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My Life Without Me

By Isabel Coixet

This is you.
Eyes closed,
out in the rain.
You never thought you'd be doing
something like this.
You never saw yourself as,
I don't know
how you'd describe it, as...
like one of those people
who like looking up at the moon,
or who spend hours gazing at
the waves or the sunset or...
I guess you know what kind of people
I'm talking about.
Maybe you don't
Anyway, you kinda you kinda
like it being like this,
fighting the cold
and feeling the water seep
through your shirt
and getting through to your skin.
And the feel of the ground
growing soft beneath your feet
and the smell.
And the sound of the rain
hitting the leaves.
All the things they talk about
in the books that you haven't read.
This is you.
Who would have guessed it?
You.
Lesson 3.
Dialogue.
Catch this.
You give me the big one.
OK.
Don't you even...
So how come you always get...
why do you always
get the big one?
I deserve the big one...
Maybe you should just try
and you know
to get chalk off the blackboard.

Laurie...

Oh, I'm trying to blow it
away from you.

- I thought you were quitting.

- I am quitting. I'm quitting, quitting.

That's great.

I can't quit smoking
and quit eating at the same time.

You don't have to quit eating.

Why would you have to quit eating?

You just don't understand.

You lose weight
just by thinking about it.

I swear you're slimmer now
than you were a month ago.

- No, you're imagining it.

- I am not.

When you're fat
like I am,
the only thing you see
is other women's bodies.

It's the only thing you see.

Laurie, you're crazy.

You're not fat at all, okay?

I know fat people. You're not one
of them. Look at this tummy.

It's not the tummy of a fat person.

As for me,

I'm eating the same as always.

Yesterday,

I ate a whole litre of ice-cream.

I haven't had ice-cream
in so long.

Say,

you're not following one of those
ice-cream diets are you?

Yeah, Ben and Jerry's
miracle diet.

Really?

No.

You know
what I'm thinking of right now?

What?

Corn on the cob.

With lots of salt, lots of butter.

Just talking about diets

makes me hungry.

See you tomorrow.

- All right. See you tomorrow.

- Tomorrow.

Bye.

Is Don going to look for another job?

Don's always looking for another job.

I could try and get him

something at the hotel.

That's okay.

Last thing I need is for you two

to fight there as well.

Why do you have

to listen to this stuff?

Why can't you listen to music

like normal people?

No one's normal, Mom.

No such thing as normal people.

Some muffins for the girls,

for breakfast.

They're a little squashed,

but they're fine.

Who rented Nathan's house?

I don't know.

Someone's moving in on Sunday.

Barry Manilow.

What?

Barry Manilow.

He's normal.

Good night, mom.

Come on. Move over, buddy.

Are those your feet or are you rubbing

ice-cubes down my legs?

Yes, they are ice-cubes.

Okay, warm them up.

That's my only choice.

I'm cold up here, too.

I'm cold everywhere.

Did you put all the laundry

in the basket?

- Yes.

- Thank you.

Are you tired?

Okay.

No!

I think you're too little.

I'll tell you when you're older.

You guys want some more milk?

Please, please, tell me now.

Drink up your milk. We've going to go
in about five minutes, all right?

You've spilt your milk.

I told you, you're too little.

Shit, Patsy, can you not drink a glass
of milk for once without spilling it?

No, no, no.

What are you doing?

Daddy, why don't the Flintstones
ever go to the beach?

I don't know. Don't change the subject.

Where does Mommy
keep your sweaters?

Mommy, I ate all my cereal
and Patsy didn't.

It's okay, we have accidents.

OK. Under the girls' bed,
in the green box,
there's another sweater under there.

Okay, put up your arms.

Come on, we've got to take this off,
okay girlie?

Got a little bit of milk on you.

Are you stuck?

Where's Patsy? I don't know.

There's Patsy.

There you go. Here you go.

Put that on.

Lance's brother rang me last night.

He said he might have something for me.

No way!

Great!

Where are the keys?

I can't find the keys.

- They're still in the ignition, I think.

- They are?

Girls, you've got to put on

your jackets.

Mommy, do I have to tell Patsy
where babies come from?

- I think she's too little.

- She is too little.

Can you put on your jacket first?

They opened a swimming pool
business in Wilmington Drive.

- No way.

- Yeah.

I know.

- Good luck.

- Yeah, thank you.

Can you...

You pick up the girls from school,
because I might not be back
till later.

- Yeah, sure. No problem.

- Okay. Guys?

Put on your hats
and gloves, okay?

I'm going to warm up the car and we're
going to be gone in two minutes, okay?

Two minutes. Yes!

I want you to help Patsy
with hers as well, okay?

So get yours on and help.

- Bye, guys. Have a good day.

- Bye, Mom.

I got you, I got you.

Ann,

I'm hanging out some wash. You got
anything you want me to hang out?

Ann, are you in there?

Put your clothes in the bag,
and put on the robe.

Do you know

if this is going to take long?

- I'm supposed to pick up my kids.

- I really have no idea.

Can I just go tell my Mom
to pick them up for me?

We can't make any exceptions.

Is your mother outside?

Yeah, she came with me.

Ann Matland.

- I forgot to tell her.

- I'll see what I can do.

Now if you could get undressed
or you really will be here all day.

Thank you.

John,

Charlie Bob, Seymour,

Jack and Bill.

Follow me, please.

Hey, do you know if the other nurse told
my mom she had to go pick up my kids?

I was supposed to go
and pick them up today and...

Who'd you tell it to?

The other nurse.

I don't know her name.

Do you know how many nurses
we have working in this hospital?

Do you know what it's like to be waiting
at the school gate all on your own,
with your nose freezing to death
while all the other kids
get picked up by their moms?

Yeah, I do.

I'll go see if I can find
your mother.

Hi Ann.

I am Doctor Thompson,
I'll be looking at the results
of your ultrasound.

Why are we doing this again?

How are your kids?

I'm kind of worried, actually,
I was supposed
to pick them up today so...

Let's not worry about that just now.

