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# Me Again

By Tommy Blaze

I don't know  
if what happened to me was real  
or if it was just a dream.  
I'm not even sure  
that that matters anymore.  
But I feel like I owe  
you all an apology.  
If you're going to believe any  
of this or even understand it,  
I feel like I'm going to have  
to start at the beginning.  
Looking back,  
it seems like only yesterday.  
I fell in love  
with my wife, April,  
when I was about 5 years old.  
Richie, do you want  
some honeysuckle tea?  
I guess.  
I learned then,  
when it comes to women,  
there's always a catch.  
You're my fella, Richie,  
and when a girl meets a fella,  
they end up having tea  
and getting married.  
Oh.  
I want to be a spaceman  
and fly to the moon.  
Dinner  
time, April! Come on in.  
Okay, Mom!  
We'll get married when you  
get back from the moon.  
I'll wait for you.  
I don't care how much  
you plan for your future.  
You don't know what it's  
actually going to be like  
until you live it.  
The years passed quickly  
and with them came children,  
bills, and responsibilities.  
There's never enough

time, money, or freedom.  
Somewhere between honeysuckle  
tea and "How did I get here?"  
my life happened, and I didn't  
recognize myself anymore.  
I know a man must die,  
but I didn't know  
that he was bound to die twice.  
Long before  
he's put into the ground,  
he must trade the man of his  
youth, his goals and dreams,  
for mowing lawns,  
taking out the trash  
and weekends of antiquing.  
Nice ride, Mr. Chaplin.  
That's kind of like dying, right?  
# And she saw me #  
# I put my foot in my mouth  
and started walking #  
# So why #  
# What's the problem #  
I don't regret marrying  
April and having a family.  
I regret not really  
understanding what that life  
would look like.  
I wasn't prepared for it.  
April got tired of me passing  
through life like a sleepwalker  
and asked for a separation.  
I wasn't prepared  
for that, either.  
Wake up, sunshine!  
Breakfast is served.  
What time is it?  
It is Sunday.  
That's what time it is.  
Oh, another Sunday already.  
Oh.  
Do you know I've been preaching  
to the same people for 15 years  
and nothing changes?  
Can't somebody else do it?

Can't somebody else be you?

No.

Not only does that defy  
the laws of physics,  
nobody would want  
to be you right now.

Fried calamari?

What do you want from me?

I run an Italian restaurant.

Look, Rich, I know  
your wife threw you out,  
and your kids  
want nothing to do with you,  
you're burnt out  
on your job; but, Buddy,  
start looking at things  
from the bright side.

Okay, I guess there  
is no bright side.

You ever wish you  
were someone else,  
so that you could be  
free to live the life  
you were supposed to?

Who doesn't?

Look at me.

I was supposed to be  
a hotshot Hollywood director.  
Instead, I run a restaurant  
for the meanest guy  
on the planet.

Look, you play the hand  
you were dealt.

I'll see you in church.

I'll see you later.

Pastor? You got a minute  
before the service  
this morning?

Sure, come on in,  
Bill, Maggie, baby.

So, how can I help you?

It's about our baby.

She's just a baby.

It's not her fault.

You're always taking her side!

Guys!

Look, we didn't plan on  
the financial burden of a baby.

It's putting a strain  
on our marriage.

We're hoping you  
had some advice.

Well, figure it out soon,  
because lawyers are  
more expensive than children.

I've got to get ready  
for church.

What are you looking at?

So, how does the story  
of the prodigal son end?

Kid comes home  
after squandering  
away his father's fortune,  
and he is... you guys are going  
to love this... pretty much,  
he is treated  
like a rock star!

Huh?

Well, you know,  
we need a rock star.

Wah, wah, wah, wah!

Huh?

This guy's on the drums!

Doo-doo-doo-doo-doo-doo-doo  
doo-doo-doo-whoosh!

Ah!

The crowd goes wild!

And the respectful son,  
right,

the guy who stayed home,  
and he did the right thing,  
you know what he got?

Does anybody here know  
what the guy

that did the right thing got?

Nada, nothing, zip!

So, there you have it!

Life is unfair.

That about covers it.  
Well, thank you.  
That was interesting.  
Let's everyone  
pick up their hymnals.  
Obnoxious, when  
subtlety isn't enough.  
The  
following live presentation  
is a paid for advertisement.  
Did you ever  
wish you were someone else?  
You have no idea.  
Have you ever wondered,  
'Is this all there is?'"  
Every day.  
Hello, folks.  
I'm Big Earl, and I'm here  
to tell you about a program  
guaranteed to give you  
a new heart and spirit,  
but you have to act fast.  
Time is running out.  
Call now.  
Big Earl.  
Got that?  
So, Michael, how's school?  
Why is it when parents don't  
know what to say to their kids,  
they ask about school?  
Well, school is important.  
I don't like this food.  
So, what's new  
with you Briar?  
Nothing.  
Who are you texting?  
It's really none  
of your business.  
She's in love with a boy.  
Shut up, dork-a-lo!  
Children!  
I'm not a child!  
So, everybody  
enjoying their meal?

What is it?

Well, young lady,  
that is the house special,  
a sauteed tripe  
in a mongoose marinade.

Hmm?

Ah, I'm needed  
in the kitchen.

Bon appetit.

What's a tripe?

What's a mongoose?

You don't have to eat that.

Eighty-six the marinade!

Hey, Mikey!

Where's your mom?

Probably in the garage.

Hey, maybe next week  
we could go to that,  
that game place you like.

Hey.

What's all this?

I'm cleaning out the garage  
and turning it  
into an art studio.

What started all this?

I haven't painted  
since college.

I like to finish what I start.

You're saying that I don't?

Well, there's the playhouse  
you were supposed to build  
the kids.

You said, "What's the point?"

They're just going to  
grow out of it one day."

And then there was the mug that  
Ruby was supposed to paint me  
for Mother's Day.

