

NOT THE SAME TREE

By Jerold London

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**Inspired in part by:
Michael Pollan's *How to Change Your Mind* (2018).**

NOT THE SAME TREE

TIME AND PLACE

2022. A room in a hospital near the medical research facilities of Lear College, Montana. Scenes 2-4: the room is set with hospital bed, accompanying table, two chairs, two individual tables (with writing pads, pens, and laptops on them), and various monitoring devices. The remainder of the play: the room is converted into a space with a comfortable couch, two stuffed chairs, tables, and a coat tree. Volunteers (DEE is not a volunteer) are participating in a clinical trial of the drug psilocybin, obtained from “magic mushrooms.” During each session there are soft background sounds. Volunteers wear eyeshades – all as described by Michael Pollan in *How to Change Your Mind* (2018). A list visible to the audience reads:

A fool sees not the same tree that a wise man sees. – William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*.

I don't believe in God; but I do believe in God's love.
And look. My eyeshades are wet from my tears.

I could actually see in my mind that consciousness lives on.

If you don't get *yourself* well, what? You can't expect other people to take care of everything in your life, now can you?

The important thing is, I can come back here whenever I need to.

CHARACTERS

DR. BONITA DeLUNA (“Nita”), 34, a psychiatrist studying the effects of psilocybin on depression, addiction, suicidal thoughts, and related conditions.

DR. WILLIAM BLAKE, 29, a psychologist studying the effects of psilocybin on depression, addiction, suicidal thoughts, and related conditions.

DEE, early 20's, homeless, and pregnant. In Scene 2 DEE is comatose, following an explosion in an abandoned shed.

ALEX, DONNA, MICHAEL, KIMBERLY, CHRIS, THOMAS, OLIVIA, and YOUNG, volunteers in the clinical drug trial of psilocybin.

... in the dialogue indicates a thoughtful break.

... // signals the starting point of interrupting (but **not** overlapping) text.

'It's gone!' sighed the Rat, sinking back in his seat again. 'So beautiful and strange and new. Since it was to end so soon, I almost wish I had never heard it. For it has roused a longing in me that is pain, and nothing seems worthwhile but just to hear that sound once more and go on listening to it forever. No! There it is again!' he cried, alert once more. Entranced, silent for a long space, spellbound.

'Now it passes on and I begin to lose it,' he said presently. 'O Mole! the beauty of it! The merry bubble and joy, the thin, clear, happy call of the distant piping! Such music I never dreamed of. Row on, Mole, row! For the music must be for us.'

Then suddenly the Mole felt a great Awe fall upon him. It was no panic terror. Indeed, he felt wonderfully at peace. But it was an awe that smote and held him and, without seeing, he knew it could only mean that some august Presence was very, very near. With difficulty he turned to look for his friend, and saw him at his side cowed, stricken, and trembling. And still there was utter silence in the bird-haunted branches around them; and still the light grew and grew.

Sudden and magnificent, the sun's broad golden disc showed itself over the horizon facing them; and the first rays, shooting across the level water-meadows, took the animals full in the eyes and dazzled them. When they were able to look once more, the Vision had vanished, and the air was full of the carol of birds that hailed the dawn.

As they stared blankly, in dumb misery deepening as they slowly realized all they had seen and all they had lost, a capricious little breeze, dancing up from the surface of the water, tossed the aspens, shook the dewy roses and blew lightly and caressingly in their faces; and with its soft touch came instant oblivion. For this is the last best gift that the kindly demi-god is careful to bestow on those to whom he has revealed himself in their helping: the gift of forgetfulness. Lest the awful remembrance should remain and grow, and overshadow mirth and pleasure, and the great haunting memory should spoil all the after-lives of little animals helped out of difficulties, in order that they should be happy and lighthearted as before.

– Kenneth Grahame, with little change from *The Wind in the Willows*,
Chapter 7

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SCENE 1 – EXPLOSION

Stage left: A small, abandoned shed **soundlessly** explodes in a flash, leaving scattered debris. An emergency vehicle arrives **soundlessly** offstage, amid flashing red lights; and two paramedics rush on stage with a stretcher on wheels. They find DEE, lift her onto the stretcher and exit – **all in complete silence**.

SCENE 2 – DELIVERY

Stage center: A hospital room, with bed, tables, two chairs, and monitoring devices. DEE, pregnant, is lying in the bed, in a coma. BLAKE enters the floor, stage right, goes through a secured entrance using a plastic ID card, walks down the hall, and enters Dee's room. He takes a seat and begins reading. DeLUNA then enters similarly.

DeLUNA

Morning, Blake, if ... //

BLAKE

Buenos días, mi amiga....

[looks up] What's up? You okay? You look, sorta tired this morning.

DeLUNA

It's nothing....

Anything with her?

BLAKE

Nada.

DeLUNA looks around the room, and takes a seat. BLAKE goes back to the book he is reading. DeLUNA eyes him closely. Their dialogue is in quiet tones.

DeLUNA

[long pause] Soooo.... Any words of wisdom for today, Blue Jay?

BLAKE

Watch and wait, I guess. What else is new? It's like being snowbound.

DeLUNA

I can't fathom how calm you stay. What bothers you?

BLAKE

This does. It's miserable business, this. This waiting. But what else?
[beat] There *are* worse things, you know.

DeLUNA

Than waiting out a coma? Name one.

BLAKE

Drug addiction is one, obviously. And suicide. And depression.
And drug-testing red tape. *And* Big Bad Pharma.
Not to mention relationships, which are the worst of all. Rubik's Cubes, for me.
If I had had a decent one, I wouldn't be in this mess.

DeLUNA

Oh?

BLAKE

In Montana? *Come on*. Present company excepted, of course.
But, the time was right. And the cause, certainly right.
And no one to talk me out of it.

DeLUNA

No one?

BLAKE

That's just it. I look to the great authorities, and they all say not to worry:
"Never does a lover seek a lover without being sought in return," they say. Bull!

DeLUNA

Why are you worrying about that now? When *I* can't stop thinking about *her*.
And what we did.

BLAKE

What we did is what we did is what we had to....
[beat] I had a dream last night.

DeLUNA

A dream?

BLAKE

At an airport, where passengers boarded planes outdoors, climbing up steps.
An old airport, maybe. And she was there, at the foot of the stairs. In the fog.

DeLUNA

Who was?

BLAKE

I don't know. I suppose the love of my life. Ingrid Bergman, maybe.
I didn't recognize her in the fog. But I went up to her.
And she threw her arms around my neck, and started kissing me.
People squeezed around us, until we were the last ones left.
And they were yelling at her to get on the plane.

DeLUNA

And?

BLAKE

Before we let go, something melted inside me, if that makes any sense.
We blended into each other, like diamonds or steel. Our souls fused. The
marriage of souls. It's all I can tell you. Except, it was the most wonderful feeling
of my life. Being completely known, and understood, and naked.

DeLUNA

You're just getting horny. And you shouldn't be sleeping in the nude up here....
[beat] So? Who *are* the great authorities on love?

BLAKE

The Sufi poet, Rumi. And the Seattle poet, Tom Robbins.
Those two. They're enough for me.

DeLUNA

That might be where your problem is. Your sources.

BLAKE

Know any better ones?

DeLUNA

It's pretty obvious, relationships aren't *my* strong suit.

BLAKE

Well, at least you have one.

Holds up his book for a moment.

Tom Robbins says, and I agree:
The solution isn't searching for the "perfect" partner.
Which is a waste of time, because there simply isn't one.
But concentrating on making a *good* relationship better. And applauding it.

DeLUNA

Applauding it?

BLAKE

The most important thing is to find somebody who understands you.
And trusts it. Knows that she does. *That's love. That's being loved.*
Without it, bath water.
You have to recognize that you two believe in the same, important things in life.
The same principles. Things worth living for. And dying for. And making love for.
Like John and Yoko.
And then applaud it, with all you might, together. *Four hands clapping.*
And not stop. Constantly building for a better world.
But what do I know?...
[beat] Do you? Is that like what *you* have with your husband?

DeLUNA

Do you want to know the truth?

BLAKE

Sure.

DeLUNA

We're separated. Just ... //

BLAKE

O my God, I'm sorry. I didn't know.

DeLUNA

How could you? It just happened, last night, on the phone.
So, you see, I don't know all that much about relationships either.
We talked about it. We've *been talking* about it.
Not enough alone time together, he says. Why be married without that? he asks.
But I can't give it up. It's what's important. Working for what's important to *me*.

BLAKE

How do you feel?

DeLUNA

Like a satellite.

BLAKE

A satellite?

DeLUNA

Up in the air. Out in space. Not getting anywhere. Except in circles.

BLAKE

Like the Earth is a ball of sex.

DeLUNA

[*sarcastically*] Yeah. Funny.

BLAKE

I guess I'm up the same tree.
Sex is a book I could write a book about.

DeLUNA

How do you mean?

BLAKE

You find a woman who's attractive. Downright good looking, let's say.
And the dance begins.
You want to take her to bed. And plan how to do it. And dream about it.
And, I guess, she's doing the same thing,
But then something happens....

DeLUNA

[*beat*] What?

BLAKE

I don't know.
It's like you wake up with your eyes open.
Sex isn't something I do well. Not at first.
Not just doing sex. By itself. Like tennis.
It has to mean something to me, for me to like it. Something love-like.
And in a few months or so.
Three months is my normal half-life.
She's tired of me, and the race is on.
To see who will be first to deliver the knockout punch.
Relationships get out of hand.
Honestly, I think relationships are too obscure for hands like mine,
if they're measured on a Richter scale of orgasms. Which I'm not.
No. The next relationship I sink my feelings into will start with admiration,
instead of sexual attraction. Period. End of story.
Tom Robbins chirping away in the trees notwithstanding.
Marry your souls first. Then your bodies. That's what I say.

DeLUNA

You're awfully jaded for a youngster.

BLAKE

Why? How old are you? I'm twenty-nine.

DeLUNA

Thirty-four, if you *must* know.

BLAKE

You only have five years on me....

Do you know what you do when you get dumped?

DeLUNA

No. Tell me.

BLAKE

It's a formula. *First*, you take out your mask.