This will be over in a few minutes.

Ann, would you excuse me for a moment?

Yeah, sure. It's your hospital.

Ann, this is Doctor Stuart
and Doctor Lance.

Hi! Do you know if someone told my mom

about picking up my daughters?
We're only gonna take
a few minutes, okay?
Does your husband live with you?
Yeah,
he... he builds swimming pools.
He was out all day today.
And you work at the university.
Yeah. I clean the university. Nights.
And you're twenty-three...
I'll be twenty four in December.
I'm an Aquarius.
How about you? What star sign are you?
What the hell is happening to me?
We've done the scan
three times and...
Are you sure you wouldn't prefer
to call your husband?
No. I would prefer not to call him.
We've done the scan three times,
and I've ordered a... a pre-biopsy...
So, what?
You have a tumour.
In both ovaries.
It's reached your stomach and it's
beginning to spread to your liver.
Wow. That's pretty far gone, eh?
Ann, if you were twenty years older,
the whole thing would be spreading
more slowly we could operate on it.
But... your cells are very young.
Too young, in fact
and I'm afraid there's...
there's nothing we can do.
Wow. How long?
Two months, maybe three.
Here's me thinking
I was pregnant...
No, I'm afraid not.
I knew it was something pretty serious
when you sat down here beside me.
They're renovating my office,
changing the air-conditioning and...
No, that's not true...

I can't sit down in front of someone
and tell them that they're gonna die...

I've never been able to...

the nurses are beginning
to mention it.

Your family might wanna see
another doctor,
they might want
a second opinion.

Someone who tells me the exact same thing
as you, but looks me right in the eye?

Can I get you a coffee?

No.

Bourbon?

Let me guess,
you're goinna offer me a cigarette?

No.

Do have a piece of candy?

A piece of...? Yeah.

It's pretty good...

what flavour is that?

Ginger.

It's pretty good.

It's a bit hot, but it's okay.

I've... I've prepared some leaflets,
which more or less
explain everything,
and some recipes
to help ease the nausea,
and I'd like to see you
next week.

I've given you an appointment
and my direct line
in case you need to call me.

Yeah... Okay.

Do you have another piece of candy?

One for the road?

I'm sorry, that was my last one...

Next week

I'll have more... candy.

Your Dad used to drnk a bottle
of bourbon and call it breakfast.

You get wired if you drink
so much as a beer.

You didn't even take drugs
during high school,
just the odd drag
of Don's joint.
Without inhaling, like that guy who used
to be President of the United States,
that guy Bill Clinton.
So, were they waiting long?
Oh, good.
Good, thanks a lot, Mom.
I owe you one.
No, no, they're doing
blood analysis.
Apparently I've got anaemia...
that's why I've been fainting.
You know they're like, once they've
got you, they don't want to let you go.
Trying out some new machine,
they're like little kids.
You know, I should go, Mom,
'cause the nurse is coming to get me,
I've got to go.
Okay, bye, thanks a lot.
Now you feel like you want to take
all the drugs in the world.
But all the drugs in the world
aren't going to change the feeling
that your whole life's been a dream
and it's only now that you're waking up.
"But I like to eat cake in a tub",
laughed the cat.
"You should try it sometime",
laughed the cat as he sat.
And then I got mad,
there was no time for fun.
I said "Cat you get out!"
Hi, Mommy.
Hi. You've been good?
Mom, can you tell us a story?
Daddy says it too fast.
Hey. Thanks a lot. You little monster.
I don't read them too fast.
- How are you?
- Good. I've got anaemia,

that's why I've been fainting,
so they gave me some iron and vitamins.

How did it go with Lance?

I start on Monday.

Hey, no way! That's so good.

Yes. I know, and there's enough work
for a year at least.

- That's so great!

- I know, it's great.

- Did you give the girls something to eat?

- Daddy gave us milk shakes and fries.

He said we mustn't tell you.

It was so nice.

Mommy, I ate all my fries
and all my milk shake.

Fries are vegetables, right? They're
potatoes, which is a very good food.

It's one of the food groups.

I'm sorry,

it was a little treat. I just got a job.

- What is wrong with you?

- I'm sorry.

- Okay. The rafters, in a second.

- Can I stay, or should I go?

You can stay.

That's okay. Good night, you two.

Close our eyes.

Close our eyes.

We're setting off. Okay?

Oh, no!

It's getting wavier and wavier
and we...

and then we splash down in the water.

No,

- what's that?

- Is that a shark?

It is a shark.

They're really really mad at us.

They thought

that this river was the ocean.

They're really mad!

Here, I think you should eat those.

Are you going to go to work?

Yeah, I'll go in.

Your mother said she could get
a lift back if you want to rest.
No, I should go in.
I thought you were pregnant.
Yeah. Me too.
You sure you're all right?
Yes, I'm good,
I'm just a little bit tired, that's all.
You know, next month when I get
my paycheck we could go to Whalebay Beach.
Would you like that?
Yeah,
that'd be nice.
Patsy hasn't even been
at the beach before.
Yeah. I've got a good feeling
about things,
with the swimming pools, I mean.
I really do.
Thinking.
You're not used
to thinking.
When you have your first kid
at seventeen with the only man
you've ever kissed in your life,
and then another kid when you're
nineteen, with the same man,
and you live in a trailer
in your Mom's backyard,
and your Dad's been in jail
for ten years,
you never have time to think.
Maybe you're so out of practice
you've forgotten how.

- What is this?
- It's coffee.
- Yes. I asked for an espresso.
- The espresso machine ain't working.

So if the espresso machine
wasn't working,
then why didn't you tell me
the espresso machine wasn't working?
I figured you wanted coffee.
You brought me a coffee.