I think that was  
about the time you checked out  
and just, you know,  
stopped trying.

Okay, but what  
else besides those?

What else didn't you finish?  
Um, oh, yeah, our marriage.  
I'm not the one who  
asked for a separation.  
But you've changed, Richie.  
You are not  
the man that I married.  
I mean, it's like  
you're a roommate,  
and all you do is complain about  
how unfulfilled your life is.  
I mean, do you have any idea  
what it does to a woman's spirit  
to feel like,  
you know, she's an anchor  
around her husband's neck?  
It's not like that at all.  
I mean, haven't you  
ever wondered  
if there was more out there?  
More than us?  
I mean, more than me?  
That's not what I meant.  
I have waited for you  
to figure out what's important,  
Richie, okay?  
And after 15 years  
and 3 kids, I am still waiting.  
How come I'm  
not in the picture?  
Because you  
haven't wanted to be.  
April, wait a second.  
April!  
Obnoxious, when  
subtlety isn't enough.  
Big Earl here,  
reminding you of a program guaranteed  
to wash the old you away!  
Make the first step  
for a new you.  
Call now.  
Your stone heart  
will be replaced,

but you have to act now.  
Time is running out.  
Well, he's persistent.  
I'll give him that.  
Call now.  
I'm talking to you.  
Hey, I need cheering up.  
You want to come over  
with a movie or two  
from your massive collection?  
Cool, see you in a bit.  
I don't get what  
you're doing, Lord.  
I was supposed to be  
a great man,  
a leader,  
someone who inspired  
people, Lord,  
but instead I feel  
like I'm nothing.  
I'm nothing.  
I'm ordinary.  
I'm miserable.  
I'm losing my family.  
Please, God,  
help me to be the man  
you want me to be.  
Help me to be...  
anybody except who I am.  
Tony?  
Tony?  
Time to get up, Mr. Bastion.  
The sluggard craves  
and gets nothing,  
but the desire of the  
diligent is fully satisfied.  
No eggs this morning for you.  
The doctor says  
you need more fiber.  
Uh, where am I?  
Now, don't you start making  
a fuss about this breakfast.  
Fresh fruit never hurt anybody.  
Who, who are you?

I'm, I'm, I'm sorry, ma'am.  
I don't know what happened.  
I think I just... I must've  
been sleepwalking  
and, and wandered into  
the wrong house.  
Are you all right,  
Mr. Bastion?  
I, I, I've gotta...  
I'll be going now.  
I'm, I'm, I'm sorry.  
I don't, I don't  
know what happened.  
I'm sorry.  
Mr. Bastion,  
you open this door.  
You're scaring me.  
Wake up, wake up, Rich.  
Wake up.  
Ai!  
Ah!  
Hold on, Mr. Bastion.  
I'm going to call your doctor.  
I knew something like  
this would happen.  
Oh, okay, this  
isn't happening here.  
This is just a bad dream, Rich.  
He's having another  
one of his spells,  
and I can't find his  
heart pills anywhere.  
Mr. Bastion,  
you come back here.  
You need to take your pills!  
Well, looks like he  
tied one on again last night.  
Tony, Tony!  
Oh, oh!  
Goodness!  
Okay.  
It's so good  
to see you, buddy.  
Good to see you,

too, Mr. Bastion.  
What?  
Maybe we should  
get in the car.  
You come  
back here, Mr. Bastion!  
You need to take  
your medicine!  
Good idea.  
Let's get out of here!  
Yeah.  
Something really weird  
is happening, Tony.  
I know.  
I don't know what it is,  
but traffic's backed  
up for miles.  
Hey, Carl, take the side roads. Stay off the  
highway.  
Tony, look at me.  
What do you see?  
Well, I see a very brilliant  
and successful restaurateur.  
No, who do you see?  
Well, I see you, Mr. Bastion.  
You want something to drink?  
Thank you.  
You're not going  
to believe this,  
but when I woke up this  
morning, it was...  
Ah!  
What is this, whiskey?  
Frank, do you feel all right?  
No, I'm not!  
I'm tired, and my joints ache.  
My stomach is on fire!  
I need some air!  
I need some... ah!  
He's having a heart attack!  
Ah, ah, ah!  
Tony, what is happening to me?  
Frank, do you have  
your heart pills?

I am not Frank!  
Ah, man, time  
to look for another job.  
You need to give him a pill!  
No, sir.  
What if I get some of that  
heart attack spit on me.  
I'm Rich!  
You're going to be  
rich and dead,  
if you don't take this pill!  
Rich, Rich Chaplin!  
Tony, help me.  
Help me, Tony.  
Help me.  
Help me, Tony.  
Oh, oh,  
I'm starving!  
Oh, oh.  
What?  
I need food.  
You've gotta be kidding me.  
Butter?  
Nothing you do,  
nothing you do  
will ever be good enough.  
You have a terrible smile.  
Who do you think you are?  
Oh, come on!  
I don't know  
what kind of game you're playing, Chloe,  
but you'd better not be  
ate for this photo shoot.  
This is your last chance  
with this client!  
You got that, Chloe?  
Last chance!  
Hello, hello.  
You're ugly.  
Work harder.  
You're worthless?  
Wow, this is  
getting ridiculous.  
Oh.

Hello, this is Tony.  
Tony, it's me again.  
Yes, ma'am, what  
can I do for you?  
It's me, Rich Chaplin,  
your best friend!  
Look, lady, I am in no mood  
for this kind of thing today.  
Listen to me, carefully.  
Your name is  
Frabruzzo Morelli.  
You've called yourself Tony  
since the second grade,  
because you didn't like  
the name Frabruzzo.  
When we were 12, I helped you  
break the world's record  
for stuffing the most frogs  
down a person's pants.  
I need your help, Tony.  
And if you think it was  
weird when I was your boss,  
just wait until you see  
me as a starving model  
in 4-inch heels!  
You do realize  
that you look like  
a beautiful woman?  
I'm aware of that.  
Is there anything  
to eat in here?  
I'm starving.  
Would it be weird  
if I asked you out?  
I mean, technically, you're not  
you anymore, and we have a...  
Dude, get over the way that I  
look and help me figure out  
what is happening to me.  
Of course, you're right.  
All right, uh, okay, did you  
have a recent encounter  
with a genie or a leprechaun?  
No.