Empty your face of all emotion, and put your mask on.

Hide the hurt, which ... Fick it ... pardon the German,

always creeps in when someone you opened up to goes A. W. O. L.

DeLUNA

Surface. It's called "surface." What we are on the outside,
when we're in distress on the inside, and won't show it.

BLAKE

Yeah. Good word: "Surface."

And I'm fed up with the whole surfacing, hook-up, break-up game. I'm tired of it.

I just wish to Hell I could meet somebody I could admire first,

before thinking of sex with her.

DeLUNA

How would you know?

BLAKE

Know what?

DeLUNA

That you respect her before having thoughts of getting into her pants. I mean,
I always thought a man's *first thought* was having sex with a woman he meets.

BLAKE

That's what I'm saying.

I need to change. I've got to grow up. Stop being so adolescent.

Or else, I'll always be getting dumped. Or dumping her. For what?

It makes imagining doing things more fun than actually doing them....

Does that make any sense?

DeLUNA

Doesn't it give you a rush, like love, when you first get a woman into bed?

BLAKE

If anything, it make me feel dark. If it's too soon.

DeLUNA

You're peculiar.

BLAKE

Can *you*? just do it with someone you don't love, at least a little?

DeLUNA

Maybe. Yes. In my dark period I could.

BLAKE

See what I mean?

DeLUNA

But that doesn't mean it all has to end badly. Maybe they were just testing you.

BLAKE

Testing me? For what?

DeLUNA

For sincerity.

A woman isn't going to take the chance of totally falling for a guy, until they're certain he isn't just playing them.

BLAKE

They ghost me to test me?? Shit! It's all just a game, isn't it?

DeLUNA

Just saying.

BLAKE

It's not very poetic.

DeLUNA

Poetic?

BLAKE

Well, call it like you like. Not very romantic.

DeLUNA

What is romance? In your book?

BLAKE

Attraction. With an honest spark of caring for each other. As beings.
Like something special you can at least think of as a solid tree.
A small tree, at first, that looks, and smells, and tastes like love.

DeLUNA

A sapling.

BLAKE

Okay, then. A “sapling” of love.
Something you can reasonably hope will grow, and you can get connected to.
And stay connected to.
Something more than just sex.
Do you have any idea what I’m trying to say?

DeLUNA

Do you?

BLAKE

No! Not really.

DeLUNA

You *are* strange. Different from the men I’ve had in *my* life.
I always thought the woman’s job was to get a man crazy about her body.
And *that* would keep him coming back for more.

BLAKE

And where does that leave career?

DeLUNA

Yes, you could say that....
I suppose I had too much hate in me, to be what my husband wanted.

BLAKE

Hate?

DeLUNA

I hate drug addiction, with a vengeance.
I lost my best friend to drugs.

BLAKE

When? In college?

DeLUNA

My sister.

BLAKE

[*thoughtful beat*] Depression. The animal. Drugs. The Devil.

DeLUNA

And a divorce to boot.

BLAKE

Love makes fools of us all, except those it make imbeciles of. Like me.

DeLUNA

Does a career help, do you think?

BLAKE

If we still have one after this. If she makes it.

DeLUNA

Pointing at DEE, lying motionless in the bed.

That's what's driving me crazy. What if she doesn't? Where do we go then?

BLAKE

I'm scared, too, Nita. But I'd do it again. In a heartbeat.
Because doing the right thing is doing the only thing I want.
She needed it. And I'm not good at doing things half-assed....
It feels like a sleeping elephant in the room, doesn't it? Ready to boil over.

DeLUNA

If she'd only say something. Anything....
[*beat*] Why do you think we did the right thing?

BLAKE

Because she needed a chance.
And we weren't thinking about covering our own asses back then. Right?

DeLUNA

Where's there any scientific truth in that?

BLAKE

In my gut.

DeLUNA

But, Mother of God, it worries me.

BLAKE

Me, too.
It's the first time I ever took a chance for a person that could end my career.

DeLUNA

Both of us did.

BLAKE

What else was there, buddy?

Nobody around here was doing a thing to wake her up before it was too late.
Somebody had to try, before they both died.

DeLUNA

You might start thinking differently if she doesn't wake up.

BLAKE

No more Tom Robbins. Is that what you're saying?

DeLUNA

Medical people are not allowed a Tom Robbins. Only his distance....
[beat] No. Really. Why did we do it?

BLAKE

She seemed like she would die.

And we did the one thing we thought might bring her out of it.

DeLUNA

Sometimes you're just up a tree in life. ¿Correcto?

BLAKE

Drug addicts are.

DeLUNA

Is that where they are?

BLAKE

Where?

DeLUNA

Up a tree?

BLAKE

Not the same tree.

DeLUNA

Maybe not. But up one anyway.

BLAKE

And that's why we're here in the first place. To help them down.
It's why *I* came.

DeLUNA

Same with me, needless to say.

BLAKE

To help end drug addiction and depression. And maybe the poverty they inhabit.

DeLUNA

God willing, in our wildest hopes and dreams.

**DeLUNA stands, and walks over to look
at DEE.**

DeLUNA

It can't be much longer now. Look how big she is.

DeLUNA sits back down.

BLAKE

When I was a kid I loved snow. Give me half a chance, I'd walk a mile in it....
It's never too late to have a happy childhood, you know.

DeLUNA

Says who?

BLAKE

Tom Robbins.

DeLUNA

Is that all you have to cheer me up with? Tom Robbins?
There's something about him I just don't get.

BLAKE

What?

DeLUNA

Why, with the millions of books out there,
does a person ever try to find Tom Robbins to read?

BLAKE

You don't have to.
He finds you.
He's water in the sky, waiting to dive without a parachute.
If he should get buried, he'll rise again.
If he lands on fire, fire will get the blisters.
It's the Tom Robbins way.

DeLUNA

What if someone told you, there's no such thing as Tom Robbins?

BLAKE

I'd direct them to the net.
He runs with the best of American literary outlaws.
Creator of some of the fastest and most dangerous idioms in the West.

DeLUNA

Your opinion.

BLAKE

Everything's opinion, isn't it?

DeLUNA

[*emotionally pointing*] Her, lying there, in a coma. That's no *opinion*.
And Tom Robbins' idioms aren't going to cure a thing for her.

BLAKE

Hold on. I was only trying to take your mind off things.
Her lying there in a coma is, *first of all*, because of an explosion. Not us.
Same with her pregnancy. And after that, we did what we could.

DeLUNA

And if it's not successful?

BLAKE

That, we'll just have to wait and learn.

DeLUNA

Not something I came here *to learn*.

BLAKE

What I'm saying, Nita, is that we had to try. We both agreed to it.

DeLUNA

[*beat*] Do you ...? Do you think she's going to die?

BLAKE

No.
I can't let myself think like that.

DeLUNA

We could have walked away. It wasn't *our* battle.
It wasn't in *our* job description.

BLAKE

I'm not made like that.
If you see a person starving, or dying of thirst,
you don't stop to ask whether they've got a Green Card or not.
Not me, at least.
When you have the power, you have to have the courage to use it.

DeLUNA

Then why didn't *they*? when they had the chance?

BLAKE

The chance for what?

DeLUNA

To perform an abortion.

BLAKE

You can't take a mother's baby away from her when she's in a coma.

DeLUNA

Even if it's going to kill them, both?

BLAKE

We don't know that.

DeLUNA

There's a lot we don't know, isn't there? *Isn't there, Blake?*

BLAKE stands. Then sits back down.

BLAKE

It's a miracle either one of them survived a blast like that.

DeLUNA

And it wouldn't have been on our watch, then, would it?

BLAKE

Everything happens for a reason, they say.
Maybe the baby's going to be the love of some future President's life,
and we're the chosen ones to make it happen....
And, by the way, I don't consider a life in a freaking coma as making it.

DeLUNA

You don't know a thing what's going to happen, do you?
You talk brave; but you don't know a thing.

BLAKE

No, I don't. Not much anyway.
But that's why we're here, isn't it?
Because we don't know diddly about everything.
And we're willing to take chances to learn....
Let's give it a rest, for a bit. Okay? We can't do anything about it now.

**BLAKE goes back to reading. DeLUNA
just sits. There is a pause.**

DeLUNA

I hate this noiseless waiting. It makes me feel that I need a shower.

BLAKE

[*looking up*] Better than the alternative.

DeLUNA

I hate it, anyway. How slow time goes....
[*beat*] I just want you to know something, Blake.
If she leaves a rippled sheet, I think I'm through with all of this.
Regardless. Just so you know.

BLAKE

You don't mean that.

DeLUNA

The other night I dreamed I heard her cry out. Or thought I did.
Like my sister, afraid of dying in her sleep.

BLAKE

You can't let it get so personal.

DeLUNA

Oh yes I can. You don't understand.

BLAKE

I *do* understand.

DeLUNA

How can you?

BLAKE

I have a sister. I know how I'd feel.
And when we were kids, we all sat together at the dinner table, and talked.
Family rule.

DeLUNA

I bet it was.

BLAKE

Dad and Mom worked at Dad's pharmacy. Every day. Still do. He pharms.
She runs the rest of the business. Plus an old-fashioned soda fountain.
And my sister used to help out. Some of the time. At the soda fountain.
Work is a way of life for them. A way of love for them, in a way.

DeLUNA

To make love stay.

**DeLUNA gets up and walks over to look
at DEE, then returns to her chair.**

BLAKE

A watched pot

DeLUNA

Is there something better to do?

BLAKE

[*pause*] Wish I had an egg cream I could share with you, right now.

DeLUNA

What's an egg cream?

I don't know whether it sounds yummy, or yucky.

BLAKE

Yummy. Trust me.

We had the greatest, at our old-fashioned soda fountain.

Along with sodas, of course. And phosphates. And fresh brewed coffee.

And salty lemonade. And all kinds of shakes.

And the best egg cream in the country.

DeLUNA

So? What's in an egg cream?

BLAKE

Chocolate syrup. Light milk. And carbonated H 2 O.

No eggs and no cream....

And if you're in the mood, not even the best, full-fledged malt can touch it.

DeLUNA

Something you don't forget.

