly)  
I know that.

I live here. (Beat)

Ah. JEREMY

I do. PRESTON

I wasn't doubting you. I was agreeing. JEREMY

You were? PRESTON

Sure. Why would I doubt you? JEREMY

I don't know. PRESTON

I'm Jeremy. JEREMY

The door opens. PRESTON enters cautiously, wearing his hat.

I'm Preston. I like to be called Press. But people call me Prez a lot. PRESTON

Don't you just hate that? JEREMY

(Beat)  
People should just call you what you want.

Yes. Exactly. PRESTON

(Pause)  
Are you gay?

(Easily) JEREMY  
Yes.

You are? PRESTON

Um-hmm. JEREMY

And you can just say that? How? PRESTON

Because it's true. JEREMY

That so rules... PRESTON

Being gay? JEREMY  
(Beat)  
It does seem very fashionable doesn't it?

No, no. PRESTON

No? JEREMY

I mean...I mean being strong like that. Just saying what's what. Like you just did. PRESTON  
(Beat)  
I want to do that.

I see. JEREMY

Yeah. I'm sort of changing. I mean, I'm trying to change and become...different. PRESTON

Different? JEREMY

Better, stronger, more...powerful. PRESTON

I think everyone wants to grow and evolve. JEREMY

Pause.

I am becoming a Viking. PRESTON

Pause.

Well, that certainly explains the hat. JEREMY

Yes. PRESTON



Nice hat.  
But... (Beat)

PRESTON  
But?

JEREMY gives him an assessing look.

JEREMY  
It's too small.

PRESTON  
Yeah, I thought so too.

JEREMY  
Sort of a starter Viking hat.

PRESTON  
So...

JEREMY  
So, you really need a hat that fits your head. If you are going to be powerful then you have to project it. A larger hat that fits your head would say powerful, what with the horns and all.  
(Beat)  
But this, well I'm afraid, just says silly.

PRESTON  
I thought so too.  
(Beat)  
How do you know all this stuff?

JEREMY  
I'm a costume designer over at the Working Theatre. You have to think about how the clothes reflect the character. So...if you want to be powerful, you have to look powerful.

PRESTON  
Sort of like how clothes make the man?

JEREMY  
Sure. Or the Viking in this case.  
(Beat)  
Tell you what, we did a production of Wagner's Ring a few years ago with the University. I'll check the costume hold and see if we have anything we can part with.

PRESTON  
(Pause)  
Thank you.

Sure.

JEREMY

I appreciate it.

PRESTON

Dream your dream, Press. For as you dream so shall you become.

(Beat)

I read that somewhere.

PRESTON

I love it.

DANIELLE enters.

DANIELLE

Ready ready ready to roll you.

JEREMY

Great.

DANIELLE

You met Prez right?

JEREMY

You mean Press. Why yes I did. We've been chatting.

DANIELLE

Stimulating I'm sure.

The TV blinks to life with an image of a smiling SONJA.

JEREMY

As a matter of fact Ms. Snarky Pants, your brother is a very interesting fellow.

SONJA

Preston!

JEREMY

What was that?

PRESTON

Wow look at the time, you guys should get moving.

JEREMY

It sounded like a buzzing or something...

DANIELLE

See? What did I tell you? You stay around here too long and you start hallucinating. Let's go.

SONJA  
Preston! God dag a du.

JEREMY  
There it is again.

PRESTON  
Time to go now.

JEREMY  
But...

PRESTON  
Now!

DANIELLE  
You are so rude.

PRESTON  
Don't forget the hat.

PRESTON pushes them out the door.

PRESTON (cont'd)  
Whew...

SONJA  
Hello to you, Preston, Hello to you.

PRESTON  
Sonja, I'm getting a new hat.

SONJA  
Good.

PRESTON  
That should help. Maybe make me feel better. Being a Viking  
this morning didn't go too well.

SONJA  
No?

PRESTON  
I sort of accidentally yelled at my Mom, while I was trying to  
be strong and Nordic and all.  
(Beat)  
But I'm getting a new hat.

SONJA  
Ah...

PRESTON  
Ah? That's it? All you can say is ah?

SONJA  
Vikings do not yell at their mothers, dum gutt. (silly boy)

PRESTON  
No, no they don't.  
(Beat)  
I feel small.