I asked for an espresso.
Okay, just relax.
Come back next week,
we'll have espresso.
- Hey, could you please lend me a pen?
- Sure, honey,
just tell me what you want first,
so as I can write it down
and then I can lend it to you,
that way we'll all be happy.
Okay, I'll have...
Don't say espresso because
the espresso machine ain't working...
don't say cappuccino
'cause it's the same machine.
Okay, I'll have a...
a Danish.
Got no more 'til tomorrow.
Can I get then a coffee and
just something sweet, like anything
you have that's sweet.
Pineapple cheesecake?
It's the sweetest thing we got.
Actually it's the only thing we've got.
That's fine, that's great.
Pineapple cheesecake.
Okay.
There you go,
the world's sweetest cheesecake.
You can keep the pen
for as long as you need it.
I already filled
in the lottery ticket earlier.
What are you going to do if you win?
Have you decided?
Have I ever, honey.
I want to be like her.
I want her nose,
her mouth, her eyes,
her hair, her waist...
I'm going to be so much like Cher
that folks are gonna stop me
in the supermarket and say
"Wasn't it terrible what happened

to dear old Sonny?"
What do you think?
I think that's
a really fucking stupid idea.
I'm just kidding.
I think Cher is great.
Penny, Patsy, I'm making
a big heap of pancakes.
If you don't come right this second
I'm going to eat all of them
all by myself.
I'm coming, Mommy.
- Morning, buddy.
- Hi, Mommy.
I guess Patsy doesn't want
any pancakes, eh?
No pancakes for Patsy.
Is it Sunday yet?
Is it my birthday?
No, but you know what?
Last night I dreamt
that you woke up
like hungry lions
and you ate lots of food.
I'll cut it up for you. There you go.
Are you going to take
the kids to school?
The biggest lion of them all.
Go get him, Patsy.
Bye. I love you, my little lions,
I love you so much.
I love you.
I kind of want...
something different.
Different...
To what I've got at the moment, I mean.
I could do you braids,
but it would take all day...
and I'm on my own here
on Wednesdays, so...
Not braids.
No way.
Well, you've got good hair
for braids.

And you asked for something
different, so...
Braids are fine.
They look great on you, but...
I was thinking of something more...
How about blonde?
Blonde?
Something to kind of...
- brighten up my face a bit.
- Something bright.
Like this?
I was also wondering
about false nails.
I don't have any nails and...
The girl who does the nails
doesn't come in Wednesdays.
You what then, why I don't just
come back tomorrow then.
We can do it all at the same time,
can't we?
Braids as well?
I'll think about it. Ok,
I'll see you tomorrow. Bye.
I had two conventions today
and I had to make a cake
for three hundred people
in the shape of a tyre.
I'm beat.
Even my hips ache.
I think I'm going to make an appointment
to see the doctor tomorrow.
My knee's acting up again as well.
That damn cake must have
weighed 30 pounds.
How about you? You feeling any better?
Yeah, I'm feeling fine.
They say it's going to snow
this weekend, but I don't think so.
I hate the snow.
I like the snow
even less than I like the rain.
...because you'll never be anything
but a common frump
whose father lived over

a grocery store
and whose mother took in washing.
With this money, I can get away from
every rotten stinking thing that
makes me think of this place or you.
You must think I'm on a string.
Go away, Veda,
come back, Veda.
It isn't that easy.
Alone.
You're alone.
You've never been
so alone in your live.
Lies are your only company.
GONE TO THE LAUNDROMAT.
WE'RE OUT FO CLEAN CLOTHES.
- Can I get you something?
- Can I get a Molson Canadian, please?
Hi!
Hi.
- I haven't seen you here before.
- No.
I'm sorry about the thing
with the braids this morning.
I shouldn't really have suggested it,
but I was having
a kind of weird morning...
you ever get those?
You know, when you just
can't face the world?
It's very stressful being
a hairdresser,
people expect a lot from you
and sometimes
you can't stand the pressure.
People want you
to make them beautiful
but sometimes
it's just not possible.
You know what?
Don't worry about it,
I wasn't having
a great morning either, so...
Now, can I ask you

a personal question?
Do you like Milli Vanilli?
You mean those guys in shorts
who didn't sing.
Oh, you're wrong there.
They did sing, but their producer
wouldn't let them.
He practically blackmailed them
and said he would tell everyone
their secret,
and he got
all the royalties.
It was so unfair.
And later they showed
that they could sing,
but you know no one listened to them.
They were too fragile
for the music industry.
- What kind of music do you like?
- Music?
God, I haven't listened to any music
in so long.
I used to like Nirvana.
I went to one of their concerts...
actually it was
their last concert.
That's actually where I met Don,
my husband.
He was...
Hold that thought,
I just got to get up and dance.
The DJ's a friend of mine.
I'll be back.
I'm going to go get
a cup coffee next door.
I was wondering if maybe
you wanted me to go and get you one too?
No, thanks.
Yeah, actually, please, yeah.
Sure. Milk and sugar, please.
Thanks.
Your coffee's cold.
I was kind of tired.
I washed,

folded your laundry.

Thanks.

I didn't forget the softener,
did I?

No, you forgot the soap.

Were you watching me
while I was asleep?

Yeah, for a little while. Sorry.

Why?

I was snoring or?

No, you were drooling.

You drool when you sleep.

Are you that girl? That girl
at the coffee shop
that was writing in a journal
the other day?

Thanks for the jacket.

It's yours, isn't it?

Yeah, you can keep it if you want.

It's mighty cold out there
and I'm used to it.

I was in Alaska for three years,
I lived there, I mean, two and a half.

It's all right.

I really like the cold.

It makes me feel really alive.

I've got to run. I've got
two young kids. You know how it is.

Sure.

Thanks.

- I'll see you around.

- My name's Lee.

Ann.

Are you sure that
you don't need the jacket?

No, no. Go ahead, take it.

Okay. I've never been to Alaska.

I always really liked the sound of it.

- I'll bring the jacket back, don't worry.

- No. I want you to have it.

I like the idea of you wearing it.

That's nice.

I'll bring it back, don't worry.

You see things clearly now.