BLAKE

You don't forget times like that.
When life was summer and choices were easy.

DeLUNA

And so, that's it?

BLAKE

What?

DeLUNA

What makes love stay. Egg cream and family time?

BLAKE

Eskimos have 52 words for snow.
I'd need 52 words for the way I feel about love to answer you.
Not sex. I can vouch for that. Not sex alone.
Sex may be a fabric to sew love out of, but it doesn't sew by itself.

DeLUNA

Why do you say that?

BLAKE

Okay.
Let's say you're having the greatest sex of your life.
Every day you screw your brains out,
over the sheets, and under them, and across the floor,
against the walls, on the tables. Crazy, wild, and messy.
Remnants on the pillowcases.

DeLUNA

Am I getting this?

BLAKE

Ratchet it out six months.

DeLUNA

Ooo! I think I *am* getting this.

BLAKE

The key is mystery. Your life has mystery, your love will have a mystery.
Your sweetheart has mystery and love stays, if you give it time. Am I right?

DeLUNA

Don't ask me.

BLAKE

If mystery goes south, love flies south with it.
You need time to connect, and talk, and work together *outside* the bedroom.
And you need the mystery to stay.... But what do I know?

**BLAKE buries his nose back in the book
he is reading. Pause.**

DeLUNA

What's happening to us, Blake?

BLAKE

We took a chance.

DeLUNA

I mean, to love in our country.

BLAKE

Tech is invading, like a crash of hippos.

DeLUNA

You say the damndest things, you know.

BLAKE

Well, it's the truth.

DeLUNA

You're not boring. I'll give you that.

BLAKE

Give it three months. Then let me know. That's about the half-life of my charm.

DeLUNA

[*beat*] Hippos?...

Hippos are some of the cutest animals on Earth.
Remember? I want a hippopotamus for Christmas?

BLAKE

Gag me.

**BLAKE sticks a finger in his mouth and
feigns gagging himself.**

BLAKE

You know, hippos are some of the most dangerous animals alive.

DeLUNA

What's that? Some more of Tom Robbins' gunk?

BLAKE

If you don't believe me, Google it.
Hippos can chase a man down at thirty miles an hour.
Not for an hour, of course, or a mile.
But fast enough to do the trick in a sprint.
You don't want to be in the path of a pissed hippo, that's for sure.
They may look like oversized, harmless, vegetarian cows,
but they're some of the world's meanest.

DeLUNA

I don't believe it. Is *that* the truth?

BLAKE

Hippos kill more humans every year than any other animal.
Except for other humans, of course.
You'd need a football field's head start, *with* end zones.

DeLUNA

It doesn't sound right to me.

BLAKE

One guy saw a hippo tear his wife's heart out. Right in front of his eyes.

DeLUNA

Okay. Okay. That's enough. I won't be walking any mile again for a hippo.

BLAKE

Or for romance.

DeLUNA

[*taking offence*] That's out of bounds.

BLAKE

Sorry. Just thinking of other women I've known. Not you.
Precious little interest in romance. Just fitness, and fashion, and devices.
Too young, maybe, and absorbed in themselves.

DeLUNA shows a pained expression following that last comment. A lengthy silence ensues. Then DEE groans, and BLAKE looks up at her, and then at DeLUNA.

BLAKE

Oh my God!
It's coming, I think.

DeLUNA

O, my God!

SCENE 3 – AWAKENING

Stage center: Same room, a month later. Late morning. DEE sitting up in bed.
DeLUNA and BLAKE rush in.

BLAKE

We came as fast as we could.

DEE

[*puzzled*] Where am I?

BLAKE

You can hear?

DeLUNA

You can talk?

DEE

Where am I?

DeLUNA

Lear College ... //

BLAKE

Or, rather, the hospital next door ... //

DeLUNA

in their clinical research facilities.

DEE

[*puzzled*] I'm in college?

DeLUNA

We've been so worried about you.

DEE

How did I get to college?

DeLUNA

Do you remember the explosion?

DEE

It looks like a hospital room to me.

BLAKE

You're right, it *does* look that way....

We might have to do something about that.

DEE

Is the college in trouble?

DeLUNA

What do you mean?

DEE

Being taught in hospital rooms?

DeLUNA

You're not a student here.

You're a patient.

DEE

I am?

BLAKE

You've been in a coma.

DEE

I have?

DeLUNA

Yes.

DEE

How long?

DeLUNA

Nine months.

DEE

Long enough to have a baby.

BLAKE

[*copping a quick look first at DeLUNA*] What do you remember?

DEE

I feel like Hell. Could have had a baby.

DeLUNA

You've survived an explosion.

DEE

I feel like a fish out of water.

I can't even remember my own name.

BLAKE

Ariel?

DeLUNA

[*to BLAKE*] What?

DEE

Unless

DeLUNA

[*beat*] Unless ...?

DEE

Unless it's Dee. That's what Doe always called me....

[*beat*] Is it Dee?

BLAKE

We don't know.

DeLUNA

We were hoping *you'd* tell us.

DEE

[*beat*] Who *are* you?

DeLUNA

I'm Dr. Bonita deLuna.

I'm a psychiatrist studying some special things about the mind, and, well, how a certain natural chemical compound can positively affect our brain.

BLAKE

And I'm William Blake, a psychologist.

Working here at Lear College with Nita, doing the same thing.

DEE

[*long pause*] I've never heard of Lear College. Where is it?

DeLUNA

In Montana.

DEE

Montana?

How did I get to Montana?

DeLUNA

We don't know. There wasn't anything left to tell us, after the explosion.

DEE

This is? what? Amnesia?

BLAKE

It looks that way.

DEE

How long does it last?

BLAKE

Search me.

DEE

I don't understand. Why are you here? What are you doing here with me?

BLAKE

We've been working with something new, to help people.

People in distress. And depression.

And drug addicts.

DEE

Am *I* one of those people?

DeLUNA

Not that we're aware of.

It's a little hard to explain, with this memory blip of yours.

Are you sure you can't remember a thing about your past?

DEE

[*pause*] No. Nothing. And it hurts.

BLAKE

What hurts?

DEE

Not being able to remember who I am.

DeLUNA

It hurts?

DEE

It's painful not knowing.
Don't you understand? being doctors, like you are?

BLAKE

Amnesia's new to me.
I deal mostly with depression.

DEE

I don't feel depressed.

DeLUNA

How *do* you feel?

DEE

Like I'm in a desert.

BLAKE

In a desert?

DEE

I don't know why I said that.
It just crossed my mind.

DeLUNA

You should get some rest. We'll be back, later.
If there's anything you need, just push the button.

DEE

I need my memory.

DeLUNA and BLAKE exit.

SCENE 4 – DEE'S DREAM

Stage center: Same room; evening. DEE is awake, sitting up in bed as BLAKE enters and seats himself.

BLAKE

How are you feeling?

DEE

When I woke up this morning, I felt really strange.
Like I'd died, and was being born again.
That's weird, isn't it?
And I keep asking myself:
Am I alive? or is this just a dream I'm having?

BLAKE

Oh, you're alive, believe me.
Nita and I can attest to that, in blood, sweat, and tears.

DEE

Where's your friend?

BLAKE

She'll be here soon enough I expect.
Just a little delay.
She can't wait to see you....
After all the time we worried about you.

DEE

Why did you care like that about me?

BLAKE

It's Well....
We'll explain when Nita gets here.

DEE

Does anybody else care?
Anyone else come to claim the body?

BLAKE

No one.

DEE

Then, why you?

DEE tries to get up, out of bed, but can rise only a little before falling back. She tries a second and third time with no greater success, and falls back exhausted.

DeLUNA enters and takes a seat.

BLAKE

[to DeLUNA] You okay?
What happened?

Stands.

DeLUNA

It's okay. It's okay.

DEE

Have you been crying?

DeLUNA

Sit down, Blake....
Please.

BLAKE

Somebody should teach that guy a lesson.

DeLUNA

It's all right. I'm the one who needed the lesson, okay?
Just sit down.

BLAKE

Sits back down.

To keep calling you.

DEE

You two are strange.

DeLUNA

What have I missed?

BLAKE

Nothing....
Except Dee trying to get out of bed.

DeLUNA

You'll be up, on your feet, in no time.
They've been giving you regular exercise. Don't worry.

DEE

Can I tell you the dream I had?

DeLUNA

You remember a dream? When did you have it?

DEE

I guess when I was in the coma.
But it didn't feel that way to me.
I was busy, very busy. And I could walk.
But it was silent, at first. I could hear the silence, like I was deaf.

BLAKE

Sure. We'd love to hear your dream.

DEE

Is it a miracle I'm alive? I heard someone out in the hall say it was.

DeLUNA

I'd have to say so. Yes.

DEE

Because of you?

DeLUNA

I'd have to say, No.

BLAKE

Maybe.

DEE

They said *I* was the miracle. But if they knew, they'd say my dream is the miracle.
A whole other life.
A whole other world.
And when I woke up, it felt more like I was dying.
I was young, there, forever. And when I woke up, I didn't want to leave.

**DEE takes a drink of water, as both
DeLUNA and BLAKE begin taking notes.**

DEE

In the beginning there was only blackness.
Actually, a sort of blue watery grayness.
Crisscrossed with random specks of light.
I was motionless, like a turtle, asleep. Afraid, maybe,
hiding my head in my shell, by a pond in the woods.
When I slid into the pond, I felt the turtle shell slip off.
And when I came up, I slithered out of the water and lay on the ground. Naked.
That's all I was aware of. Just lying there, on the ground.
I had no idea where I was, or what I was. Only the feel of water on my skin.

DEE

And all I could see was haze, and later clouds, and shapes.
Trees and rocks, and things in the distance that moved.
Sometimes I would try to call out; but I couldn't make a sound.
Nothing made a sound.
I wanted to move to those things that moved, but I couldn't.
I was paralyzed.
Let me show you.

DEE reaches for a pad of paper and a pen (which BLAKE hands her) on which she makes a quick sketch.

DEE

See, there's the water, and there I am, lying beside it, near the trees.
One day my eyes fixed on a spot in front of me.... There.

Indicates.