SONJA  
A new hat is good. But it is just a hat Preston.

PRESTON  
But...

SONJA  
A hat is a hat. You must live and breathe Viking. Conduct yourself as a Viking. All the time. Always.

Pause.

PRESTON  
I see...

SONJA  
Do you?

PRESTON  
Yes...

SONJA  
Good.

(Beat)  
På gjensyn snart, (Goodbye to you) my little Viking.

SONJA's image fades and the TV blinks out.

Pause.

PRESTON  
Live and breathe Viking. Live and breathe Viking. Live and breathe...

(Beat)  
Viking.

Blackout.

End Scene.

Scene 2

Late Afternoon.

Shadows play across the apartment.

The door opens and DANIELLE and JEREMY enter.

DANIELLE is carrying a multitude of shopping bags. She has also worn some of her purchases home. Her fashion statement is an odd one. The garments are covering her all over and are puffy, as if she was trying to shield herself from the environment.

She drops her bags and twirls dramatically.

DANIELLE

Well?

JEREMY

It's a statement all right.

DANIELLE

That's hardly a ringing note of approval.

JEREMY

(Beat)

Honey...it's a radical look. And, frankly, I don't believe it's for you.

DANIELLE

(Pouting)

Why not?

JEREMY

Because you, mademoiselle, were blessed with the pretty skinny gene. It's a great asset and you should be showing it off, not hiding it.

DANIELLE

Well, I want to be radical. Fashionistas make radical statements. You know that. You have to do that to get noticed. And I want to be noticed. I really do.

JEREMY

Fine. But that six pack you're sporting under all that fabric would get you noticed in a hurry, girl.

(Beat)

The hot way.

DANIELLE  
Well see, that's just the easy way. And I'd like to avoid  
that whole thing...

JEREMY  
What whole thing?

DANIELLE  
The whole hotness leading to touching thing...  
(She shivers)  
Ewww....

JEREMY  
Dani, that's a little off don't you think? People want, no,  
people need to be touched, dear.  
(Beat)  
Every heard of skin hunger?

DANIELLE  
No. Is that like a vampire zombie thing?

JEREMY  
No woman. Scientists have proven that we people have a  
physical need to be touched, to be hugged.

DANIELLE  
Well, they haven't proven it to me.

Pause.

JEREMY  
(Concerned)  
Dani, how long have you...

Suddenly a clatter and banging is  
heard. It is the sound of metal being  
worked in a very vigorous manner.

JEREMY (cont'd)  
What was that?

Orange and yellow lights flicker around  
the edge of PRESTON's closed bedroom  
door. The noise continues.

DANIELLE  
Ohmigod!  
(Beat)  
Preston...?

JEREMY  
Press?

The door to PRESTON's room opens violently.

PRESTON enters in a billow of smoke. It appears that a medieval forge has somehow been installed in his room. He is carrying a large, deadly looking, two handed sword.

He doesn't notice DANIELLE and JEREMY standing there with mouths agape.

He strikes several poses as he tests the weight and heft of the sword.

DANIELLE clears her throat.

DANIELLE

Preston...

Pause.

JEREMY

Press...

(Beat)

So...whatcha been up too?

Pause.

PRESTON

Crafting.

Pause

JEREMY

Hey...we stopped by the theatre and got you that hat.

DANIELLE

(Quickly)

Oh we sure did.

(She pulls a hat out of a bag)

See?

PRESTON

I thank you for thinking of me.

DANIELLE

Sure...

PRESTON exits into his room, which is still eerily lit with wisps of smoke escaping. He enters again immediately.

He is wearing a huge Viking helmet, one that looks as if it has seen many battles.

Pause.

Nice...hat.  
JEREMY

It is a helmet.  
PRESTON

It sure is...  
DANIELLE

A helmet meant for battle.  
PRESTON

Of course...it...is...  
JEREMY

I crafted it on my forge.  
PRESTON

Your forge?  
DANIELLE

MAX and EUDORA enter through the front door.

MAX  
I remember when meetings of the Radical Revolutionary Workers party were exciting...

EUDORA  
Ummmm....

MAX  
And dangerous too...

EUDORA  
Yes dear...

MAX  
Now it's just a group of us oldsters discussing their urinary tract issues.