You see all these all these
barrelled lives, barrelled voices.
Milli Vanilli everywhere.
You look at all the things
you can't buy,
now you don't even
wanna buy.
All the things that will still
be here after you're gone.
When you're dead.
And then you realize
that all the things
in the bright window displays,
all the models
in the catalogues,
all the colours,
all the special offers,
all the Martha Stewart
recipes,
all the piles
of greasy food,
it's just all thereto try
and keep us away from death.
And it doesn't work.
So, it turns out that she loved
her daughter so much
that she didn't tell her
that she was her mother,
because she didn't...
she thought
that would be better,
the boy's parents
would accept her better
and the boy would ask her
to marry him,
which was what she wanted
most in the whole world.
But it was a huge sacrifice,
and she suffered a whole lot,
Mommy, Grandma told us
a beautiful story about a mom
who has lots of bad things happen
to her, and it's really sad.
Goodness, how unusual.

I bathed them
and Penny ate three slices
of banana bread
and Patsy drank some milk.
Lately she's been kind of off it.
Grandma's story's a movie,
Mommy, and she says she likes it a lot.

- Really?

- Yeah, Joan Crawford.
Joan Crawford, that's great!
Okay, let's go, guys.
Patsy, put that down.
Patsy. We're going.
I just wanted to keep them entertained,
you know, so they don't watch so much TV.
Next time I'll keep my mouth shut.
Mommy, I don't want to go
to school tomorrow.

- I don't want to.

- I know, I know.
I said thanks, okay?
So just drop it.

- I don't need your thanks.
- Okay, so I'll take them back then.
All I did was watch your kids
while you did your shopping.
You asked me to.
Yeah, I asked you to.
I didn't ask you to fill their heads
with stupid stories about mothers
making dumb-ass sacrifices.
What kind of stories
do you want me to tell them?
Cinderella?
About murderous step-mothers?

- Is that what you want?

- Yes!

There's times that you're
just like your father,
and let me tell you,
it's not something I like.
You're wrong, there's times
that I'm just like you,
and it's not something I like either.

I'm sorry, it's just really tangled.
Patsy's always whining.
Penny, please don't pick on her.
You always complain
when I brush your hair too.
- Why do you have to do that?
- I wasn't picking on her.
And telling me
that she's always complaining,
that's not picking on her?
I think so.
I wasn't picking on her.
I'm not always complaining.
Okay, that's enough, guys.
Go to bed, okay?
Okay, good night, monkey girl.
You got kitty?
- Yeah.
- There you go. You've got some covers.
'Night, buddy.
You don't want me to kiss you?
I wasn't picking on her.
Penny, that is enough,
I said, okay?
It's true you're just
like Grandma.
Hey. Do you want some leftover chicken?
Aren't you going to say hello?
How many beers have you had?
Well, one or two or...
four. I don't know.
- You want some chicken or don't you?
- I want a kiss.
I want a big, juicy kiss.
Here's some chicken.
Great. Chicken.
It's good.
Have the girls been
in bed long?
Yeah, a little while.
Penny's was picking
on Patsy again.
I told her not to
and she got kind of mad at me.

- She did?

- Yeah, a little bit.

We started

a pool out at Rushmore today.

- Oh yeah?

- Yeah. It's crescent-shaped.

It's going to look wild.

These people,

they got a three- story house,

a porch out of "Gone With the Wind"

and everything.

It's beautiful.

Are you happy?

With the swimming pool thing, I mean.

Yeah, it's good.

It's not like the factory

but it's better than nothing.

I'm going to get to work.

You not just going to leave me here alone

gnawing on a cold chicken bone, are you?

If you like you can always heat it up,

but I thought you really loved cold food.

Why don't you just eat it cold?

Will you sing to me?

No, I have to go to work.

You know how much I love it

when you sing to me.

Please.

Just sing to me.

Hi.

Hi.

Bye...

Bye...

Hey, my buddy Penny.

I'm not going to be

at your birthday party,

but there's nothing I'd like more

in the whole, wide world.

I bet Grandma's made a special

birthday cake just for

you with your name on it

in big chocolate letters.

Penny, I want you to know

that the day that you were born

I held you in my arms
and that was the happiest day
in my whole life.
I was so happy
I couldn't even speak.
I just stroked your tiny little feet
and I cried with happiness.
Without you I could have never found out
that lions eat pancakes
or that the bed
could be a raft.
Try and look after Patsy, okay?
I know it's hard 'cause sometimes
she makes you mad and everything.
I know it's not easy being a big sister,
but I know that you can do it, okay?
Mommy sends you millions
and millions of kisses.
Happy birthday,
my darling little Patsy.
Now you're five!
I'll bet that Penny looks after you now.
I bet that she doesn't pick
on you anymore.
Honey, I don't want you to be sad
that I'm not at your birthday, okay?
Promise?
I remember your first birthday
really well, you know?
I remember how you started to cry
and you wouldn't stop because you didn't
like how we were singing "Happy Birthday".
Every time we started to sing,
you'd just scream and yell
because you didn't like
how we were singing.
Happy birthday, my little buddy.
Mommy loves you to bits.
Buddy, I want you to be happy.
I know sometimes
it's not easy 'cause
sometimes things happen
and people aren't always
like you want them to be.

Talk to your Dad
if there's things bothering you, okay?
He knows more
than you'd think, seriously,
if there's something bothering you
and you're not sure about something,
just ask him and he'll tell you.
Grandma knows a lot of things, too.
I really hope
she'll explain them to you.
Try and be patient with her, OK?
She is a good person, even if sometimes
it doesn't always seem that way...
None of the things she's always dreamed
about ever came true, you know?
Try and understand her.
Don't let her make you mad.
If you get a new Mom,
try and love her, okay?
Don't make life impossible for her
just out of some loyalty to me
or something like that.
Just I don't know...
I know it's not the same.
...and whatever happens,
you finish school,
even if you think it sucks,
and you don't know
if you can take it anymore,
you just finish school.
I'd like to be able to tell you
stuff about boys
and boyfriends and relationships
and that kind of stuff,
I think
I wouldn't be much help.
I was seventeen
when you were born, Penny,
exactly how old
you are right now.
You have to have faith in yourself.
You have to have faith
in your ability to do things,
to just make a go of it.