I noticed a small insect fly over my shoulder and land.
It moved its legs and antennae and wings all about,
and I followed their motions, fascinated.
When it saw me, it came toward me.
My vision blurred.
And as it did, abruptly, like some invisible hand pulling me up,
I found myself standing on my feet.
I was elated.
And mystified.
You'd think flying would be best, wouldn't you?
Well, my greatest thrill was merely getting to my feet.
And I had no idea how I'd done it.
But I didn't have long to think about it.
Because right in front of me,
right smack in front of my face,
there was a huge, horrible, black thing.
A monster!
Worse than anything you could imagine....
Here, let me show you.

Sketches, and shows DeLUNA and BLAKE.

DeLUNA

iMonstruoso!

BLAKE

Sounds like something out of Carlos Castaneda.

DEE

It was twice, maybe three times my size, with a pair of long, thin wings,
and scary clumps of black, ugly hair all over its body.
Sickening green blobs drooling out of its mouth.
Eyes bulging, and glaring at me when it started to fly.
It whirled, round and round me, closer and closer, green spit coming out.
I tried to follow it as it flew, but I could only catch glimpses.
Finally, it flew away. *But I had a premonition.*
Suddenly, like a rainstorm, the beast turned, and drove directly at my face.
I couldn't even duck out of the way.
Its wings hit me, square in the eyes; and I must have fainted.
When I woke up, I was lying at the bottom of the pond.
And I discovered something really peculiar.
I can breathe under water. Imagine that!
While I lay there on the bottom, thinking, the water started tickling my feet.
I felt laughter inside, even though the rest of my whole world was silent.
That's when I decided to get back out, and face my enemy again.
Did you ever have feelings like that?

DeLUNA

Too many times ... until you came back.

BLAKE

You're a miracle, Dee.

DEE

Well, after I decided that's what I was going to do,
I felt a strange calmness come over me. I wasn't afraid. At all.
I *wanted* to get out of the water. I *had* to get out of the water, to see better.
That's all I felt; and no monster was going to stop me.
I pressed out all my will inside; and I drifted to the surface.
And there it was, waiting for me. Big deal!
I can't explain it, but I felt empowered. I *wanted* to face it.
Why? Well, why not?
It was better than being in the leaves at the bottom of the pond.
And, anyway, what could it do? Some pain, maybe. So what? I can take the pain.
Nine or ten times I went through the same battle, from lying down, under water,
rising out of it, confronting the beast head on,
and being knocked back down again ... and again.

DeLUNA

You weren't afraid of being hurt? Or dying?
I can't imagine.
I know *I* would be.

DEE

No, I wasn't.
Don't ask me to explain.
I guess in a coma you're not afraid of getting hurt, or dying.
But up on land, I couldn't move.
Every single time, I was glued to the spot where I stood.
Like a boxer, with his shoestrings tied together.
Until the last time. The last time it charged me, I flew!

BLAKE

You flew?!

DEE

J'ai volé!
My body was free like the wind.
I left the ground.
And sped right at the creature's eyes, like an arrow.
I simply willed myself at it.
For a split second the bug seemed to defy me.
Then it spun around.
And with a strange, piercing, cry, it flew off.
For good.

BLAKE

[to DeLUNA] You see? Bugs can fly off. For good.
But I never knew our medicine could do that.

DEE

You know, I hadn't thought about it then,
but that must have been the first sound I heard, in my dream.

DeLUNA

But you could *fly*?

DEE

Yes. Yes. In my dream, I could fly.
I could, very well, thank you.
And walk, too. Which I'm not doing much of here.

BLAKE

Don't worry about that.
They say you'll be walking in a week. Or less.

DEE

I walked, forever and ever.
And loved every one of them.
Through fields, and meadows, and woods ... rivers, lakes, and flowers.
I walked until I was exhausted. And then I slept in my sleep.
Each time I woke up, I would go farther.
Sometimes it was easy. Sometimes it was steep and rough.
That didn't make any difference to me.
I loved it, either way.
Nothing could stop me.

BLAKE

It sounds like a dream.

DEE

It was. And what's the problem?
I was just happy to walk and look.
Until, at some point, it hit me....

DeLUNA

[*beat*] What? What hit you?

DEE

I was looking at everything, but not myself; and I started wondering.
So, I lifted my hand and stared at it. It's harder to do than you'd think.

BLAKE

I know it is.

DEE

My right hand. Then my left. And then my arms; and my feet;
and my legs; and then myself. And I could see.... I'm a woman.

DeLUNA

You are absolutely amazing.

DEE

To realize you're a woman, and know the world is yours.
Can you understand what that means?
And then, to have to come back here? And not even walk.

DeLUNA

You're teaching *us* something, Dee.

DEE

But I wasn't lonely. Not that I knew of.
Isn't that strange?

BLAKE

I haven't a clue what's strange or not, in that bizarre place of yours.

DEE

I guess I might have sensed something, waiting for something.
But I didn't seem to want anything.
I went on walking.
I walked in the heat.
I walked through snow.
Funny thing, isn't it? How no two snowflakes are alike.
It's as if, when we see snow, it's the first snow we've ever seen.
Then one day.... It's okay, isn't it, if I call my dream days, "days"?

DeLUNA

Of course it is.

DEE

My dream really wasn't in days; but I don't know how else I can tell it to you.
Anyway, one day I was walking along a river, in a ravine.
Up ahead was a tall waterfall. And rapids.
I stopped at the bottom; and gazed up.
When, all of a sudden, I saw a man at the top, on the other side,
with something golden shining around his neck.
And right before my eyes he started crossing the rapids, beginning at a boulder.
I saw long, bright tentacles of light emanate from his stomach,
and grasp hold of the boulder, and hold him to it like a fly on a window.
Then he loosened some of them, and slung them across to the next boulder.
With their help he jumped from slippery rock to slippery rock, across,
winding up on my side, at the top, where he stood tall,
and let his luminous fibers shine at me, like a million candles.

BLAKE

I feel like I've been there. Somewhere.

DeLUNA

Thanks for the warning.

DEE

He slid down the hillside to me, moving over the ground like silk.
And made love to me. Unbelievably.
He was mine; and I was his....
[beat] But all that's impossible, isn't it?

DeLUNA

Let us listen to the whole thing. Then we'll talk about it.

DEE

The man was a warrior; and he taught *me* about being a warrior.
He taught me patience, and kindness.
And he taught me how, if you have them, you can make anything happen.
I must have fallen in love with him, I guess, in my dream, in my coma.
I wonder where he is now.
I wonder if we can still love each other.

BLAKE

[aside] I wonder if Could *I* ever fall in love like that?

DEE

He taught me how to build.
We built cities, and castles, and temples, and bridges.
We built towers and cathedrals.
We created all forms of art.
And we made ourselves a home, out of wood and rocks.
Here, let me show you.

Sketches, and shows DeLUNA and BLAKE.

Granite boulders, and tons of light,
and a mountain stream flowing straight through the middle of it.
No doors. And no food.
We knew nothing at all of being hungry.
What we knew was each other's voice. His was gentle.
We spoke English, and gave each other names.
He called himself Doe, like the first note.
You know: Doe Ray Mi.
And he called me Dee.
We had no pain, and no hunger, and no sadness....
Now, that *is* strange. An entire world, with no sadness.
It seems strange to me.

DeLUNA

It's a dream world.

DEE

I wonder where it's gone.
Could it still be out there? Do you think?

DeLUNA

Only in heaven.

DEE

Maybe in a coma, sadness doesn't exist.
Doe was always happy.
Happy building. Happy painting. Happy running. Happy being with me.
Just a joyful man all over.
He loved music, and making things out of Doe Ray Mi.
He said everything's made out of the eight notes of the scale.
They're the building blocks of the universe, he told me.
He called them "dimensions."
Eight dimensions. Eight dimensions of a universe.
And no hunger, and no pain. But, we felt a want....
[beat] Now how can that be? Where does *want* come from?
I guess *want's* the foundation underneath the notes. Like a piano.
Without want, there wouldn't be any notes, or music, or art, or anything.
There might not even be words.
But how can there be *want* without sadness?
Doesn't sadness always marry itself to want?
We had no sadness; but we had want.
And what we wanted was family.
People to populate what we'd built in our world.
"How do we do it?" I asked him.
Doe told me: It was something only I could do, he said.
He could make the rest. The homes, the buildings, the music.
The boats on the rivers, the ships on the seas.
But only woman can create people.
When he said that, the instant he said that,
I felt like a volcano inside me.
A billion sparks of light and water came leaping out of me.
In all the colors of the world.
It was a wave of liquid light that grew to the size of a mountain.
And the water took shape, a billion different shapes.
It was amazing.

DeLUNA

It must have been.

DEE

Do people ever remind you of water, Dr. deLuna?

DeLUNA

Not that I ever noticed.

DEE

To me, some sparkle like a waterfall.
Some soothe, like a bath.
Some cut, like cold rain and carved stone canyons.
Some can carry us off to far places.
Some can keep us where we are.
What kind of water are you?

DeLUNA

Perrier.

DEE laughs, and takes a drink of water.

DEE

Ah! Perrier. Que ferions-nous sans Perrier?...
[beat] But then I began to notice, that they were different from Doe and me.
There was a flaw. Their lights weren't shining right. They had broken patches....
Do you ever see light, and patches of light, around people?

BLAKE

Castaneda did.

DeLUNA

And David Bowie.

DEE

Our people didn't seem happy, and I couldn't understand why.
Do you know why?

BLAKE

I came here this evening thinking *we'd* be the ones asking the tough questions.

DEE

They weren't happy because they were created with a piece missing.
A piece that *I* couldn't give them. And do you know why?

BLAKE

I have no idea. But I bet you do.

DEE

Because the final piece can't be *given* them. They have to get it on their own.

DeLUNA

And Doe told you that?

DEE

He did. And that's the world I discovered when I was in my coma.

DeLUNA

I've never heard anything like it, Dee.

DEE

But that's not exactly how it ended.

BLAKE

It isn't?