(Beat)  
The dream is fading...

EUDORA  
Hello Dani. Who's your little friend here?



DANIELLE  
(Indicating PRESTON with a nod  
of her head)

Mother...

JEREMY

I'm Jeremy...

(Beat)

We...we were just...chatting...with Preston...

EUDORA looks at PRESTON, who is  
standing in a rigid warrior pose.

EUDORA

Son...

PRESTON

Mother.

EUDORA

You got the part. That's terrific. Max, look, Preston is  
going to be in a play.

MAX

I see that. You look ferocious, son. Very savage.

MAX gazes at the light and wisps of  
smoke coming from PRESTON's room.

MAX (cont'd)

And you have a new hobby too I see.

PRESTON

Mother. Father.

(Beat)

I honor you.

EUDORA

Oh that's so sweet.

(EUDORA kisses PRESTON)

Thank you baby.

PRESTON

I must go now. I will hunt.

EUDORA

Hunt?

MAX

On 57th street?

DANIELLE

(Quietly. To JEREMY)

Did he bump his head or something?

JEREMY

I don't know. I honestly don't...

DANIELLE

Oh parental units, have you noticed anything...odd...about our Prez?

MAX

Odd?

EUDORA

He is in a play. That's very creative.

PRESTON

(Gravely)

Know now what I say to you. My time with you is short. I will provide for the season before I depart.

(Beat. PRESTON moves toward the door with his sword)

Farewell.

PRESTON exits.

MAX

So...where's he going?

JEREMY

Out apparently.

DANIELLE

To hunt. He went out to hunt. On 57th street.

(Beat)

I don't think he's right. I mean less right than he was, which is still pretty bad.

JEREMY

Huh?

DANIELLE

I'm worried.

EUDORA

Oh stop now. He's in a play and he's working out the part. Right?

DANIELLE

Mother. He is strolling around midtown with a sword.

EUDORA

You're worried about your brother? That's so sweet.

MAX

You two have certainly grown close.

DANIELLE  
He is wandering around hunting! How is it you aren't worried about this?

JEREMY  
He told me he wants to be a Viking.

MAX  
Ah...A Viking you say?

JEREMY  
Yes.

EUDORA  
It's just a phase.

MAX  
Of course it is.

DANIELLE  
A phase?  
(Beat)  
You're kidding right?

MAX  
No. Not at all. Sort of like you with your fashion ...experiments.

EUDORA  
Is puffy in this year dear?

JEREMY  
Actually no...

DANIELLE  
Shut up you.  
(Beat)  
We're not talking about me, we're talking about Preston. It's not a phase. Something's not right. Something's wrong.

MAX  
My darling girl. You don't have the history of child rearing, the overview if you will, that your Mother and I have.

EUDORA  
Trust me, it's a phase.

DANIELLE  
But...

MAX  
Ah now. Before you pop off again let me ask you something. Do you remember when you and Prez were four?

DANIELLE

Vaguely.

MAX

You and your brother wouldn't eat anything but fish sticks, rice and corn for a year and a half.

EUDORA

Breakfast, lunch and dinner.

MAX

So it was a...say it with me...

EUDORA

A phase.

DANIELLE

Really? Ok then...explain the forge.

MAX

That's a forge?

JEREMY

It appears so, yes.

EUDORA

He's interested in native crafts?  
(Beat. Then to MAX)

Right?

MAX

Perhaps...

DANIELLE

Sure, it's all good. He's got a medieval forge in his bedroom that he's used to craft a gigantic sword and helmet and now he's running around midtown hunting.

(Beat)

And all of this because a woman in the TV set told him to.

(Beat)

Nothing to see here people, just move on. Everything's fine.

JEREMY

A woman in the TV set?

DANIELLE

You do not want to know.

JEREMY

This might actually be the time to consider professional intervention.

EUDORA  
(Holding her pill container)  
It worked for me.

MAX  
You are a woman of an age my dove, you've earned the right to  
be pharmaceutically managed.

EUDORA  
(Brightly)  
I have, haven't I?

DANIELLE  
What are we going to do about this?

JEREMY  
A medical opinion wouldn't hurt at this point.

MAX  
Nonsense you two.  
(Beat)  
I'll catch Preston when he returns and we'll have a chat.  
Mano e mano if you will. I will express our collective  
concerns in a manly yet non-threatening manner.