Lots of kisses and cuddles,
even though I know you're not
a small little thing anymore.
Ann, is something wrong?
What is it?
Is it that diet you're on?
How come you're throwing up?
You're not taking
those slimming pills, are you?
You want to know why I'm throwing up?
You really want to know?
I'm throwing up because
when I was eight years old
the girl who was supposed to be my best
friend told everyone I was a slut.
I'm throwing up 'cause
when I was fifteen years old
I didn't get invited to the only party
I ever wanted to go to in my entire life.
I'm throwing up because when
I was seventeen I had my first kid
and I had to grow up
overnight.
And I've got no more dreams.
Without dreams
you can't fucking live.
I'm throwing up because since they put
my dad in jail I haven't seen him.
I don't have anything from him,
I don't even have
a single fucking postcard.
And in all the commercials
everybody is so fucking happy
and all day long my two little daughters
sing those stupid fucking songs
from those stupid fucking commercials.
If I beg you,
if I get down on my knees
to beg you...
please, don't give me the name
of that diet you're on.
I didn't wake you up, did I?
It's Ann.
Can I bring you back

your book now?

Yeah, right now.

Yeah, okay, I know where that is.

I should have given you
a raincoat. Come on in.

- It's got a bit wet.

- Don't worry about it.

What happened?

You didn't keep up the payments on your
furniture and they took it all away?

No.

Well, actually, I was
planning on getting
some furniture one day,
I just didn't really have the time.

Sorry, I'd offer you something,
but I don't have anything.

I don't even have any glasses.

Not even like a cookie or something?

Nothing.

If I knew you were coming,
I would have bought something.

I can live without cookies.

Who took
all your furniture?

Someone...

took it... yeah.

You don't want to get anymore
because you think she might come back?

You wanna sit down?

Thanks.

Are they okay?

What did you do in Alaska?

I'm a surveyor.

I survey land for building highways,
bridges and things like that.

Before that I was in
Chile.

And before that I was in
North Carolina,
and before that Halifax.

What are your daughters call?

Penny and Patsy.

Would you like to see a photograph?

Okay.
They look happy.
They look like you.
Do I look happy?
Not happy.
You look beautiful.
You look like your girls.
You've been thinking about me?
Yeah.
I've been thinking about you a lot.
Too much.
I've got a sister, you know, who...
she works for this radio
company up north.
And she makes these tapes for me
that she sends to me,
music that she likes and
I've got the latest one
out in my car right now.
We could go listen to it,
if you want...
If you don't kiss me right now,
I'm going to scream.
Shut up!
If you don't kiss me right now,
I'm goinna fucking scream.
Hello, Ann.
This some kind of therapy
to get over your shyness?
Something like that.
So you didn't come last week.
There didn't seem to be a lot of point.
I have to give you a further scan
and a fuller biopsy.
No, I'm sorry.
I don't want any of those things, okay?
I need to feel
like I've got some control.
So I don't want any more tests
if they're not going to save me.
I don't want to die here.
I will not have the only thing my kids
remember about me be a hospital ward.
So why are you here?

It's this package.
I want you to look after it for me.
I don't know. What is it?
I've recorded birthday messages
for both of my daughters,
for every birthday
till they're eighteen.
And you want me
to give these, don't you?
Why don't you ask your husband?
'Cause...
'cause Don, you know, he'd lose them
or maybe he'd give them to them next year,
and maybe the year after that,
or maybe he'd give them to them
all at once.
They wouldn't understand
a thing if he did that,
so... please tell me
you'll do it, please.
I'll only do it
if you promise to come here
every week
and I have to give you medication.
I would imagine that the nausea's
got worse, you're not eating.
Dying's not as easy as it looks.
But there's no need for you to have
to feel terrible all the time.
It's just...
It's just I'm kind of afraid
I'm going to come in here one day
and I'm never gonna leave...
and I've got to so much
I have to do before I die,
I have so many things I have to do.
I have to do them, or...
It'll only be just some painkillers.
I promise we won't do any more tests,
just something to ease the pain.
And anyway...
I brought you some candies.
- So you'll look after it for me?
- Of course.

Let's just say it's part
of your therapy.
God. These candies are so good.
I don't get it.
I've been counting my calories today,
and I can't have eaten more than 1500,
and in theory I need 2000,
so in theory I should have lost weight,
and I just weighed myself
before I left the house
and I weigh nearly a pound
more than I did yesterday.
It must be my metabolism.
They should give us compensation
for slow metabolisms,
give us some kind of allowance.
Laurie, you want to come over
for dinner tomorrow night?
Yeah, I'd love to.
Great.
Diet food, I hope.
I don't want to ruin my diet.
It's cold in the supermarket,
and you like it like that.
People always read the labels of their
favourite brands really really carefully
just to see how many chemicals
they have,
and then they just sigh
and they put them in their cart anyway,
like they're saying sure
it's bad for me,
it's bad for my family but we like it.
No one ever thinks
about death in a supermarket.
Sixty dollars and forty eight cents.
Girls, you finish
those mashed potatoes, okay?
Oh, God. These ribs are so great.
How did you get them
so tender?
I leave them soaking in my fridge
in milk for a couple of hours.
You leave them soaking in milk

in the fridge for a couple of hours.

I must try and remember that.

Patsy, stop playing with your food.

Ann, tell Patsy to stop playing
with her food.

You do what your Dad tells you to do,
okay? Stop playing with your food.

Try and eat a little more.

It's more fun playing with it
than eating it.

You know

that eating food can be fun too?

Why?

Well because...

because you're doing new things,
you're trying new things
and that's fun.

Mashed potatoes isn't new.

It's more fun doing things with it.

Laurie, why don't you have
some more sauce?

Here, Don made it himself.

Goodness me.

I didn't know your husband cooked.

I didn't know there were husbands
that cooked.

It wasn't really cooking.

I just added honey
to a bottle of barbecue sauce.