DEE

Just before I came out of the coma, Doe told me we had to leave.
Our sun was getting old and about to explode.
And we had to jettison into space before it went nova, to find a younger one.
It would take about thirty thousand years, he told me.
I trusted him. And Doe was right: It did explode.
But after our world was spun off, things changed.
All the motion I loved so much, stopped.
Trees no longer bent in the breeze. Little creatures no longer darted about.
Everything turned into ice sculptures.
Doe himself had to burrow down into the ground, to keep warm and awake.
I'd visit him, from time to time.
The cold didn't bother me. He and I were different that way.
He made me a light cannon, an industrial torch, to carry around on my shoulder.
The world was as rigid as a painting. Waves, frozen solid and knife-edged.
In the frozen years I began flying again. And searching.
And what I found sickened me. I saw devastation.
I saw what people had done to all the beautiful things we'd made.
Most of them had been smashed open, torn apart, burned, or trashed.
I found pictures. Blood, and broken bodies, and death.
They had been slaughtering the land and slaughtering themselves.
I'd been as naïve as a child. And guess what I did, when I saw what they'd done.

BLAKE

What?

DEE

[*laughing*] J'ai pété. I farted!

And that opened the door between that life and this life for me.

BLAKE

A new way for a fart to open a door.

DeLUNA

O Blake, for Christ's sake!

DEE

But I wasn't laughing, when I went down to talk to Doe.

I needed to tell him what I saw.

And he told not to try to understand everything.

He told me I was a warrior. And the spirit of a warrior embraces the unknown.

And he told me that it was time for me to leave.

I hadn't noticed her before, but Doe had one of those people with him.

So, I left.

And as I left, Doe handed me a white narcissus. Like this one.

Sketches, and shows DeLUNA and BLAKE.

DeLUNA

[*pause*] We have something to tell you, Dee ... //

BLAKE

And show you ... //

DeLUNA

You see, we're part of a scientific group of experimental labs, around the world, working, and hoping, to find a cure for drug addiction ... //

BLAKE

and depression.

It involves ingestion of a carefully controlled amount of psilocybin, which triggers something like a safe, psychedelic trip ... //

DeLUNA

a drug trial ... "magic mushrooms" ... //

BLAKE

carefully monitored by two doctors ... //

DeLUNA

who are us.

Tour guides, so to speak.

We stay right by the volunteer's side, through the entire journey ... //

BLAKE

to make sure the trip doesn't go haywire ... //

DeLUNA

which they did in the past ... //

BLAKE

in the bad-old days of LSD, and Timothy Leary.

DEE

You gave me LSD?

DeLUNA

Dee, we gave you a dose of psilocybin, not LSD.

DEE

Why? Why me? Did I volunteer?

DeLUNA

Because they were afraid that if some contact couldn't be established with your conscious mind, you'd probably die.

DEE

Die? Do comas kill people?

BLAKE

Not unless you're pregnant.

DeLUNA

And they can't do C-Sections on women who are comatose.

DEE

[*pause*] *I had a baby?*

DeLUNA exits the room, and shortly returns, with a one-month-old baby in her arms. She carefully approaches DEE, who slowly reaches out her arms, takes the baby, holds her, kisses her, and begins sobbing.

SCENE 5 –IN A MUSEUM

Stage center: The hospital room of Scenes 2-4 is converted into a clinical trial testing room – monitoring and recording devices removed, the bed replaced with a comfortable couch long enough to stretch out on, a small table beside it on which volunteers are permitted to place personal photographs, letters, etc. Rustic items placed around give the room a cabin-in-the-woods ambiance. There are several bookcases filled with old and inviting volumes. The formal hospital chairs and tables are replaced with stuffed chairs, wooden side tables, and a coat tree. DeLUNA and BLAKE enter the room together.

DeLUNA

[*sitting*] Another day.

BLAKE

[*sitting*] Another dollar, so they say.
How are you feeling?

DeLUNA

We've already gone there, Blake.

BLAKE

No, seriously. How *is* everything?

DeLUNA

Nothing broken.

BLAKE

I wish you'd ... //

DeLUNA

[*raising her hand*] Stop.
I can take care of myself; and prefer it that way.
Okay?

BLAKE

I'm not trying to get personal, or anything.
But ... Well, you're my best friend.
Do you know what I mean?

DeLUNA

Okay. Okay. Just can it. Okay?

BLAKE

I'm sorry.
I just can't get him out of my mind.

DeLUNA

If you can't, just keep it to yourself. Okay?

BLAKE

I'll try.

DeLUNA

What *I* can't get out of my mind is Dee. And that dream of hers.

BLAKE

Like being alive twice.

DeLUNA

But real life doesn't allow much room for dream worlds, does it?
No one wants the Chairman of the Board to be in a place like that.
Not even part of the time.
Or their doctor.
Or their dentist.
Or their pharmacist.
Or their divorce lawyer.
Or their pastor.
Or their stockbroker.
Or their banker.
Or an airplane pilot.
Or a bus driver.
Or their parents, for that matter.
We'd all like to escape into our own little space. But not at the expense of safety.

BLAKE

The look on your face and the question mark on your nose belie what you just said.

DeLUNA

We've got to do better, Blake.
We've got to deliver something better.

BLAKE

Better than Dee's dream world?
Is that what you're saying?

DeLUNA

Not exactly.

BLAKE

I have a dream.

DeLUNA

I know: To find a way to make love stay.

BLAKE

Not exactly.

DeLUNA

What?

BLAKE

Like Edison had a dream.

DeLUNA

And Greta Thunberg?

BLAKE

It's called, "The Marriage of Souls," the best I can tell.
Where people can love each other without all the complications.

DeLUNA

What complications?

BLAKE

You know.
Remember?
Sex?

DeLUNA

Ah, all the glorious trouble.

BLAKE

Maybe, after these tests are over, I'll just spend a year or two out here,
under the Big Sky, and look into it.
With the love of my life.

DeLUNA

And who is she?

BLAKE

I haven't a clue. Where to find her, or how to make her stay. That's the problem.

DeLUNA

I think she's your work.

BLAKE

You're probably right.

DeLUNA

So, why did you risk it for Dee? A girl you didn't even know?

BLAKE

Why did you?

DeLUNA

There's no answer I've been able to come up with. No sane answer.

BLAKE

Except it worked....

Shit! Nita. Shit!

There are more than two hundred a day dying in our country from drug overdose.

Two hundred a day. Every day.

It's a crisis.

DeLUNA

And?

BLAKE

I think we have the answer.

DeLUNA

Here in Montana? In Dee's dream world.

BLAKE

Yes. In a way.

The door to the room opens, and ALEX enters, carrying a folder. DeLUNA and BLAKE stand.

ALEX

Is this the room for the drugs test?

DeLUNA greets ALEX.

DeLUNA

Hi. I'm Dr. Bonita deLuna. I'm one of your guides today.

They shake hands. And then BLAKE ...

BLAKE

And I'm Dr. William Blake, your other guide.

They shake hands.

ALEX

I'm Alex.

Where do I go?

DeLUNA

There are a few preliminaries we have to cover first.
Just have a seat on the couch there, and relax.

ALEX does so.

DeLUNA

First, have you read through the flight instructions?

ALEX

The what?

BLAKE

The 10-page pamphlet you were given, that goes over what you can expect today.

ALEX

Oh yeah. I've read it.

DeLUNA

Any questions?

ALEX

No.

DeLUNA

Does anything in it frighten you, or worry you?

ALEX

I'm here for the money. Just so you know.

I don't believe in any of this crap. Just so you know.

And it doesn't frighten me. No. Not at all. Just so you know.

DeLUNA

And you've signed your consent?

ALEX hands her a signed consent.

DeLUNA

Have you been on any antidepressant medication for the last four weeks?

ALEX

No, I haven't.

DeLUNA

And you agree not to use any alcohol, nicotine, or psychoactive drugs for twenty-four hours after the session ends today?

ALEX

Okay. Sure.

DeLUNA

Did you bring anything for the room?
Anything personal, of your own?

ALEX

Just this.

ALEX removes from his folder a picture of a large question mark in a frame; and BLAKE rests it on the table next to the couch.

BLAKE

A question mark?

ALEX

It stands for the universal uncertainty.
I stand for uncertainty, and

DeLUNA

And?

ALEX

And anarchy. All things that would give you frights in the night, missy.

DeLUNA

Got it, Sweetie....
Now drink this. It's psilocybin. And lie back, and put these eyeshades on.

DeLUNA hands ALEX a glass. He drinks and puts it down. BLAKE hands him a pair of eyeshades, which ALEX puts on.

ALEX relaxes into a sleeplike state; and DeLUNA and BLAKE sit quietly, observing. Music plays in the background. After a length of quiet time, ALEX begins violently thrashing about and pounding his fists into the couch. DeLUNA and BLAKE abruptly spring from their chairs and rush to the side of the couch.

ALEX

For Christ's sake, get me out of here.
How thin is the skin of sanity?

BLAKE

Stay calm, Alex.
We're here with you.
Where are you?

ALEX

In the fucking museum you put me in.
Where else? And I can't get out.
They won't let me in, to the next unswept room,
until I give the woman at the door something valuable.
Piles of crap. Less and less, as the rooms go on.
Until now, I've got nothing left to give her but my buck-naked underwear.
How thin is the skin of sanity?
Just a white rag, as stained as a dishcloth, lying on the floor.

DeLUNA

Stay calm.
We'll get you out.

ALEX

The wall says, "Know thyself."
What the fuck does that mean?

BLAKE

It means you're beautiful, even when you're naked and alone.

ALEX

Is *that* what they think? while they're secretly watching me?
Looking at my bones and flesh?
Nearly naked now.
How can I get out of this place?
I see a damn swan, swimming toward me.
How thin *is* the skin of sanity?

BLAKE

[*almost as a whisper*] There's a door, in the wall, by your side, that looks like a solid wall. You can open it, any time you want. Just touch it, and walk through.

ALEX

[*pause; calming down*] Thank God. I'm out.

Rips off his eyeshades, flings them across the room, and exits (slamming the door behind him).

BLAKE

How thin *is* the skin of sanity?

SCENE 6 – BLACK MASS

Stage center: Same as Scene 5. DONNA is coming out of her trip, reclining on the couch. DeLUNA and BLAKE are seated, watching her closely.

DeLUNA

How do you feel? Are you okay, Donna?