EUDORA  
Father knows best.

DANIELLE  
Oh boy...

Blackout

END Scene 2

Scene 3

Midnight

The apartment is completely dark.

Suddenly, center stage, a fire pit ignites.

PRESTON's face is revealed in the light. He is now wearing an outfit made of animal robes. Plus the helmet.

Behind him a large crude map of Ireland has been tacked to the wall with ornate looking daggers in each corner.

PRESTON moves off into the darkness for a moment then returns abruptly. He has a large carcass on a spit which he places over the fire.

Finally satisfied that the meat is cooking, he turns to the map standing before it contemplatively.

PRESTON

We will come in darkness...hidden by night's black pools...

MAX enters. He pauses for a long moment watching his son.

MAX

Well, we've been busy, hmmm?

PRESTON whirls around and drops to one knee, holding his sword in front of him.

PRESTON

Father, I honor you.

MAX

That's very nice indeed son, but all this honoring is making me a tad uneasy. I mean compared to the usual teenaged snarling and sulking.

(Beat)

And, of course, there's the matter of the open fire in the living room.

(Beat)

Please get up.

PRESTON

Thank you, sir. Will you dine?

PRESTON turns swiftly and hacks a piece of meat from the carcass with one stroke. He offers it to MAX.

MAX

Ah...no...no. But thanks...

PRESTON

We will drink together then, yes?

MAX

Drink?

PRESTON produces two enormous tankards and a pitcher. He pours a yellow liquid into the tankards.

PRESTON

Mead.

MAX

Huh?

PRESTON

A wine of honey.

(He raises his tankard)

To Odin. To the goddess Sonja. To victory!

MAX

Victory?

PRESTON indicates the map.

PRESTON

My quest.

MAX

For...?

PRESTON

Victory.

(Beat)

We will come under velvet darkness and attack without warning. Those who will obey will be spared, those who deny us will be slain.

MAX

Is this some sort of school project?

(Beat)

I knew we should have enrolled you in something more traditional.

PRESTON

Father? I do not know your meaning...

Long pause. MAX studies the map.

MAX

Is that Ireland?

PRESTON

Eire, my lord. A rich hunting ground indeed. We attack in the spring then return to Thule to winter. To family, to friends, to rest.

MAX

Thule?

(Beat)

You mean Iceland...?

PRESTON

As you will my Lord.

Pause.

MAX

You know son, sometimes when we have a lot of concerns and a lot of pressure on us, we...we sometimes deal with it in...nontraditional ways...

PRESTON

Indeed?

MAX

Perhaps I should have seen this coming. Maybe we just had too many expectations for you...

PRESTON

Father no.

(Beat)

This, what I am now, in this very moment, is what I have always been meant to be.

MAX

A...

PRESTON

Viking.

MAX

No...

PRESTON

Yes, my father, yes.

Pause.

MAX

And how did all this come about?



PRESTON  
The goddess Sonja appeared to me and showed me my destiny.

MAX  
Sonja?

PRESTON  
Sonja Henje.

MAX  
The ice skater?

PRESTON  
She comes to me through this box. She has instructed me and illuminated my mind. She has guided me unto the one true path.

MAX  
Sonja Henje? The ice skater? The one from the forties?

PRESTON  
The goddess may have many names. This is how she has chosen to reveal herself to me.

MAX  
I see  
(Beat. Then quickly)  
More mead please.

PRESTON  
Of course, Father.

PRESTON pours his father another drink.

MAX  
I was wondering if tomorrow you might have time to meet a friend of mine....

PRESTON  
I would be honored.

MAX  
Ah more honoring....

PRESTON  
We should meet early with the rising of the sun. For on the morrow, I must depart with the tide.

MAX  
Depart?  
(Beat)  
Depart to where?

PRESTON  
To the sea. To join my men and start my journey.

Pause.

MAX  
Well...what about your mother and your sister?

PRESTON  
What of them?

MAX  
Son, they'll miss you.

PRESTON  
I leave them in your good hands, Father.

MAX  
And school?

PRESTON  
The sea will be my school.

MAX  
Ah...so you have this all thought out, eh?

PRESTON  
Indeed.

Long pause.