Well that's better than nothing.

You could have lied,
said you made the whole thing.

No, Don would never lie.

He wouldn't even know how.

How did you two guys meet?

We met at a Nirvana concert.

Actually

it was the last Nirvana concert
before Kurt Cobain...

No, my God.

Did you save the tickets?

They must be worth a fortune by now.

No, no we didn't save them.

No, we were sort of too excited

to keep them.
Ann spent the whole concert crying.
I didn't really like Nirvana back then,
so I was this kind of bored
and I was looking around,
and that's when I saw Ann.
She was this beautiful girl
just crying her eyes out,
so I went up to her
and I offered her a handkerchief,
but I didn't have a handkerchief,
I didn't even have a paper one,
so I just...
I took off my T-shirt
and I gave it to her.
That's how we met.
That's really romantic.
- Do you have any more mashed potato?
- Yeah, sure.
You're a pig.
She's basically a nice person,
you know?
Oh Christ, Ann.
Don't talk so loud.
Penny's right.
I mean, the woman ate eight ribs.
And they were fucking huge ribs.
Did you see those things?
I know, but...
Fucking huge.
Her fianc dumped her
the day before her wedding, you know.
He invited her to an All You Can Eat
and they wanted to charge her triple?
That's not funny, Don.
That's not funny.
Food can be fun.
Food can be fun.
She's a really nice person.
Lately she's got this obsession.
Yeah, lately you seem to have
the opposite.
It's the anaemia.
Gonna go get more vitamins this week,

go to the hospital.

Do you want me to come with you?

No, don't worry, I can manage.

Ok.

Tonight I realized how lucky we were to meet that night.

I mean, in spite of everything, in spite of living in this shit hole, in spite of never having anything new, in spite of never going on vacation.

You never complained once, not once.

I would...

I would like to be better for you.

I love you, you know that?

Don't you ever forget that.

I love you.

What are you doing?

I'm sweeping up.

- What are you doing?

- I'm the queen witch and I'm teaching this little witch how to make spells.

- I'm the little witch.

- Really?

And what kind of spells are you doing?

Oh, just normal spells, turning frogs into cars and turning lizards into airplanes.

You know how to do that?

- Are you going to teach me?

- Sure!

Hi, there.

I'm Ann.

I see you've already met Penny and Patsy.

- Yeah. I'm also Ann.

- Oh yeah?

There you go.

Nice to meet you.

- So you just moved in or...?

- Yeah, a few days ago.

I was just trying to do some gardening or something.

- Looks great.

- They're so sweet.

Their little gets ups on.

Listen,

this is kind of a weird question since we just met and everything, but I was wondering,

I'm just heading out for about half an hour 'cause both my husband and my mom aren't back yet.

I was wondering if there was any chance of you keeping an eye on them for the next half hour if you're around.

- Of course. No problem.

- Are you sure?

Yeah, I'm going to be here all day and they were going to show me how to do some spells, so...

There you go.

They're very good at spells, so...

- Okay.

- Thanks a lot.

Bye, guys.

You behave yourselves, okay?

Ann's gonna watch you for a little bit.

- Thank you so much.

- It's okay.

So, help me here.

Who's Patsy and who's Penny?

My body hurt

thinking you weren't gonna come.

I wasn't gonna come.

I'm glad you did.

Is this one of your sister's tapes?

Yeah.

Would you like to dance?

...and then the Little Mermaid

said to the Taxi Driver

"I wanna see New York City.

Please, show me New York. "

'Cause it's so big. You can't...

you can't just walk around New York.

So the taxi driver took her
to the Empire State Building,
and you know it's so high
it has two elevators
because they couldn't find
just one cable to build one, you know?
They had to build two.
So he got on the first elevator
and then on the second elevator
that's as fast as a space rocket,
and they got to the top
of the Empire State building
and the Little Mermaid was looking down
and she said
"Oh, my God. People look like ants,
they're so small... "
Hey, guys. Hello, there.
We played witches and princesses.
And Ann did our braids.
Oh, they look beautiful. Thank you, Ann.
I'm sorry I took so long.
No, that was fine.
We had a great time.
- Were you guys good?
- Yeah.
Good. Want your witches hats?
Tomorrow can you finish the story
about the mermaid
- and the taxi driver?
- Of course. My pleasure.
Give Ann a kiss goodbye.
We have to go have bath
and supper time now,
but maybe we can come back
and hear the end of that story, okay?
Thank you so much, Ann.
Let's go.
- Hey, Ann?
- Yeah?
I was just going to make some coffee.
Do you want to come over?
Great.
Just let me finish doing this.
Okay.

- Do you take sugar?
- No, no it's alright.
You're not on a diet, are you?
No. Why? Should I?
No. I just have this friend
who's obsessed with diets
and calories and...
Boring.
No, and I've seen too many people
sick with anorexia and bulimia.
- I'm a nurse. That's why.
- Is that so?
So I'm not really bothered.
You know, you've got really cute kids.
Yeah, they're great, aren't they?
What about you? You want kids?
No, I don't think so.
Why not? I mean,
you think it's stupid
to bring them into the world, or?
Just haven't found
the right guy, or?
No, I haven't.
No, but it's not that either, no.
Do you think you can't?
No. Well,
I don't know, actually.
But...
I was in my last year
of nursing college.
We were doing some work experience
in a paediatric hospital.
I'd decided to specialize in kids,
because I've always liked them.
Maybe because I was an only child.
I don't know. Anyway,
one night I was on duty,
and they called me in
to help with a birth.
This woman was overdue,
she was expecting twins,
and the babies were in danger.
So they decided to do
a caesarean

and the mother was put
under a general anaesthetic.
And...
it turned out they were Siamese twins.
They were born without one torso...
one set of lungs...
they hardly cried.
They weren't horrible to look at.
No, they were just like any other baby.
But
there was no way
they were going to survive.
It's impossible.
So we put them in an incubator
while the doctors talked to the father
about what they should do.
The father didn't even wanna see them.
So they decided to take them out
of the incubator
and wait for them to die.
And I offered
to be with them until they...
I couldn't bear the thought of them
dying alone
in a cold hospital room.
They lived thirty hours.
I held them in my arms thirty hours.
I sang every song I knew,
songs from the world
they could never see, but...
Anyway, they just grew smaller
and smaller in my arms.
First the boy died, and...
six hours later the girl died.
So... since then I've specialized
in geriatric nursing.
I'm so sorry, Ann.
I don't know
why I told you this story.
Thanks for the coffee.
You know what? I better be going.
No, I'm sorry.
Do you want to come over
for dinner next week?