DONNA removes her eyeshades.

DONNA

I'm fine.... I feel fine.... Really, I'm fine....
Other than dying ... maybe ... of course.

BLAKE

How do you feel about *that*?

DONNA

You know, Dr. Blake, I've faced it now. It's fine. Really, it's fine.

DeLUNA

You're okay about it?

DONNA

No problem, Dr. deLuna. Really.

DeLUNA and BLAKE begin taking notes.

DeLUNA

Tell us what you can. What you can remember.

BLAKE

No rush.

Just tell us whatever comes into your mind, that you can remember.

DONNA

[*beat*] I was just here, and thinking to myself.

Remembering the Beatles, and their songs.

And Syd.

And *The Wind in the Willows*, which is my all-time favorite story.

And all the other books I've loved.

And how one goes about saying goodbye to what they'll always remember.

And miss.... Do you remember Syd?

DeLUNA

I'm sorry. Sid who?

DONNA

Ever hear of Pink Floyd?

DeLUNA

Pink Floyd? And *The Wall*? Of course I have.

DONNA

Syd was the grain in Pink Floyd's mustard.

Syd was the flavor of Pink Floyd's cheese.

Syd was the genius of Pink Floyd's name. That's Syd who.

DeLUNA

Oh! Syd *Barrett*. O, my God, yes. Of course. That body.

So young, and symmetrical. His curly, midnight hair and bewitching, gypsy eyes.

It was Syd *Barrett* you were talking about.

My God, he was flat-out another Lord Byron.

BLAKE

Are you okay, Nita? I've never heard you talk like that.

And why are we talking about Syd Barrett, anyway?

He wasn't with Pink Floyd for ages.

DeLUNA

Sorry. It's just ... if ever a person was born with zero ego, Syd was the one. All he wanted to do was paint, and play music, and rest in a comfortable bed.

DONNA

She's right, Dr. Blake. I was walking down the path, in the yellow woods, in Cambridge, where Syd Barrett used to walk. And, well, Syd was walking alongside me. And maybe I was a little scared, remembering LSD, and everything. And thinking of the Beatles, too, and Wind in the Willows. When all of a sudden I was swept up, like into a helicopter overhead. Maybe like a helicopter, but it took me inside my body, that I could see, lying here. Like looking down from the ceiling into myself, on this couch. A miniature helicopter flying through my body. Down passageways I couldn't imagine, inside and out. Through my whole body. And my lungs. And right next to them, I saw a massive black lump.

BLAKE

Your cancer.

DONNA

No. *Not cancer.*
My fear.
And I recognized it for that. What it was.
And I saw that it meant me no good.
So I stopped. And I screamed at it, with all my might:
"Get the Hell out of my body, Monster, you filthy, monster.
I know what you're up to. And you have no place inside me. Ever again."
[beat] Didn't you hear me? screaming like that?

BLAKE

No. We didn't.
Then, what happened?

DONNA

I'm cured. No, really. I'm completely cured. Really.
Not of cancer, of course. It might be coming back, I don't know. Or it might not.
But if it does, I'll take it on.
It's the fear of it. I've lost my fear of the cancer completely.
It was crippling me. And now it's gone. And I'm cured.
No, I mean it. It's one hundred percent gone. Truly. Totally.

DeLUNA

Wonderful.

DONNA

And one more thing.

DeLUNA

Yes?

DONNA

I was bathed. There. Where I was.

BLAKE

Sorry?

DONNA

I was bathed in God's love. And I don't even believe in God; isn't that the most? I don't believe in God; but I do believe in God's love. And look. My eyeshades are wet from my tears.

SCENE 7 – HEART ATTACK

Stage center: Same as Scene 5. MICHAEL is coming out of his trip, on the couch. DeLUNA and BLAKE are seated, watching him closely.

BLAKE

Where are you? Are you back?

MICHAEL

I'm back. It was wonderful.

MICHAEL takes his eyeshades off, and DeLUNA and BLAKE begin taking notes.

DeLUNA

How do you feel, Michael? Is everything okay?

MICHAEL

Yes. Yes, fine. A little surprised, though. I thought there'd be demons out there. But there weren't any. Only love. Inside, an ocean full. For all the people I love so much, and some I thought I'd never love again. You know, love is all around us, if we only let it. It's something *inside*. It's not something you *get*. It's something you *give*.

BLAKE

Where were you?

MICHAEL

Up a tree. In a treehouse. A giant kid's treehouse.
Nine-stories tall. Which I figured out were the stages of my life.
It was all open, and I could see into each floor.
Every floor was built on the floor below.
And every floor, after the first, was a chapter of my life with my wife.
And with our son....
[beat] Looking into the first floor, I remembered when I was back in school.
And how terrible we were to our fourth grade music teacher.
How we tormented him, when all he wanted was to share his love for music.
O God! the unthinking cruelty of children.... I guess *that* was my demon.

BLAKE

Did you feel your heart? while you were there? at all? Or worry about it?

MICHAEL

I *was* a bit of a bore about it, wasn't I?
Making you swear to call 9-1-1 the moment anything seemed to be going wrong.

DeLUNA

No problem.

MICHAEL

All the time I've spent, worrying about *my* heart,
when, what about all the other hearts in my life?

DeLUNA

Yes?

MICHAEL

I can't explain it. There aren't the right words in me.
Maybe I'll catch up with them later.
I mean, what words would a Manhattan Indian have had, 400 years ago?
Teleported into New York City today?
With all the skyscrapers. And traffic. And subways. And airplanes.
And people all around?
I mean: How could he describe it? in *his* language?...
[beat] You know? In a word: Love *is* everything.

BLAKE

So I've heard.

MICHAEL

If that's all I've learned today, it's enough.
Seems so childish, doesn't it? Like a platitude. Love is everything.
But that's what's left, when your life is spread out before you, in a treehouse.
What you wind up with, taking with you.
Not the hurts. Not the jealousies and disappointments. Not the politics.
But the love. The love, and the simple truth that love is everything.
I guess that's what you warned me about, in the flight instructions, isn't it?
Psychedelics make a common man into an evangelist for the obvious.
Like, every day I used to put the miraculous in a box, and label it:
"Know that. Done that. Seen that." And today it's like pirate treasure to me.

DeLUNA

Tell me: When you discovered love, like you did, did you see God? Just asking.

MICHAEL

[*pause*] There *was* a strange moment. But I really don't want to talk about it.

BLAKE

Then, don't. No problem.

MICHAEL

But I will....
A strange insect sound started running through my mind.
Dry leaves, lying under the tree.
Crumpling in my hands.
I saw a tenth floor, at the top, I hadn't expected.
And when I looked in, I suddenly lost my balance, and began to fall.
Just for a moment, and then righted myself.
But in that moment I sensed something unnerving.
My heart started pounding, in a good way. And "Tyger, Tyger, burning bright,
in the forests of the night" ran through my mind.
I felt myself beginning to melt into a can of paint.
No kidding. Melting. Into a can of paint. And I didn't care.
For a split second I didn't care a thing about my body.
Or what was happening to it.
I felt myself being spread out, all over all the trees and the rest of the landscape.
Like the paint I'd become. Thinly coating everything with myself.
I was becoming part of everything. And everything was becoming part of me.
And it was good. And I was one. And it was with God. And I didn't care.
And then a capricious little breeze, dancing through the trees,
blew lightly across my face; and with its soft touch came a kind of oblivion.

BLAKE

You're not the first to feel that capricious little breeze.

MICHAEL

It felt very un-personal. Like a balloon, when the air lets out. I'm the air inside. And it doesn't bother me at all, to think of myself being let loose. To the winds. Not at all to be paint on the surface of the world.... Actually, it feels liberating.

DeLUNA

Liberating?

MICHAEL

No more worries about heart palpitations.
No more resentment. No more guilt.
No fears about a life I was deathly afraid of losing.
I was *free*.

BLAKE

[*slowly, and softly*] No fear of death?

MICHAEL

Death loses its bite.
Because I could actually see in my mind that consciousness lives on.

DeLUNA

That's something to think about.

BLAKE

Isn't it!

MICHAEL

I could actually see in my mind that consciousness lives on.

SCENE 8 –SKIN AND BONES

Stage center: Same room. KIMBERLY sits up, abruptly, on the couch, and pulls her eyeshades off. DeLUNA and BLAKE are seated, watching.

BLAKE

Kimberly?

KIMBERLY

[*looking*] Who are you?

DeLUNA

Where are you? Do you feel all right?

KIMBERLY

I don't know you.... [*beat*] And I don't know where I am.

BLAKE

You're with us. I'm Dr. Blake. We're here. With you. Don't you remember?

DeLUNA

I'm Dr. deLuna. Do you need anything?

KIMBERLY

Who are you? I don't recognize you at all. Where's your skin?

BLAKE

What do you mean?

KIMBERLY

You know. You don't have any skin on.
You're just bones.
And eye sockets.
And when you talk, I see your skull moving.
Your jaw. And naked teeth.
Talking, like skeletons.
In a graveyard.
You look horrible. Horrible. Horrible.
Why are you talking to me like this?

DeLUNA

Close your eyes, and lie back down. Slowly.

**KIMBERLY does as she is told; and
DeLUNA helps her put her eyeshades
back on.**

BLAKE

Are you comfortable, Kimberly?

KIMBERLY

Do I have to talk to you?

DeLUNA

No. We're here to help you. Not to hinder.

KIMBERLY

You're dead, aren't you? Just trying to fool me. Come back to haunt me. Right?
Because I can never reckon with the dead. Right? Right?
Never reckon with my Father, or my Mother, or Char. Right?

BLAKE

No.

KIMBERLY begins sobbing. BLAKE and DeLUNA leave her alone. A pause.

KIMBERLY

I'm okay, now. Can you hear me?

DeLUNA

Very clearly.

KIMBERLY

Sounds like an echo, down a well. Like shadows in here.
They say you won't get it until you step into the shadows of your loss.
Walk in your shadow's shoes. Pink Floyd does.

BLAKE

Where are you?