MAX  
I see.  
(Beat)  
You know, I can't help but feel that somehow I've failed you,  
Press.

PRESTON  
No.

MAX takes a long drink.

MAX  
I wish I could believe that.

PRESTON  
Father...

(Beat)  
I think, I think that after a certain age a person is solely  
responsible for finding their own way.

(Beat)  
Now is my time.

(Beat)  
I could not have asked for a better father.

MAX  
Thank you.

PRESTON  
And now, sir, I must prepare for my departure.

MAX  
Yes...  
(Beat)  
Yes of course...  
(Beat)  
But...you will talk with my friend tomorrow, eh?

PRESTON  
Of course.

MAX  
Well, Ok then.  
(Beat)  
Good night son...

PRESTON  
Good night Father.

The lights dim on PRESTON as MAX heads to his bedroom door where EUDORA and DANIELLE await.

DANIELLE  
Well?

MAX  
Well...

EUDORA  
Well what, my love?

DANIELLE  
(Hissing)  
Well, Daddy, what now?

MAX  
He will meet with a "friend of mine."

EUDORA  
A doctor?

MAX  
It might be prudent darling...

DANIELLE  
Thank God.

EUDORA  
I don't understand this. I do not understand this. Why? Why  
are people so upset?

DANIELLE  
Why are people so upset? Mother!

EUDORA  
He has become polite and respectful. He's interested in  
things. He seems...happy...

(Beat)  
He can be a Viking if he wants to.

(Beat)  
He'll have new interests when the play is over.

DANIELLE  
There's an open fire pit in our living room.

EUDORA  
Oh.  
(Beat)  
So there is.  
(Beat. Then to MAX)  
Was that always there dear?

DANIELLE  
He's not in a play. This isn't a "phase". He isn't well and  
he needs some sort of professional intervention.

EUDORA  
No he doesn't.

DANIELLE  
Yes he does.

EUDORA  
It will all be fine.

DANIELLE  
No it won't.

Pause.

EUDORA  
Well, what about you?

DANIELLE  
Me?

(Beat)  
We aren't talking about me.

EUDORA  
Maybe...maybe we should...

Daddy! DANIELLE

Ladies enough. MAX

(Beat)  
Tomorrow we'll have my "friend" over and see what he says.  
Then we'll go from there.

But... DANIELLE

But... EUDORA

Enough. I have ruled here. Bed, you two. MAX  
(Beat)  
Now.

Blackout.

END Scene 3

Scene 4

Dawn.

PRESTON is kneeling beside the TV set, sword in hand, praying.

PRESTON  
My Goddess, I beg you, reveal yourself to me and grant me the succor of your wisdom.

The room darkens suddenly and the TV set comes on with a pop. SONJA appears in close up with a serious expression on her face.

SONJA  
God dag a du.

PRESTON  
God dag a du, O my Goddess.

SONJA  
And you, you are well?

PRESTON  
I am...  
(Beat)  
I am worried, I am...I guess...

SONJA  
Fearful?

PRESTON  
No.  
(Beat)  
Well...

SONJA  
A bit?

PRESTON  
Yes...  
(Beat)  
A bit.

SONJA  
It is natural. You have started your journey, you are on your way. Your heart has begun the voyage, soon your person will follow. Everyone has worries at the start of the new.

Yes? PRESTON

Yes. SONJA

Thank you. PRESTON

And you are changing yes? SONJA

Am I? PRESTON

I see it. You are different. You are no longer Preston. The boy, that Preston boy, is gone now. SONJA

But... PRESTON

Bow your head. SONJA

PRESTON bows his head.

From infant to child, from child to stripling, from stripling to man... SONJA

A flaming sword appears on the TV screen, spinning slowly.

I dub you... SONJA (cont'd)

The room darkens. Suddenly lightning flashes and thunder booms.

Hjorvarth...the Just. And all your fellows shall know you as such. SONJA (cont'd)

Thank you, my goddess. PRESTON

SONJA's image reappears on the TV.

And you are charged by me to go forth now. Into the wilderness and out to the sea. Out to the sea in ships. SONJA

(Beat)

Fulfill your destiny.

PRESTON  
Yes.  
(Beat)  
I will not fail you.

SONJA  
Your journey awaits...

The doorbell rings. The room brightens.

SONJA (cont'd)  
It is time.