- Are you sure?
- Yeah, no, I would really love you to.
I know the girls
would really love it too,
because you have to tell them
the end of that mermaid story,
they love that story.
I'd love to, Ann.
And you know,
that story is happy.
Thank you so much,
I'd love to.
Read me something.
Read me something
that you're reading right now.
I'm reading a very sad book
at the moment.
Beautiful, but sad.
It can't be as sad
as the story I heard today.
Tell it to me.
I can't.
It'll make me too sad.
You don't wanna tell it to me
because its part of your life,
and you don't want me to know
anything about your life.
I like it that you don't ask me
anything about my life.
I don't ask you anything
because I've learned not to.
When you look at somebody,
you might see
fifty per cent
of who they are,
and wanting to know the rest,
that's what destroys everything.
That's what I learnt.
Whoever took away your furniture
really taught you a lesson, eh?
That's all she left me.
- You really want me to read you something?
- Please.
Read me something.

Okay.

Pick something.

"To the Wedding"

by John Berger.

"Her capacities go out one by one,

and there's no night,

no stars,

only a cellar from which

she can never walk

and which nobody else

can stay.

She's given medicines

which make her ill,

but would stop her dying.

For a little while.

They're scared.

I'm scared. "

You know, I don't think it was that bad.

No, I like it.

Ljust don't want to read right now.

I lied.

When I said that when you look at
somebody you know fifty per cent.

I guess when I look at you I see,

I don't know, maybe ten per cent...

and that ten per cent is...

It's not so bad. Is it?

It's my birthday today.

Wish me a happy birthday.

Happy birthday, mom.

Aren't you going to start the car?

I've got something to tell you, Mom.

It must be serious, otherwise

you'd tell me while you were driving.

I need to know

where my Dad is.

Are you going to go and see him?

Because that bugs you?

No,

not even that can make me mad anymore.

This time last year,

this very same day,

my birthday,

I thought I should do something,

I don't know why.
So I... I put on some makeup
and the least old clothes
I could find
and I went to a bar.
And I ordered a whisky
and started talking to
the bartender.
He was just a kid,
he'd just started at the hotel,
it was his first job,
and we chatted about this and that,
and I told him it was my birthday.
About five minutes later
he presented me with a bowl of peanuts
with a candle in.
And I...
I started to cry.
I cried so hard the kid got scared,
and he blew out the candle,
and hid the bowl of peanuts,
and I said
"No, don't blow out the candle.
Don't hide the peanuts. "
And all this year,
all I could think about was
that bowl of peanuts
and how I started to cry.
So this year,
I baked myself a cake.
'Cause I knew if I went back to that bar,
I'd give that kid a heart attack.
Start the car.
Five minutes.
You're almost done, too.
- Am I hurting you?
- No, not at all.
She's great with nails.
Now, don't you ask her to give you
a perm or braids or anything,
but with nails, she's the best.
I've got a manicure diploma
and everything. I'm not interested
in hair or heads.

Give me hands every time.
So do you like Milli Vanilli as well?
I'm from Segovia. We don't have
any Mili Vanilli in Segovia.
Milli Vanilli is universal.
- Thank you very much.
- Thanks.
So, see you soon.
No.
No?
You know,
braids really suit you.
They look really great on you.
You think so?
Yeah.
Bye.
Hi...
Hi.
How are you, Ann?
This is Penny and this is Patsy.
Penny's six and Patsy's four.
They're very pretty young girls.
You haven't been wasting your time.
You could say that.
What about your husband?
Don?
Ah, he builds swimming pools.
Swimming pools, no less?
Yeah, he's doing pretty good.
I got work here, you know.
Sewing sports shoes together.
You know, a sports shoe can take up to
86 different pieces. Did you know that?
No.
We sew the side pieces on here,
and then
in another jail they finish them off.
It's good work.
Sure.
People are always gonna want to
need shoes, huh?
Ann, I suppose your mother
still hates me.
Dad, Mom hates everyone.

Yeah, I bet she hates me
the most.
Sometimes, yeah.
Some of us...
just can't live the kind of life
that other people want us to live.
No matter how hard you try,
you just can't do it.
I guess.
- You believe me, don't you?
- Yeah.
I believe you.
It's hard.
Like you know
you love someone
and you can't make them happy.
It's kind of like you love them, but...
you can't love them
the way they wanna be loved,
you know what I mean?
If you send me the kids' shoes sizes,
I can make some shoes for them.
Okay.
I want to touch your face.
I remember how it used to feel.
I've forgotten a lot of things.
I remember that.
I remember,
you used to before you'd leave the house
you'd put on this record of ringing bells
and then you'd just leave
the house like right away.
I used to like to hear
the music from the house
as I was walking down the street.
It was really pretty.
It was?
It was always the same record.
It was the Mule Serenade.
It was really pretty.
Take care of yourself, Dad, okay?
Yeah, you too.
And remember to send me
the girls' shoe sizes, okay?

Yeah, I will.

Going to have a good day
at school? Give me a kiss.

Okay, have a good day.

I hope you feel better, Mommy.

I want you to feel better, yeah.

- Okay. You have a good day, all right?

- Bye.

Hey, Patsy.

- Give me a cuddle, Mommy.

- I'll give you a cuddle.

- How's that for a cuddle?

- Okay.

- I need to go now.

- You have to go to school now?

Okay. I know,

you're in a bit of a hurry.

Are you sure this is anaemia?