KIMBERLY

In a graveyard. Dark. Gravestones at my feet. In my face.
All I've touched. And all I've seen. And all I've smelled. And all I've felt.
And all I've eaten. And all I've met.
And all I've fled, down the nights and down the days.
Down the labyrinthine ways of my own mind.
Staring at me. Through the dark....
[beat] I've drunk too much in my life. For too long.
I've cared too little, for too long.
I don't understand why I've been doing what I've been doing with my life.
It's so stupid. And unfair.
Maybe death's nothing at all.
Maybe death's just a large ink blot which divides itself into infinity.
And comes back one, black, single blot, fading off into the shadows of itself.
If you don't get it, well, what can you expect? Other people to get it for you?
You can't expect that, now, can you?
If you don't get *yourself* well, what?
You can't expect other people to take care of everything in your life, now can you?

SCENE 9 – ON ROARING RIVER

Stage center: Same room, but coats are now on the coat tree. CHRIS is lying silently on the couch, eyeshades on, an unfolded letter resting on the table by the couch. DeLUNA and BLAKE are seated. Their conversation is in **quiet tones** until CHRIS “wakes up.”

BLAKE

[to DeLUNA] After all this, what *do you* believe about love, Nita? Real love?

DeLUNA

Do you actually believe you can ask me a question like that?

BLAKE

No, honestly. I think that’s part of why our country’s going downhill the way it is.

DeLUNA

Because of love?

BLAKE

What else has changed so much in the last twenty-five years than love?

DeLUNA

Let me count the ways.

Only the internet, smartphones, social media, digital cameras, and GPS.

BLAKE

You mean?: computer dating, and sexting, and gender bullying, and nude photos of yourself on Instagram, and fifty other shades of gray?

DeLUNA

What are you saying?

BLAKE

Nothing, except that love has lost its touch.
It’s lost its feeling.

DeLUNA

What do you want? What is it you want?

BLAKE

I want a good love life like everybody else. But I want it to be *real*.
In love we find out who we *want* to be.
In science we find out who we really are.

DeLUNA

You can find out what you are, animal or devil, for a honeymoon, at least.
What more do you want?

BLAKE

I want a love that lasts. Something that connects body and soul. *And* passion, too.

DeLUNA

Haven't we talked about this?
I had a client tell me, once, that she was *born* dissatisfied with life.
Any person she ever had sex with only made things worse.
They handed out scraps of validation in exchange for power and pleasure.
Less satisfying than drugs.
She said doing drugs and doing sex were just two ways to endure insanity.

BLAKE

That's my point. See how paper thin love has become?

DeLUNA

Are you speaking from experience? Or from what we've heard?

BLAKE

My experience comes from addicts I've treated.
And over and over again, how often they relapse,
just because they're unhappy with their love lives.

DeLUNA

It's more likely loneliness.

BLAKE

Two sides of the same coin.
We need to find more of love and less of shades of sex in our lives.
That's all I'm saying.

DeLUNA

What do you suggest?

BLAKE

That we teach ourselves more about joining souls and less about joining bodies.

DeLUNA

That "marriage of souls" thing of yours.

BLAKE

Yes. Pure heart-to-heart relationships. The marriage of souls transcends sex.

DeLUNA

Where are you getting all of this?

BLAKE

I've been reading. And listening.

The only way for people to demonstrate the reality of love is in relation to each other. And the only way to find the cure for drug addiction is to find true love.

DeLUNA

And marriage? What do you think of marriage?

BLAKE

Most marriage puts the cart before the horse.

My recommendation is a marriage of souls first. That kind of marriage.

Then, in a year or two, a physical marriage union.

DeLUNA

You're nuts.

BLAKE

You don't think it would work?

DeLUNA

What two people in love are going to wait a year or two?

BLAKE

It *would be* like fasting, wouldn't it?

DeLUNA

Worse than Ramadan.

BLAKE

Don't knock it.

DeLUNA

Haven't you read somewhere? Love's nemesis is obedience.

BLAKE

I'm not arguing obedience. Hell, that's the last thing I'd want.

What I'm feeling is the loss of the feminine mystique.

And the loss of the mystique of sex.

Am I off base here?

DeLUNA

Love is the answer. I agree. It's: How you find it and fit it.

BLAKE

Peel the onion.

DeLUNA

Simply peeling the onion doesn't make what emerges love.
Not if love is what's holding the onion together.

**CHRIS stirs, and without removing the
eyeshades –**

CHRIS

May I keep them on?

BLAKE

Whoa!

DeLUNA

Are you okay?

CHRIS

May I keep them on?

DeLUNA

Yes, of course.

CHRIS

Can you see them? Lights all over me.

BLAKE

Tell us about them.

DeLUNA and BLAKE begin taking notes.

CHRIS

My body's in a light of magnetic blue dots. Like a bubble bath.

BLAKE

How does it feel?

CHRIS

It feels like being connected to oneness....

[*beat*] Read it to me, please. The letter I left on the table.

**BLAKE picks it up; but CHRIS continues
speaking, blindfolded:**

CHRIS

Chris, I will always love you.
And wish never to have to let you go.
Is what I want these words to say.
But, you are on a journey, away from me.
There's nothing more I can give you now.
Nothing more I can say.
More money, you'd turn into Heroin.
So I give you these words, and this promise.
There is an escape. Your soul knows it.
And when you find it, come back home. But not before.
The light will always be on for you. And I will always love you.
But we will not die with you in your addiction.

BLAKE

[*under his breath*] Word for word.

DeLUNA

Where are you, Chris?

CHRIS

On a rock, in the middle of a roaring river.
With stars blanketing the sky above.
Uncountable.
Flowing themselves, like a river.
They're marking a path for me to Oneness.

BLAKE

To *oneness*?

CHRIS

With sobriety. And with my mother's love.
The air is warm. I'm safe. I'm fine.
At last, I'm free.

BLAKE

How?

CHRIS

Because I am valued. And I know it
The most important thing in the world is to be valued.
And the second most important thing is to like it.
To *know* you are valued.

DeLUNA

I'm not sure I understand.

CHRIS

I'm not sure I do either.

Except, I can see now that Heroin is unimportant.

Doing Heroin is unimportant.

Do you understand?

DeLUNA

Maybe not *your* way.

Tell us, what *is* important.

CHRIS

The voice of someone who loves you.

Hearing her voice.

And stopping hurting her.

And something else.

BLAKE

Yes?

CHRIS

I can come back here.

Write that down:

The important thing is, I can come back here whenever I need to.

CHRIS removes his eyeshades.

CHRIS

I was scared.

I can tell you, I was scared.

But now I'm not.

DeLUNA

[*beat*] It works.

SCENE 10 – A NO-GO TRIP

Stage center: Same room. A new coat on the coat tree (in place of Chris's coat). THOMAS is coming out of a trip, lying on the couch. He sits up, and takes his eyeshades off. DeLUNA and BLAKE are seated.

BLAKE

Thomas?

THOMAS

[*looking*] What? Did I say something?

DeLUNA

Nothing at all.

THOMAS

I didn't think so, 'cause nothing happened. I didn't go anywhere.

Did I?

I don't remember going anywhere.

I don't remember *seeing* anything.

Maybe you gave me the wrong dose.

Or the wrong address.

Or a placebo.

Is that it?

Or is it that you two are incompetent?

Not very thrilling. Not at all frightening.

Not a place you'd want to send a postcard from.

I was thinking to myself:

This stuff could be poisonous; and leave it to people like you to try and find out.

In fact, just leave it to people like you to chase after things that change nature.

Ridiculous.

Don't kid yourselves thinking this is some kind of cure for anything. How?

Do you want to know something?

BLAKE

What?

THOMAS

Modern medicine knows absolutely nothing about curing depression.

Antidepressants do nothing more than treat symptoms with drugs.

What cure is that? I say: What cure? Just more chemical dependence.

"Fuck you" I tell modern medicine.

BLAKE

We'll give you your money back, Thomas.

THOMAS

You're a sarcastic, son-of-a-bitch.

Do you know that?

THOMAS stands. They all stand. He takes his coat from the coat tree, and puts it on.

THOMAS

You're fired.

THOMAS exits.

SCENE 11 – ST. PAUL

Stage center: Same room. Three coats on the coat tree. OLIVIA is coming out of a trip, lying on the couch. She sits up, and takes her eyeshades off. DeLUNA and BLAKE are seated, and begin taking notes.

DeLUNA

Are you all right, Olivia?

OLIVIA

[*looking*] You wouldn't believe it. What I just saw.

DeLUNA

What?

BLAKE

Where was it?

OLIVIA

Nowhere. In empty space. The voices I heard called it "astral."

DeLUNA

What voices?

OLIVIA

It sounded like babies. Not-yet born babies.

BLAKE

Like in 2001?

DeLUNA

Be serious, Blake.

OLIVIA

No. Different from that.

BLAKE

How?

OLIVIA

But that exact same feeling, in the movie.
It was a kingdom of wide open being.
It was huge. I mean *huge*.
And they talked to me ... I don't know how.
I just felt the words.
They told me not to be afraid. And they told me a secret.
Something they didn't know I knew. And that makes all the difference, doesn't it?

DeLUNA

What secret? that you already knew.

OLIVIA

To give thanks, to the mushrooms that brought me to them. And to *feel* the truth.
And I did. And it was wonderful.
That doesn't make a lot of sense, does it?

BLAKE

It doesn't *not* make sense.

OLIVIA

And then I felt it. The presence of God. Overwhelmed by God, so near to me.

BLAKE

The "mysterium tremendum" Huxley called it.

OLIVIA

God is overwhelming. And I never use that word.
And then I heard it. Or felt it. I was overwhelmed.
There it is again: that word, I never use.
But I can tell you: it *is* overwhelming. Like an ocean.
Gratitude. For being. For just everything being, and my being a part of it.
Thank you, God. Thank you.
And that's when they told me: That being survives.
And that's what Jesus taught Paul.

BLAKE

Olivia? Is this something from today? Or something you've brought from church?

OLIVIA

Dad and I talked about it. After he had his psychedelic experience.

DeLUNA

[*surprised*] Your *dad* had a psychedelic experience? When?

OLIVIA

I thought you knew.

He was in a terrible depression, at 65, when he found out about his cancer.