The TV screen blacks out.  
MAX and EUDORA enter.

MAX  
Well good morning son.

PRESTON  
Good morning Father.

The doorbell rings.

MAX  
(Brightly)  
I wonder who that could be?

EUDORA  
(Archly)  
Yes...I wonder.

MAX goes to the door and flings it open. A middle aged slightly greying DOCTOR stands there.

*The DOCTOR is played by the same actor who plays TAD and JEREMY.*

MAX  
Doctor! Oops, I mean...um...

Pause.

DOCTOR  
Wittgenstein.

MAX  
(Whispering)  
First name.

DOCTOR  
Bob.



MAX  
Bob!  
(Beat)  
Look everyone, Bob's here.

Pause. An uncomfortable silence.

EUDORA  
So he is.

MAX  
Bob, my darling wife Eudora.

DOCTOR  
My pleasure.

EUDORA grunts.

DANIELLE enters, covered head to toe in an absurdly elaborate sleeping ensemble.

DANIELLE  
Who is that?

MAX  
That is Bob.

DANIELLE  
Who's Bob?

DOCTOR  
Me. I'm...uh...Bob.

DANIELLE  
Short for Robert?

DOCTOR  
Ah, yes...yes indeed.

DANIELLE  
(To MAX)  
Who's Bob?

MAX  
This is my friend Bob. You remember, pumpkin, we were discussing him just yesterday.

DANIELLE  
Oh...that Bob...  
(Beat)  
Hi Bob.

Hello...miss? DOCTOR

Danielle. MAX

Danielle. DOCTOR

Hello. DANIELLE

Pause.

DOCTOR  
Well Danielle, I've heard a lot about you. How are you doing?

DANIELLE  
Excuse me?

DOCTOR  
How's school?

DANIELLE  
What?

DOCTOR  
Tell me Danielle, do you have a lot of friends?

Pause.

DANIELLE  
Daddy...

MAX  
What pumpkin?

DANIELLE  
(Whispering)  
He thinks he's here to see me.

MAX  
Oh.  
(Beat. Then to DOCTOR)  
No, no.

DOCTOR  
Danielle, do you sometimes feel life has no purpose?

DANIELLE  
Daddy!

EUDORA  
Oh my goodness.

DANIELLE stomps out.

MAX

No Bob. I meant that one. That one over there...

(Beat)

My son Preston.

The DOCTOR turns to see PRESTON.

DOCTOR

Oh!

(Beat)

Oh.

(Beat)

Hello...Preston.

(Beat)

Good morning.

PRESTON

(Curtly)

Sir.

MAX

Bob, my son Preston...

PRESTON

Father...

MAX

Son?

PRESTON

Preston is no longer with you.

(beat)

I am transformed.

MAX

Oh?

EUDORA

Uh-oh.

PRESTON

Yes, pater. The goddess has blessed me. I am Hjorvarth...

(Beat)

The Just.

Pause.

MAX

Hjorvarth...

Hjorvarth? DOCTOR

EUDORA  
That's nice dear. Is that your character's name? What a nice Viking name.

MAX  
Ok, ok...well...  
(Beat)  
Hjorvarth... this is my friend Bob.

PRESTON nods.

PRESTON  
You would speak to me?

DOCTOR  
(Cautiously)  
I would.

PRESTON  
Speak.

DOCTOR  
Um...could you remove your hat so I can see your face?

PRESTON  
No.

EUDORA  
He's in a play.  
(Beat. Then to PRESTON)  
Is this method acting dear?  
(Beat. Then to DOCTOR)  
He's a very good little Viking don't you think?

DOCTOR  
Oh yes. Yes indeed.

PRESTON  
Speak sir. For soon I must depart.

DOCTOR  
Depart?  
(Beat)  
Where are you going?

Pause. PRESTON takes a step closer to the DOCTOR.

PRESTON  
I sense a falseness about you.

DOCTOR  
I'm a friend of your father's.

MAX  
He is.

Pause. PRESTON takes a step closer to the DOCTOR. DANIELLE is watching from the bedroom door.

PRESTON  
I sense a trickery about you.

DOCTOR  
Do you?

PRESTON  
(Ominously)  
I do.

DOCTOR  
So Preston....

PRESTON  
Hjorvarth.