Aunicorn?

No.

All right,  
rules that out.

Are you now or have you ever  
been a terminator, replicator,  
or any other form  
of bio-robotic being?

Ah.

All right, that rules out science fiction.

All right, were you recently  
bitten, perhaps, by a...

Okay, you know what?

This is, this is  
getting us nowhere.

Whew.

Really?

Well, all right.

What is the last thing you  
remember before this happened?

I was, I was at the church  
waiting for you to come over.

Yeah, but that's just it.

I did come over last night.

We watched movies 'til

**like 2:**

You're telling me you  
don't remember that?

No, I don't remember that!

This is so weird.

All right, so then  
what happened?

I don't know.

I was watching TV.

This guy was talking about  
the new me,  
and I prayed.

You prayed?

Yeah, I prayed.

So what?

That changes  
everything, friend.

Divine intervention.

It's a whole other ball game.  
'It's A Wonderful Life"?  
conic masterpiece.  
The answer to your  
dilemma rests in here.  
You're saying I'm  
supposed to watch this movie?  
I'm saying you're  
supposed to live this movie.  
Obviously, your  
prayers were answered.  
Clearly, you have  
something you need to do.  
I suggest you go with it.  
Go with it?  
I'm a man of God!  
I don't believe in  
magic or fantasy!  
God doesn't work this way!  
What?  
You mean miracles?  
Okay, if I'm  
supposed to help you,  
the first thing you  
are going to do is eat.  
Yeah.  
Oh.  
Hello?  
So now you answer your phone.  
Are you flaking  
on me again, Chloe?  
You called earlier.  
Yes, Chloe, that's what  
agents do, and as your agent,  
I'm now asking why  
aren't you at the shoot?  
There is no need  
for you to yell like that.  
It's disrespectful.  
I'm texting you  
the directions again.  
Okay, go with it.  
# You're shy  
Come on #

# It's time  
to lose yourself #  
# So go on, get free #  
# Right underneath  
your feet now #  
# And get on the backbeat #  
# Weight of the world  
off your shoulders #  
# Put on the repeat  
and rock it 'til it's over #  
# Come get  
on the backbeat #  
# Get it up  
and under your feet now #  
# If you've got the backbeat #  
# Then let me  
hear you say yeah #  
# Here we go #  
# Lose control #  
# Let's leave this world  
behind us #  
Where is she?  
The client  
is losing confidence.  
Not to worry.  
I'm sure she'll walk  
in any second now.  
Hi, guys.  
Sorry I'm late.  
Interesting choice.  
Tell me you can fix that.  
Maybe with a spatula  
and a blow torch.  
Poor girl needs some  
lessons in self-defense.  
Who did this to her?  
You've really  
done it now, Chloe.  
Look at you.  
I told you this  
was your last chance.  
I don't feel so good.  
I feel dizzy.  
Get it together, you freak,

or I will ruin you  
in this town.  
Hello, Chaplin residence.  
Hello, Briar?  
Yeah, who's this?  
It's...  
Wrong number, sorry.  
So, who was  
that on the phone?  
Some weirdo, I guess.  
Well, I guess  
that's all that's left.  
I can ask Colin  
to come haul it away.  
This is not the way  
it was supposed to happen.  
He promised me.  
Who, Dad?  
How do you know if a boy  
s going to break  
his promise to you?  
Is there something  
that you want to tell me?  
No, what are  
you talking about?  
Ooh, yes, yeah, I like it.  
Hey, there you go.  
# I've got this joy  
right down in my heart #  
# It's gonna bubble,  
bubble out of my life #  
Wow, she looks awful.  
You got anything to eat?  
Tell me there is something  
you can do about her makeup?  
I could blend it a bit.  
Actually, the client  
likes this look, heroin chic,  
kind of a raw,  
post-modern nouveau.  
It's the latest thing  
in the enviro garbage  
toxic greenhouse thing.  
Right.

You, out!  
Chloe, in!  
Awful.  
Chloe, in!  
# I've got this joy, got this  
joy right down in my heart #  
# It's gonna bubble,  
bubble out of my life #  
# It's gonna bubble,  
bubble out of my life #  
Hey.  
Yeah, here we go.  
She looks wounded.  
Ha-ha.  
I like it!  
Show me rage!  
Oh, yeah, that's it,  
more rage.  
More like that,  
more like it.  
Oh, yeah, yeah,  
nice, nice.  
Oh, that's nice.  
Is she dead?  
If she is, these pictures  
will be worth a fortune.  
Chloe, Chloe!  
Chloe, Chloe!  
Am I dead?  
Is this heaven?  
Why is everything so white?  
It's April and the kids!  
That fish looks like  
t's having a spaz attack.  
Are you serious?  
I'm a fish?  
I think it's because  
we're eating its family.  
I don't care what Tony says.  
This has gone too far.  
Tony said to tell  
you guys it's on the house, tonight.  
Oh, tell him  
thank you for us.