And he left Seattle to go to Johns Hopkins, to be a guinea pig there, like me here.

And those six hours at Johns Hopkins changed his life.

He calls Johns Hopkins one of the single most meaningful events of his life....

[*beat*] He's still alive, and kicking, and fighting his cancer.

DeLUNA

You have no idea what you've just done for my morale.

BLAKE

Ditto.

OLIVIA

But the difference is, now I know Dad was right, about St. Paul.

Before I just believed it. Now I'm certain of it.

DeLUNA

Anything else you'd like to tell us?

OLIVIA

Nope. That's about it.

OLIVIA stands. They all do. BLAKE helps her on with her coat.

OLIVIA

How can I thank you enough?

BLAKE

You already have.

DeLUNA

Take care.

OLIVIA

You, too.

OLIVIA exits.

SCENE 12 – YOUNG’S DREAM

With a spot on him YOUNG, dressed in green cammies and wearing an overcoat, enters. He takes off the coat, and hangs it on the coat tree. He then sits on the couch. The stage is dimly lit in red, except for the glow of a dark-red stone, upstage right. YOUNG leans back –

YOUNG

For four years I tracked my dreams to the underworld.
It felt like forty.
In the end, I was on a flight of stairs down, into a deep, rocky cave. Way down.
On the final step I turned, to look back,
when a sudden gust of wind blew me off balance, and I stumbled,
landing on all fours in a stream of water running through the cave.

**A figure, clad in raven feathers, enters to
place the head of a horse over Young’s
head.**

I felt my head covered with the head of a horse.
And I crawled with it on me, along the water,
until I came to a tree, standing close to the rock face of the cave.
Above the tree shone a dark-red stone.

**A second spot lights up a tree, standing
beneath the glowing red stone.**

I stood. From the tree hung the body of a man, by the neck.
When I approached, he released himself, and jumped down.
The rope fell to the ground and became a snake.
The man pointed, and the snake slithered up the tree.
Behind the tree I could see a blind girl, feeling the wall of the cave.
Taking me by the hand, the man led me to her, and directed her hands to my face.
To the horse’s head that was over my face. She touched it, and moved to kiss it.
I pulled back; and when I did, she climbed into the tree, as well,
pulled out a knife, cut free the severed head of a bearded man, and climbed down.
The head was oozing blood in her hands.
And she offered it to me.
I pushed her away, in horror; and she angrily threw the head at my feet.
Picking up a whip from the ground, she blindly lashed out at me.
I splashed away from them.
And the man slapped the tree with his hand.
Instantly there was a flash of lightning in the cave; and they disappeared.

The figure removes the horse's head from Young, and exits with it.

YOUNG

I wiped what I could of the blood from myself, and looked around.
In the farthest corner of the cave I could see a red sun beginning to rise.
I watched it, until lizard-like creatures crawled in, and completely covered it.
I walked toward the last light there was.
A glowing, dark-red light at the back of the cave.
When I reached it, I stretched out my arms to it,
pleading for the wall of the cave to open. And it did.
And out came a flock of crows and a figure, clad in raven feathers.
She carried a lantern; and for an instant the light from it was so bright,
I had to throw my arm across my eyes.
When it went out, the walls were lit, and covered with graffiti.

YOUNG stands, and the raven-feathered figure enters to help him remove his green cammies and don a white robe. As all the lights dim, a spot follows YOUNG as he returns to the couch and to his sleep. The figure exits; and the sound of a single, long note from a trumpet ends the scene.

SCENE 13 – CODA

Stage center: Same room as Scene 12. Three coats on the coat tree. Lights return. YOUNG, on the couch, asleep. DeLUNA and BLAKE enter and sit.

DeLUNA and BLAKE speak in quiet tones to each other, so as not to disturb YOUNG.

DeLUNA

Shh. Let's let him sleep.

BLAKE

Do you want to go someplace else?

DeLUNA

I think this is it. Sorry.

BLAKE

Is it over?

DeLUNA

I'm afraid so.

BLAKE

What a ride!

DeLUNA

My pleasure, Dr. Blake.

BLAKE

Mine, too, Nita.

But when you're as selfish as me, you don't want to let go.

DeLUNA

What did you say?

BLAKE

Oh, my God.

I didn't actually mean....

I meant that I don't really want to leave you.

DeLUNA

What are you thinking?

BLAKE

[*pause*] I think I've been falling in love with you.

DeLUNA

What?? Are you serious?

BLAKE

I've never been so serious in my life.

DeLUNA

You don't look it.

You look like you're in outer space or something....

[*beat*] What have you done, Blake?

Have you taken some of the psilocybin?

Tell me the truth.

BLAKE

What if I have?

DeLUNA

You're kidding me.
What if you have?
What if you have?
What are we going to do?

BLAKE

Why?

DeLUNA

Because you're not thinking straight.
Have you lost your mind?
You may have just jeopardized all the work we've done. *All of it.*

BLAKE

What have we been doing here?
But trying to prove that it's not crazy to open up your mind.

DeLUNA

You *are* crazy.

BLAKE

To connect areas that normally don't speak to each other.
That's all I've done.
Like Dee. And Donna. And Michael. And Olivia. And her father.

DeLUNA

Psilocybin, unescorted. *That's* what you've done.

BLAKE

You did it to me.... Leaving you.

DeLUNA

You've never even touched me. We have nothing in common.

BLAKE

We'll have plenty in common.
We'll work, side-by-side, and desk-to-desk, for the rest of our lives.

DeLUNA

You say the damndest things.

BLAKE

You want to know how to make love stay?
Simple.

DeLUNA

How?

BLAKE

I'll tell you: Tell her you want a lock of her hair...
Give me a lock of *your hair*, as a memento.
Then burn it in a brass, incense burner.
Facing east.
Reciting Spanish love poems.
Remove the ashes, and use them to paint a mustache on your upper lip.
And tell her you're someone new.
She'll stay.

DeLUNA

Do you know how stupid you look, sitting there, saying that?

BLAKE

I must look stupid, sitting here, saying this. But I feel enlightened.
Like for the first time in my life I've reached my oasis.

DeLUNA

And I'm old enough to know better.

BLAKE

What have we been doing here? Tell me.

DeLUNA

I don't know about you, but I'm out to change things. Change opioid addiction.
Change Big Pharma. Change Big Washington, if necessary.

BLAKE

But there's no point changing the world if you lose the moon.

DeLUNA

There you go again.

BLAKE

We're a team, and I want to stay a team.
Let's not lose it, and then regret it the rest of our lives.

DeLUNA

You're a dreamer.

BLAKE

I'm a loner, a Weaver, a snowbound believer in love.

DeLUNA

You're a dreamer, and you need a therapist.

BLAKE

Why? To see if I *really* love you?

DeLUNA

Sí.

BLAKE

Then you need one, too.

DeLUNA

Why?

BLAKE

To see if *you* really love *me*.

Pause.

BLAKE

Nita?

DeLUNA

Yes?

BLAKE

Marry me.

DeLUNA

This is getting ridiculous. Out of hand. I'm not even divorced yet.

BLAKE

Then marry me a soul marriage; and we can do the other bit later.

DeLUNA

You don't even know if you love me.

BLAKE

I *know* I love you. Like I can feel it.

And I know it would be a sin to blow it.

DeLUNA

[*beat*] The most beautiful thing I ever read was:

It's a sin to kill a mockingbird.

BLAKE

It is, now that I think about it.
It is the most beautiful.

DeLUNA

Are you playing me?
Knowing I'm hurting inside?

BLAKE

Things happen for a reason. Even things that hurt for a while.

DeLUNA

You're out to make everything a disaster.
What if people find out?
We're only finishing Phase Two.
We still have to get approval for Phase Three.
You'll finish everything off for good.

BLAKE

Why do you say that? What have we been doing, then?

DeLUNA

Being sensible. And professional.
Except, maybe, for Dee, of course.
And keeping our noses clean.

BLAKE

That was back when we started.
Back before we got to know each other.
Before Dee.

DeLUNA

It's *Dee*, isn't it? Why you think you're in love with me.

BLAKE

I fell in love with you because of *you*.
Maybe she helped a little, my realizing it. But it's *you*.

DeLUNA

You're doing this all wrong.
And it's a shame.
Because I *do* like you.

BLAKE

Okay, how's this?

BLAKE stands, walks to the coat tree, and tilts it toward him.

BLAKE

There's a young British playwright who's brilliant, named Tim Crouch.
And he's written a play called An Oak Tree that I love.
It's about a daughter who's hit and killed, accidentally,
on a road by an oak tree.
Leaving her father who's completely lost without her.
Her mother had died of cancer, and she was all he had left.
But it's all in the mind.
There's no road. There's no car. There's no oak tree. Not even a father.
Only a coat tree like this one that a volunteer from the audience hugs,
being fed his lines by Crouch.
Heart broken, hugging an imaginary tree in place of an imaginary daughter.

BLAKE begins hugging the coat tree; and as he does, he loses his balance, and he and the coat tree tumble to the floor. DeLUNA jumps up, goes to him, and helps him up. The two of them put the coat tree and coats back in place. Then BLAKE suddenly grabs DeLUNA into his arms.

DeLUNA

[*struggling, a bit*] Blake, what do you think you're doing?

BLAKE

I saw you smile.

He moves toward kissing her. She pushes him off (again with only a modicum of resistance).

DeLUNA

Good God, Blake, stop it.

BLAKE

I love you.

DeLUNA

You're acting like an animal.

BLAKE

I'm abandoned.

He kisses her, becoming more passionate as she begins to kiss him back. While they are kissing YOUNG sits up on the couch and makes an intentional cough.

BLAKE and DeLUNA abruptly step apart and begin readjusting their clothing. YOUNG starts laughing. He happens to have one of those infectious laughs, that catches.

DeLUNA

[to BLAKE] Is this the way it's supposed to go? Like this?...
Why are you looking at me like that?

BLAKE

"A fool sees not the same tree a wise man sees."

DeLUNA

Who said that?

BLAKE

I did.

DeLUNA

Oh.

BLAKE

My namesake ... Mrs. Blake.

DeLUNA

Dr. deLuna, thank you.

He kisses her again.

END