DOCTOR  
I see you're a...a...Viking.

PRESTON  
Indeed.

EUDORA  
He's in a play.

MAX  
Shhhhhhh.

DOCTOR  
How exactly did you become a Viking?

DANIELLE  
(Yelling)  
Some old muscle butt ice skating fattie on the TV set told him he was, that's how.

MAX  
Danielle...

DOCTOR  
So Pres...I mean Hjorvarth...people on the TV set talk to you?

(Beat)  
Directly to you?

PRESTON

The goddess Sonja appeared to me. She counseled me, directed me, gave my life purpose and form.

(Beat)

And today, I begin my journey.

DOCTOR

She appeared to you?

(Beat. Indicates the TV)

In that box?

PRESTON

Yes.

DOCTOR

I see.

(Beat)

I need to talk to your father for just a moment.

The DOCTOR and MAX move away from PRESTON.

MAX

Well, Bob?

DOCTOR

Um...I'll be honest, OK? It's not good. I mean, I've only talked to him for a few moments but clearly he's impaired.

EUDORA

No.

DOCTOR

I'm afraid so.

EUDORA

(To MAX)

No...no.

MAX

Let's hear him out darling.

DOCTOR

Normal people don't believe that people on TV are talking to them. Normal people don't dress like they're from the eleventh century.

EUDORA

He's in a play.

MAX

(Gently)

No angel, no he's not.

EUDORA reaches unsteadily into her pocket for her pills.

MAX

(To the DOCTOR)

What do you recommend?

DOCTOR

Offhand I'd say a week's committal for observation. Then probably a fairly heavy regimen of anti psychotic medication. And that's only if he stays...

PRESTON moves toward the group.

PRESTON

(To the DOCTOR)

You speak of me?

DOCTOR

Well...

PRESTON

You speak of me to my father?

MAX

Son, he's a friend and just wants to help.

PRESTON

(To the DOCTOR)

Speak no falsehoods. I sense danger within you.

DOCTOR

I'm here to help.

PRESTON

And who here requires your help?

Pause.

MAX

Ummmm...

DOCTOR

You.

(Beat)

You do.

PRESTON

I require no assistance.

(Beat)

Leave us.

DOCTOR

Look... Sometimes we get...over tired. Yes, overtired. We get confused and worried. Sometimes we just need to take a bit of a rest. You know, get away from the stresses of life. Take a break.

PRESTON

Father, I must depart soon. Send this man away.

(Beat)

Or I will.

MAX

Son...

DOCTOR

We know you've been under a lot of stress lately. We want to help...

The DOCTOR reaches out to touch PRESTON. Instantly a dagger flashes and PRESTON backs the DOCTOR up against the wall, the dagger at his eye.

MAX

No!

PRESTON

You will turn now, leave this place and never return. If you do not then I shall send you to the depths of hell before you draw your next breath.

The DOCTOR nods, frightened. MAX pulls PRESTON off of the DOCTOR. DANIELLE dashes from her room and stands between the two. Her outfit is now even more elaborate and confining, there is not an inch of bare flesh but her face. EUDORA cringes away from the scene.

The DOCTOR moves to the door, shaken. He opens it then turns to the family.

DOCTOR

I'm calling the authorities, Max.

(Beat)

I'm sorry, I really am. But he's violent and it's my professional opinion that he's very, very disturbed.

PRESTON

Die, swine.

PRESTON lunges at the DOCTOR. MAX and DANIELLE hold him back.



DOCTOR  
And one other thing, maybe you should consider getting some sort of help for your daughter too.

DANIELLE  
You bastard!

DANIELLE lunges for the DOCTOR but he escapes, slamming the door behind him.

Long pause.

MAX  
Oh my, oh my...

MAX collapses into a chair.

DANIELLE  
How dare he? Where does he come off saying that? I am scaling the heights of avant garde fashion.

EUDORA  
Of course you are dear. Of course you are.

MAX  
It's been a morning, hasn't it?

DANIELLE  
It's not over yet. The police will be here. Very soon.

MAX  
Yes.

(Beat. Then to EUDORA)  
Darling, I am nonplussed. Could I impose upon you for a wee little tiddle, my dove?

EUDORA  
Right away, my sweet prince.

EUDORA exits to the kitchen and instantly returns with an elaborate cocktail.