Thanks for coming.  
Sure.  
April! Hey, over here!  
Mom?  
Mm-hm?  
When is Daddy coming home?  
Um, Daddy and I are,  
you know,  
we're taking some time apart,  
so we can figure out  
what's best for all of us.  
How is taking  
time apart best for anyone?  
Listen, you guys, I know  
that this is very hard for you  
to understand, okay?  
It's very hard  
for me to explain.  
Well, haven't you known  
Daddy your whole life?  
What are you waiting  
for him to do?  
Sometimes,  
you know, your father,  
he needs a push  
in the right direction.  
I'm here in the room!  
Well, what's next?  
I push harder.  
Remind me never  
to get married.  
Okay, you guys, come on.  
Let's go, everybody.  
Hey, come back, kids!  
April, it's me.  
It's time I get  
a little rough with him.  
Come on, honey, let's go.  
Ruby!  
Yeah, Ruby, over here.  
I love you, honey.  
I promise to try harder.  
No, no, no!  
Hello, fishy.

No.  
You're so pretty.  
Whoa, whoa, whoa!  
Hey, stop that.  
Now, what is that?  
Wait a minute.  
Oh, no.  
Come on!  
I'm a baby?  
What's the matter  
with her now?  
There's nothing  
the matter with her, Bill.  
She's a baby.  
Wait a minute.  
That's Bill and Maggie.  
Why does she keep doing this?  
I mean she starts crying,  
and she stops crying.  
I mean...  
Babies cry.  
They're my parents?  
Oh, this is not good.

**It's 2:**

I mean, isn't it bad enough  
I've got to work overtime?  
Now she won't even let me sleep.  
She's not doing  
it on purpose.  
Guys, really?  
You're going to fight now?  
Now look what you did.  
Now she's crying.  
Right, I'm the one  
that made her cry.  
Come on.  
Hello?  
This is no way  
to treat a baby.  
Look, babe,  
I've gotta get back to bed.  
Ooh, I've got a full diaper,  
and I think I

might have a rash.  
I'm pretty hungry down here.  
Oh, now we're talking.  
Boy, that's some  
good stuff right there.  
Mm-mm.  
Ooh, I've got a little  
gurgle in my stomach.  
There's a little something  
to show my appreciation.  
Oh, now, was that so hard?  
Babies are people, too.  
Goodnight, sweet girl.  
They just want a little love.  
Wait, baby.  
Hush, not yet.  
One, two, three.  
Happy birthday!  
Now let's see  
about that peach pie.  
Yeah, yeah.  
Come on, grandma.  
Mama, come on.  
Open up your presents, Mama,  
and then we can eat supper.  
Read my card, Mama.  
My eyes,  
I can't, I can't see.  
Muriel, you lose  
your glasses again?  
I guess so.  
Here you go, Mama.  
Thank you.  
For the best great grandmother  
anybody could ever have.  
Love, Kizzie.  
Open up your presents, Mama.  
I'm hungry.  
Darryl!  
What?  
No, I shouldn't  
open these presents.  
Save those for her,  
for me later.

Of course.  
You must be tired  
after working all day.  
How old are you now?  
Kizzie, a lady  
never tells her age.  
You got that right.  
I still don't know  
how old you are.  
How old is grandma?  
Darla, please.  
What?  
How are things at the plant?  
Same thing every day.  
Why didn't you wear  
that jacket I love?  
Girl, it  
don't even fit anymore.  
But, you know,  
t's getting old anyway.  
They haven't won  
a game in 4 years.  
Something wrong over there.  
Mama,  
I told Charles,  
whenever you're ready,  
come stay with us.  
I can't imagine what it must  
be like living all alone.  
A toast.  
Whoa, whoa, wait a minute!  
Since when does Muriel  
allow alcohol in her house?  
It's tea, Reverend Green.  
It's just tea.  
Well, somebody  
should've told me.  
We did.  
Mama, I don't  
know how you did it.  
After Daddy died,  
I was so scared for you  
and for all of us.  
I remember hating seeing you

get up at the crack of dawn  
to go clean people's houses,  
working your fingers  
to the bones all them years  
to keep a roof over  
our heads and keep us kids  
out of trouble.  
I felt guilty  
for all your burdens.  
We all did.  
But if I heard  
you say it once,  
I heard you say it  
a million times.  
You told us,  
'It's not a burden.'  
It's a privilege.  
It's a privilege.  
And, today, Mama, we have  
the privilege of returning  
that love and commitment.  
So, happy birthday.  
We love you.  
Good, now let's go eat  
before she gets any older, huh?  
Reverend Green,  
could you lead us in prayer?  
Well, now, I don't often  
shy away from giving thanks,  
but this time, I think it's  
fitting if Muriel led us.  
Sure.  
Dear Lord, we thank you  
for this wonderful time  
and this beautiful day.  
Thank you, Lord,  
for the opportunity to share  
with this family  
and for showing me what  
t's supposed to look like,  
according to your plan.  
And, Lord, I don't know how  
much time I have left with them,  
but each moment is a blessing.

Amen.

Amen.

Ah, the little  
girl looks stressed.

You okay, Dorothy, huh?

Tony, where is he?

I've been trying to give  
this to him for days.

Have you seen him?

That depends.

You know, I, I really thought  
that this separation, you know,  
would, would make  
him come around,  
but I don't even think  
he cares anymore.

No, April, Rich cares.

He just, he hasn't  
been himself lately.

Okay, well,  
you know what?

You give this to him, okay?

And you tell him our  
court date is on Friday.

If he has something to say to  
me, he can just say it then, hm?

Yeah.

Ah, Rich, where are you, man?

Wake up, Colin!

I don't know why you think  
you can sleep in all day!

Look at this mess!

Olean up this room  
before you go out today.

Yes, ma'am.

Ma'am?

Are you doing drugs?

Um, I don't think so.

Let's go.

And be more productive today.

You.

You're a jerk!

Hello?

Where are you?