Maybe we should go see
another doctor?

No, I know it's anaemia.

They did like a million tests
and I've been taking all the vitamins.

They just told me I need to rest.

I took care of all of you guys

when you were sick,

it's your turn to take care of me.

Okay.

I think I'm going to like
taking care of you.

Yeah? Let's see

if you're any good at it.

Okay. Bye.

Don,

I want you to understand
why I didn't tell you I was goinna die.

It was like...

It was like the only present

I could give you and the girls,

to save you all the trips to the hospital
and all the stress

and the waiting around in waiting rooms

and I know if you think about it,

you'll know that I'm right.

Now you have to be happy,
and you have to look after the girls,
you have to make them happy too.
Dream up a heaven for me.
Don't let them be sad
when they remember me.
You just remind them
of all the great things we did together.
I love you, Don.
You'll always be the guy who took off
his T-shirt to wipe away my tears...
Sorry it's so out of key.
It always kind of was, though.
Hi, Mom.
Well, I guess you're never
going to forgive me
for not telling you
I was going to die.
So, it's just one more thing to blame
the world for, I guess.
I love you.
I know you love me.
I know you adore the girls,
so please
tell them that.
Try and show like you love them
just a little bit every day.
And try to enjoy life,
you know, a little, just a little bit.
I mean, maybe at some point
you could go on a date.
That would be fun,
or you could put an ad
in the paper or anything.
I just think
you could have a little fun.
You're really beautiful
and you've got a great heart
and just try
and enjoy stuff more.
Please help Don.
You can tell the girls
any stories you like,
even Joan Crawford movies.

Your sister really knows
how to pick a song, hey.

- You like it?

- Yeah, it's great.

It's Blossom Dearie.

You ever heard of her?

No. What's that?

Blossom Dearie?

Oh, she's amazing.

She's still singing

and she's 83 years old.

83?

And she plays in this little club

behind a Chinese lounge

and

she has this tiny little voice,

this tiny little body

and such personality and...

- 83.

- Yeah, she's 83.

I'd love to take you there.

Ann, there's so many places

I'd like to take you.

Tell me about all the places

you'd like to take me.

Okay.

In the south of Chile,

there's a desert,

it's stunning,

pure white and flat

as far as the eye can see

and the only thing that breaks

the line of the horizon

are these robin-egg

blue little houses

and in the morning,

the sky goes

completely green.

It's unworldly.

And in Argentina,

a glacier lake,

and in the spring

when the thaw comes on,

these huge blocks of ice,

I mean huge,
the size of apartment buildings,
come sliding off the glacier
into the lake
and then your heart is pounding out
of your chest, it's terrifying.
And Mexico and Alaska...
Are you OK?
What's the matter?
I'm not going to see these places.
What is it?
What's the matter?
You don't wanna tell me?
I'm so sorry, Lee.
- I really need to get out of here.
- Okay.
Waiter!
Can I get the check?
Thank you.
I always wanted to come here.
Could you get them to put this
in a doggy bag for me?
Sure.
Thanks.
Okay, I'll meet you outside, okay?
You have to go.
He's gonna be here any minute.
He works nearby.
It's better if he comes and picks me up.
This happens occasionally, so...
Ann, there's something that I have
to tell you, and I have to tell you now.
I love you.
I'm in love with you...
and the world seems less terrible
because you exist.
I feel like I wanna be with you
for the rest of my life,
and all that, the palpitations,
and the nerves,
and the pain, and the happiness,
and the fear...
I wanna...
I wanna touch you all the time.

I wanna take care of you,
and your girls and...
and even find your husband
a decent job and get you a house
- that doesn't have wheels and...
- Careful.
That sounds like a classic case
of falling in love.
I am in love.
I'm classically in love.
The classic husband
who's gonna be here any minute,
and the classic depression that sets
in every time you go off with him,
and the crying
and the tears and everything.
I'll go.
Though I don't want to see you
driving off with some guy, you know?
Someone you don't know.
So, I'll be watching.
Unless of course it's your husband.
Ann, I feel terrible.
I invited you over to dinner
and now you have to do all the work.
That's okay,
I just have to heat up this.
So I still don't understand
why you had to go to the restaurant
in your condition...
I told you I thought
I was feeling better.
A bad case of anaemia isn't something
you should take lightly. You should rest.
Yes, listen to Nurse Ann, Ann.
And you know what?
I think you could go wash your hands,
'cause this is ready.
Go wash up, girls.
- Don...
- Yeah?
- You too.
- All right, yes ma'am.
You pray that this will be

your life without you...
you pray that the girls
will love this woman
who has the same name as you,
and that your husband
will end up loving her too,
and that they can live in the house
next door, and the girls can play
doll houses in the trailer,
and barely remember their mother
who used to sleep during the day,
and take them on raft rides in bed.
You pray that they will have moments
of happiness so intense
that all of their problems
will seem insignificant in comparison.
You don't know who or what
you're praying to, but you pray.
You don't even regret the life
that you're not gonna have,
because by then
you'll be dead,
and the dead don't feel anything,
not even regret.
My darling Lee,
I guess by the time you get this tape
you'll know that I'm dead
and, well, all that...
Maybe you're angry with me,
or hurt or sad or upset
or maybe you're all of it together.
I just want you to know
that I fell in love with you.
I didn't dare tell you 'cause
I thought you kind of knew,
and I didn't realize
I had so little time.
Actually, time is the one thing
I haven't had enough of recently.
Life is so much better
than you think, my love.
I know, because
you managed to fall in love with me
even though you saw,

what was it,
you said ten per cent?
Five maybe?
Maybe if you'd seen it all,
you wouldn't have liked me.
Or you would have liked me
in spite of everything.
I guess we'll never know.
Oh, and one last thing... Lee,
for God's sake
just paint your walls
and buy some furniture.
Alright? I don't want
the next woman you take home
to get the wrong idea about you
and run off before she gets
a chance to know you.
Not everyone's as crazy
as I am.
I loved dancing with you.
Ripeados por Tylerg