MAX  
Splendid.

EUDORA  
You're welcome, my delight.

MAX turns to PRESTON as EUDORA moves to the couch, availing herself of a few pills.

DANIELLE sits next to her, placing a large hat with a heavy veil on her head. She is now completely hidden.

MAX

Son...

(Beat. Then to PRESTON)

I am concerned about what the future is going to bring for you. I really am.

PRESTON kneels besides MAX's chair.

PRESTON

I apologize for disturbing the peace of your home, Father. But I did what I felt I must.

MAX

I know. I know. But we have to consider the possibility that he is...

PRESTON

Father...

MAX

...right.

PRESTON

The wind...

DANIELLE

What?

MAX

Perhaps you need more help...

PRESTON

Do you feel it?

MAX

...than we can provide.

PRESTON

The wind...

EUDORA

What wind?

A wind moves across the set, gently at first.

PRESTON

The wind is freshening.

DANIELLE  
This can't be good...

PRESTON  
The wind is freshening.  
The wind grows stronger.

PRESTON (cont'd)  
They have come.  
(Beat)  
It is time.  
Urgent footsteps can be heard coming up the stairs.

EUDORA  
The police? Oh God...  
There is a loud pounding at the door.  
Not a knocking, more like someone trying to break it down.

MAX  
Ohmigod. The fascists have come for us.

DANIELLE  
Daddy!  
The door pancakes into the floor with a resounding crash. A VIKING stands revealed in the doorway. He enters.  
*Note: The same actor plays the VIKING who plays TAD, JEREMY and the DOCTOR.*

VIKING  
My lord.  
(He salutes.)  
It has been far too long.

PRESTON  
Indeed.  
They embrace.

VIKING  
The tide is with us, your ship awaits. Let us depart.

PRESTON  
A moment...  
(To MAX)  
The season is upon us and I must take my leave of you now.

I return with the snows, bearing gifts and treasure, my beloved ones. I pray for your good health in the meantime. And you must pray for me, pray to Odin for my good fortune and courage in battle, I beg you.

Pause.

We will.

MAX

Take...take care son.

EUDORA

Bye, freakshow.

DANIELLE

Farewell.

PRESTON

PRESTON and the VIKING exit.

Long pause.

They sit on the couch. A wind moves through the curtains. Then sounds. The sounds of ships, the water, of men moving. Suddenly a voice rings out.

I give you...Hjorvarth!

VIKING (O.S.)

A loud cheer rings out.

No...

DANIELLE

DANIELLE waddles to the window to look.

I don't believe it.

DANIELLE

What dear?

EUDORA

They're...

DANIELLE

A splash of sea water hits DANIELLE full in the face. She is stunned and returns to the couch. Outside, men are lustily singing obscure Nordic sea chanteys. Gradually the singing and sea noises fade.

Well...  
MAX

Ummm, yes.  
EUDORA

I do believe, even though it is early, I could use a refill.  
MAX

Of course.  
EUDORA

Will you join me?  
MAX

Yes...  
EUDORA

Yes I will. (Beat)

They get up.

My dove...  
MAX

Dear?  
EUDORA

What just happened here?  
MAX

Oh...well. Nothing really.  
EUDORA

(Beat)  
It's just a phase he's going through.

I see.  
MAX

It's just temporary.  
EUDORA

You think so? Thank goodness.  
MAX

You know what teenagers are like.  
EUDORA

Indeed.  
MAX

They exit.

Long pause.

DANIELLE sits silent, motionless on the couch.

Suddenly The TV set snaps on. SONJA appears.

Danielle...  
SONJA  
Danielle... (Pause)

DANIELLE stirs, looking this way and that.

Danielle...  
SONJA (cont'd)

DANIELLE rises unsteadily from the couch, following the voice.

Danielle...  
SONJA (cont'd)  
God dag a du! (Beat)

DANIELLE kneels down next to the TV and peers at the screen.

SONJA smiles.

God dag a du, liten piken. (little girl)  
SONJA (cont'd)  
God dag a du! (Beat)

DANIELLE stares at the screen for a moment. Slowly she removes her hat and veil.

God dag a du?  
DANIELLE

SONJA smiles warmly at DANIELLE then turns to the audience and winks.

Blackout.

END ACT 2

Curtain