You were supposed to pick  
me up a half an hour ago.  
Briar?  
My mom's coming back soon,  
and now she's going to know.  
She's, she's  
going to know what?  
Stop acting like such a dufe  
ball and just get over here!  
Oh, I knew you were trouble.  
Where are you going?  
I'm not sure.  
I think I'm supposed  
to pick up Briar.  
Hey, you ever think about  
the way you raised me,  
that maybe you've been  
a little too lenient?  
When I get back,  
we should take some time  
to talk about proper discipline.  
# So why  
what's the problem #  
What is this  
garbage they listen to?  
Oh, nice touch, very homey.  
Michael, Ruby!  
Oh, hey, Colin.  
Hey?  
What's up, brother!  
Yeah, um, awkward.  
Ruby, give Daddy a big hug.  
You're not my daddy.  
No, I'm not your daddy, but  
how about a daddy-sized hug,  
right?  
Huh?  
Okay, all right.  
Uh, so what are you guys doing?  
We're playing  
in our playhouse.  
That's not a playhouse.  
It's as close as  
we're ever going to get to one.

What are you doing out here?  
Hi, honey.  
I missed you so much.  
No, whoa.  
Hey!  
What are you doing?  
I'm telling Mom  
you hugged a boy.  
That's right.  
You're telling your mother,  
because that was  
completely inappropriate.  
You'd better keep your  
mouth shut, you little twerp.  
Hey, that's no way  
to talk to your little brother.  
You're not supposed to  
have boys here when Mom's not home.  
He's got a point.  
You know, I shouldn't  
even be here.  
You are in big trouble,  
little lady.  
Come on, let's go.  
Wait, shouldn't  
we, uh, you know,  
wait for your  
mother to get home?  
My mom?  
Man, I sure would  
like to see her.  
Okay, if you don't stop  
acting like such a freak,  
I'm going to scream.  
Okay, okay.  
I'll see you guys later, huh?  
Bye.  
Bye.  
Hey, smile.  
Hey, wait up.  
What a freak.  
You want to tell  
me where we're going?  
This whole thing

was your idea.  
Wait, are you  
backing out now?  
You promised me.  
Wait, wait, wait, wait.  
Promised you what?  
You are just like my dad.  
My mom trusted him,  
and look where it got her.  
Wait, wait, just slow down.  
What are you talking about?  
The doctor's office.  
Remember?  
You're taking me  
to the doctor's office.  
Why?  
Are you sick?  
You're really going  
to make me say it?  
Isn't that enough  
that I've agreed to do it?  
Do what?  
Of all the... I can't believe  
you would...  
your mother would faint  
if she knew.  
You're in so much  
trouble right now!  
I can't... with Colin,  
of all people, Colin, me,  
with... young lady, you are  
grounded 'til the rapture!  
Briar, Briar!  
Briar Emily Chaplin, you get  
back here right this instant!  
Excuse me?  
There is no reason  
for you to be using  
that tone of voice  
with my daughter.  
April, I'm glad you're here. We've got major  
problems.  
I would prefer you address  
me as Mrs. Chaplin, Colin.

If it's not bad enough, our  
kids are playing in a pile  
of wood, Briar's about to make  
a huge mistake with a boy!  
What are you talking about?  
What boy?  
Me!  
Uh, not me, but Colin.  
You know what?  
I think it's time  
for you to leave.  
April, April, listen to me.  
Okay, listen to me.  
I need you to keep  
an open mind on this, okay?  
I am your husband.  
I'm him, me, Rich!  
Okay, that's  
not funny, Colin.  
No, you, you have  
to believe me, April.  
I am the father  
of your children.  
Okay, you know what?  
Don't you ever  
come here again, okay?  
I want you  
to stay away from Briar  
and stay away from my family.  
And if you do come around, I'm  
going to have you arrested.  
April?  
Or better yet,  
committed to an institution.  
April!  
Yeah, all right, all right.  
Can I help you, young man?  
It's me again.  
I liked you better  
when you were a hot babe.  
You have no idea  
the day that I've had.  
See, that's what's weird,  
because I just spent

the whole day with you.

What?

The other you, the real you,  
trying to figure  
this whole thing out.

You mean I'm  
still walking around?

Yes!

What was I like?

Same old miserable  
self-loathing,  
suck the energy out  
of a room guy you always are.

How can you stand  
to be around me?

Why are you still my friend?

Because you haven't  
always been like this.

Do you remember when  
I went to New York,  
and I fell on my face out there  
trying to make it  
in the movie business?

All I ever wanted was  
to direct and write movies,  
and it didn't work out.

I was in a bad way.

You, you drove all the way from  
the West Coast to come out there  
and straighten me out.

You saved my life...

by introducing me to Jesus,  
and I found out that I could  
actually have a better life  
than the life

I thought I wanted.

You know, Rich, you may not  
like yourself very much,  
but you've got the ability  
to make those people around you  
like themselves  
a whole lot more.

That's a gift, man.

I don't know about that.

Why is this happening to me?  
Am I being punished?  
Well, let's break it down.  
Have you learned anything?  
Have I learned anything?  
Do you know what I've learned?  
My youngest kids  
think that I'm a loser.  
My oldest daughter is about  
to make the biggest mistake  
of her life.  
And so,  
yeah, yeah, I've learned.  
I've learned  
that I am a terrible father  
and a husband.  
But we already knew that.  
I'm saying have you  
learned anything different?  
When is this going to end?  
Buddy, that's  
entirely up to you.  
Do you feel like you've  
touched rock bottom?  
Do you feel like you're  
at the end of your rope?  
Have you thought  
about just giving up?  
No!  
Look, things are going  
to get a lot worse  
before they get better.  
Every hero has to die before  
he could be born again.  
I'm a Christian.  
I'm already born again.  
Ah, I think you  
were born again.  
What you need right now is  
a crisis that's going to change  
the way you live your life.  
What do you mean?  
This may speed things up.  
April brought this by before.

I was supposed  
to give it to you.  
I was kind of hoping  
for the best.  
What is it?  
I don't know.  
I didn't read it.  
It's divorce papers.  
I've gotta get out of here.  
I've gotta go back home  
and save my marriage!  
Hey, hey!  
Come here!  
April!  
April, it's me!  
Go away, Colin.  
April, April, it's me!  
All right, boy, come on!  
Well, ma'am,  
I guess that about wraps it up.  
I have no idea  
what came over him.  
He frightens me.  
Well, it looks like he's got  
it bad for your daughter, April.  
Actually, I'm April.  
Oh, well, it's worse  
than I thought, then.  
Ah, a night in county  
ought to smarten him up.  
Have a good night.  
Thank you.  
Whew.  
Funny thing about life.  
Just when you think things  
can't get any worse,  
they usually do.  
Why me, Lord?  
Why did you put  
me in this story,  
if it wasn't going  
to have a happy ending?  
# Why me, Lord,#  
# Why can't I have

a happy ending #  
# Aboo-hoo, boo-hoo #  
# A crybaby you #  
# Aboo-hoo, boo-hoo #  
That's a little rude.  
Well, you were having  
a pity party out loud,  
so naturally I assumed  
everyone was invited.  
I thought I was alone.  
# Oh, I'm all alone #  
# And nobody cares,#  
# Ooh, I'm all alone #  
# Ooh, I'm all alone #  
You're never alone, son.  
You should know that.  
I know you.  
You're that guy  
from the TV commercial.  
And I know you.  
You're the guy who's ready  
to throw it all away,  
cause you think life's unfair.  
If you're so smart,  
why are you in jail?  
Oh, I like jail.  
Folks who end up in jail  
usually spend a lot of time  
thinking about the mistakes  
they made in life,  
their regrets.  
So, people who are at the end  
of their rope are more likely  
to buy into your program?  
If that's what it takes.  
Look, I'm gonna  
level with you.  
This is not me, okay?  
I'm not who you think I am.  
This, this is not...  
I'm not this person.  
I mean, this, this is not me.  
I'm serious.  
Why are you doing that?

You couldn't possibly  
understand how I feel.  
Here's what you  
need to understand.  
What you feel is a choice.  
Happiness is  
a decision you make.  
Hey, that door is locked.  
Of course, it's locked.  
This is a jail.  
Sleep on it, son.  
You're running out of time.  
Wait a minute.  
Hey! Hey!  
So, this is what  
rock bottom feels like.  
Dad, come back.  
It's over.  
I'm home.  
I'm home.  
April?  
Daddy?  
Ruby?  
It's okay, honey.  
I'm here.  
You were just  
having a bad dream.  
I want Daddy.  
But Daddy's right here.  
Daddy's not far away, honey.  
And he loves you very much.  
She's having a  
bad dream about Daddy again?  
She's going to be fine.  
We're all going to be fine.  
Tell me a story.  
A story?  
What's going on?  
We were just about  
to tell a story.  
Come on.  
Once upon a time, there was  
a man with two sons who lived  
on a farm, and one of the sons

thought that life on the farm  
was too hard of work  
and too boring,  
and so he left in search  
of something different.

He ran away?

Kind of.

He was jealous of the way that  
other people lived, rich people,  
people who he thought  
had exciting lives.

While he was away, he, he  
kept getting into all kinds of  
trouble, because he kept doing  
things that he knew were wrong.

Well, one day, the son decided  
that he had had enough  
of this life, and he just  
wanted to go home.

He felt that life really wasn't  
worth much without his family  
and his farm.

So, he went home,  
and his father  
was so excited to see him  
that he threw him  
this big party.

Did they have  
ice cream and a pinata?

Sure.

Why not?

Well, what does  
the story mean, Mom?

It means that no matter what  
you've done, who you've become,  
or how far you've strayed...

- that our heavenly Father  
and our earthly father  
will always welcome us  
back with open arms.

It's never too late to go home.

It's never too late.

Have you seen Dad?

Uh, yeah, he's around.

Why?

I wanted to talk  
to him about, you know,  
what happened last night with  
Colin and the police and all.  
Uh, yeah, I think  
that's a really good idea.  
Hey, would you mind watching  
Mike and Ruby  
for me this afternoon?  
I've gotta run out for a while.

Twenty bucks?

How about ten?

Dad always gives me 20.

Actually, I know  
for a fact that he doesn't.  
Your father and I have a lot  
more in common than you think.

Dad always  
burns the pancakes,  
so I guess you have  
that in common, too.

Hm?

Oh, oh!

Who wants to go to  
Uncle Tony's for breakfast?

Kids!

Hey, Uncle Tony.

Hey.

Good to see you.

April, I tried to give  
Rich these papers.

He wouldn't take them.

It's me again.

Rich?

Yeah, yeah.

I woke up last night as April.

Oh, buddy,  
you look terrible.

Oh, this, this is awful.

Actually,  
t's been pretty great.

I envy my wife's  
relationship with the kids.

All that's  
going to change now.  
Well, look, dude,  
whatever you're going to do,  
you'd better do it quick.  
You've got court  
in an hour.  
Okay, okay.  
What comes next?  
Well, you have  
to face your enemy,  
and you have to defeat it.  
Okay.  
Who's the enemy?  
Who's the enemy?  
You.  
You've always been  
your own worst enemy.  
All right, listen,  
after the kids finish eating,  
can you take them back  
to your place for a while?  
Yeah, yeah, sure.  
This ends today.  
Kids.  
Ha, ha.  
You, we need to talk.  
Excuse me.  
Who are you?  
Your Honor, that's  
a really good question.  
Just who are you?  
Do you even know anymore?  
You're a man of the cloth  
sitting in a divorce court.  
I mean, you don't even  
believe in divorce!  
You must be the defendant  
in Chaplin versus Chaplin.  
Well, wait.  
No, you're the one  
who filed,  
citing irreconcilable differences.  
Oh, we're

different all right.  
I'm nothing  
like you, not anymore.  
What do you want me to do?  
How about wake up?  
While you sit  
around complaining  
that nothing exciting  
ever happens in your life,  
all the good parts  
are passing you by.  
I get that now.  
I realize... what you need  
to realize  
is that it's not about  
being someone else.  
It's about being the best  
you that you can be.  
She has a point.  
I've tried,  
and it gets me nowhere.  
That's because you always  
try to do it by yourself.  
God wants to help you, Rich.  
He wants to help you do stuff,  
and if you don't let him,  
he might very well let you fail.  
And trust me, as time goes by,  
his methods can get  
a little extreme.  
Are you saying you want  
to withdraw your petition  
for a divorce?  
I'm saying  
that happiness is a choice.  
It's a conscious decision  
you have to make.  
Choose to step up  
and lead this family  
away from  
the brink of disaster.  
If you need help,  
just ask for it.  
God will help you.

What's it gonna be?

Ma'am?

Ma'am, you cannot just  
walk out on these proceedings.

Mrs. Chaplin!

Fight for us.

Fight for us, Rich.

We can't have a  
divorce without a petitioner.

Postponed 30 days.

Next.

I'm so sorry.

I was too late.

Are you saying they're  
better off without me?

Why?

My heart came apart.

I just want to go home, Lord.

I promise you that I will,

I will choose to rejoice.

I will choose to see

and appreciate all

of the blessings in my life,

but I can't do it alone, God.

Help me

to go home again.

Please.

Help me be me again.

Help me be me again.

I just want to be me again.

I just want to be me again.

- How come I'm not in the picture?

- Because you haven't wanted to be.

- Did you ever wish you were someone else?

- You have no idea.

Give you a

new heart and spirit.

- God doesn't work this way!

- You mean miracles?

Dad, come back.

I'm saying your

prayers were answered.

Have you lost your mind?

Tony?

It's me, Rich.  
Yeah.  
Tony, look at me.  
What do you see?  
I see a stark-raving lunatic.  
Thank you, Lord!  
I'm me again!  
It's the most amazing thing.  
I mean, I asked  
God for a miracle,  
and he blessed me with this  
unbelievable experience.  
I mean, I, I spent a week  
turning into all  
these different people,  
but all I wanted to do  
was just to come back home  
and be me again.  
A week?  
Dude, I just talked  
to you a half an hour ago.  
You told me  
to bring a movie over.  
It all happened  
in half an hour?  
Well, of course, it did.  
He's God, right?  
I mean, he could do anything.  
Today isn't by any chance Christmas, is it?  
Now you're pushing it.  
Yeah.  
You're a good friend, Tony.  
I'm glad I could help?  
There is one more thing I  
need you to do for me, though.  
I need you to go  
by the restaurant...  
Richie?  
What is this?  
I mean, Rich, I don't,  
I don't understand.  
What's to understand?  
I'm your fella.  
We're supposed to drink

honeysuckle tea  
and live happily ever after.  
Okay, Rich, listen.  
You need to stop,  
because I can't...  
I spent the last few years  
thinking that I missed out  
on something, that somehow life  
would've been better  
if I'd chosen another road.  
It took a miracle, April,  
to show me that there's nobody  
that I'd rather be than me,  
but not without you.  
I was thinking that we were  
getting in the way of you,  
you know, of you  
flying to the moon.  
I'm already there.  
April, forgive me.  
I can't get those years back,  
but I promise you  
that I will never take you  
or the kids for granted again.  
I love you.  
I love you.  
It's a playhouse!  
It's totally awesome!  
It looks like  
our date is over.  
It's just beginning.  
Daddy's home!  
Hey, honey, how are you?  
My baby!  
I had a dream  
you would come home.  
You did?  
Well, I'm home now.  
You want to go in  
and check it out?  
Go on, check it out.  
Go look!  
It's totally awesome!  
I know!

You, too, darling.  
You know you like it.  
I, uh, I have to run  
out for a little while,  
take care of some business.  
But I, I just got you back.  
I know, but I have to.  
I, I think it's  
part of the deal.  
Will you meet me at Tony's  
for lunch a little later?  
Absolutely.  
Go, go.  
Hey, Richie.  
Yeah?  
I'm glad you're home.  
Me, too.  
Thank you.  
What do you think?  
It's awesome!  
Can you believe it?  
Since when do I have  
to open my own door, Carl?  
It's not like you can't  
use the exercise, Frank.  
You're not Carl!  
Who in the blazes are you?  
I'm your wake-up call.  
Get out of my car!  
Obviously, you  
don't know who I am.  
Oh, I know who you are.  
You're a ticking bomb.  
You drink too much,  
you smoke too much,  
and you're so cruel  
and mean to everyone,  
your own heart is eating  
itself from the inside.  
What do you want?  
Who sent you?  
You're going to die soon,  
Frank, alone and miserable.  
You sound like

my cleaning lady,  
always talking about my soul.  
That woman's insufferable.  
Sometimes I wonder if that's  
why she still works for me.  
Areal smart lady.  
Here.  
Give us a chance.  
Come by and see me  
when you're ready to talk,  
but act soon.  
Believe me when I say that  
you don't have much time.  
Good morning!  
That's right,  
call your parents,  
and I'll make sure they find out  
about the lovely literature  
you keep under your bed.  
So, I understand you are  
in love with my daughter.  
Sorry.  
Yeah, I love her!  
What is this all about?  
Oh, maybe one day  
you'll get married  
and have a daughter of your own.  
I guess.  
And she'll grow up to pose  
in one of those magazines.  
No way.  
The girls in those magazines  
aren't anyone's daughter.  
Let me put it  
to you this way.  
The music you listen to,  
the magazines you read,  
you can't help but look  
at women as things.  
You can't be  
in love with a thing.  
My daughter, Briar,  
is not a thing.  
It's different for you,

all right?

You're an old guy  
and a pastor.

I was you once,  
not that long ago.

My daughter is about to do  
something foolish to prove  
that she loves you.

Prove to her that you love  
her, and don't ask her to.

The keys are in the sock.

Daddy?

Yes, honey?

I'm sick of eating here.

You know, I think I am, too.

It is so good to see all  
of you here together again.

So, how'd it go,  
you know, with the old man?

Perfect.

Just one last

loose end I need to tie up.

Rich, what are you doing?

You people don't know how  
to take care of your fish here.

Rich, you can't take my fish.

Come on, guys.

You asked to see us, Pastor?

Oh, yeah. Come on in, guys.

I've been thinking more about  
what we talked about last week,  
and I just wanted to apologize  
for the way that I treated you.

As I remember,

the problem was about money,  
the cost of raising a child.

Yeah, that's right.

Kids cost a fortune.

Actually, according

to the government,

the cost of raising a child  
from birth to 18 is \$160,140.

When you do the math, it comes  
out to about \$24.24 a day,

a little over a dollar an hour.  
You know what?  
I think we've heard enough.  
No, just, just wait a second.  
Let's just see what  
a dollar will get you.  
I mean, the question is whether  
or not it's worth it, right?  
For about a buck an hour,  
you get to witness a miracle  
of modern medicine every time  
you heal a scraped knee  
with a lollipop and a kiss.  
A dollar will earn you  
glimpses of God  
and giggles  
under the covers at night.  
You get to be a hero for taking  
training wheels off a bike,  
getting a Frisbee off the roof,  
or just pulling out a splinter.  
You get Velcro hugs  
and butterfly kisses.  
Is it worth it?  
I can't answer that for you.  
Here, you do the math.  
Pastor, thank you.  
You're welcome.  
I'll see you at service.  
I once heard that at  
the end of every good story,  
the hero must make a speech  
to show that he's grown  
or learned from his experience.  
You know, that's true.  
I guess this was mine.  
Sometimes we don't understand  
the gifts that we receive.  
It's so easy to lose  
sight of why we're here,  
that God wants us to live  
and to be happy,  
according to his plan.  
And when you receive

such a beautiful gift,  
you should, in turn,  
pass that gift on to others.  
So that they might never  
lose sight of God's plan.  
Was it a miracle,  
what happened to me?  
Like I said, I'm not sure that  
any of this really happened  
or if it was just a dream,  
but maybe the truth  
is whispered to us  
through our dreams,  
like a message from a friend  
that arrives at exactly  
the right time,  
telling us exactly  
the words we need to hear.  
It's so easy to get lost  
chasing a life  
we thought we wanted,  
convincing ourselves  
that power, fame, or wealth  
will make us happy,  
that we lose sight of what  
is truly important,  
and all we need  
is a little push to reveal  
what we've been missing.  
It is the love of our  
family, our friends,  
and the love of God that  
will bring us happiness.  
We just need to take  
that first step  
and reach out for it.  
You see, it's okay  
to follow a dream,  
as long as we don't abandon  
those who truly love us.  
Mom?  
It's me, Chloe.  
I missed you too, Mom.  
So, you can spend your time

pretending to be  
someone you're not,  
but it's wasted time,  
because God is rooting for you.  
He wants you  
to come back to him.  
He wants you to come home.  
So, did you go to the moon yet?  
No, I couldn't get  
my spaceship to fly.  
So, can we  
get married now?  
What makes you think  
we're getting married?  
An angel promised  
me we would.  
What?  
I had a dream, and the angel  
said that we would get married,  
and he promised  
that we would be happy,  
but he did say I might  
have to get rough with you.  
The angel said you might  
gotta get rough with me?  
I think he was an angel.  
He said his name  
was Earl, Big Earl.  
# On this roller-coaster ride #  
# Won't you ride with me #  
# It's taken me  
on the ride of my life #  
# No, it's not my emotions #  
April, I tried  
to give the...  
# It's just you and me  
for the ride of our lives #  
We're not starting  
with the fish?  
# Take me under the water  
Drop me off of the tracks #  
# I'm in your care  
So I don't care about that #  
# The ticket's been paid

by the most expensive thing #  
# The smile on my face #  
# You know I'd  
like to be there #  
# It doesn't mean  
I'm not stable #  
# It doesn't mean that at all #  
# I will ride #  
# Take me away  
from this normal life #  
# I ride #  
# I will find  
a new way of life #  
Who are you looking at?  
I'm looking off  
into the cosmos  
from whence I drama...  
Stop, stop!  
Do your line one more time.  
conic masterpiece.  
'It's A Wonderful Life"?  
I want you to live.  
You're smiling.  
Why are you laughing? Because you are.  
They can't see you,  
so I look like the idiot.  
We're all  
going to be fine.  
He's really funny.  
Once upon a time,  
there was a plane  
that just kept flying over.  
Dramatic!  
Haven't you ever wondered if  
there was something out there  
that was out there  
that was better than us?  
Better than me?  
Better than us?  
Wait, bigger, bigger.  
Haven't you ever  
wondered if there's more out there?  
And what do I say?  
More than that.

I knew if I repeat whatever you  
say... I knew it wasn't better.  
Haven't you ever wondered  
if there was something  
out there better?  
More.  
Haven't you ever  
wondered if there's more out there?  
More than us.  
Oh, come on!  
Don't be like that!  
I could be good  
in this picture!  
I'm Rich, Rich Kaplan.  
Chaplin, Rich Chaplin.  
I'm sorry,  
I made him Jewish?  
Yeah, you're right.  
My bad.  
Really my bad on that one.  
All right,  
let's go back to one.  
Della, I am ashamed I was so bad.  
Well, that's two of us.  
Oh, a bagel.  
Big Earl here to remind you  
of a program guaranteed  
to wash the old...  
Big Earl here  
with a new program...  
Say something other than yeah.  
That's the joke.  
I'm going to say it  
throughout the whole movie.  
All right,  
then do it better.  
Ready, set?  
Yeah!  
There you go.  
So, I guess...  
She bit me so hard!  
She just bit me so hard.