

SIDE 1

(SANDRA helps EDWARD into bed...WILL enters...a sotto conversation with SANDRA before she exits)

WILL

Dad?

EDWARD

Son?

WILL

Can we talk?

EDWARD

I believe we have permission.

(A wince of pain...WILL helps him with a glass of water as EDWARD takes some medicine)

WILL

Do the pills help?

EDWARD

Mostly. But they got me floatin' a bit. Not entirely sure what's real.

WILL

I know that feeling.

(EDWARD smiles...he walked into that one)

WILL

Do you know much about icebergs, Dad?

EDWARD

I saw an iceberg once. They were hauling it down to Texas for drinking water, only they didn't count on an elephant being frozen inside. The woolly kind. A mammoth.

WILL

(interrupting)

Dad!

EDWARD

What?

WILL

I'm trying to make a metaphor here.

EDWARD

Then you shouldn't have started with a question. Because people want to answer questions. You should have started with, "The thing about icebergs is..."

WILL

(frustrated)

The thing about icebergs is you only see 10 percent of them. The other 90 percent is below the water where you can't see it.

(more)

And that's what it is with you, Dad. I'm only seeing this little bit that sticks above the water.

EDWARD

(joking)

What, you're seeing down to my nose? My chin?

WILL

I have no idea who you are...because you have never told me a single fact.

EDWARD

I talk about myself all the time! I tell stories.

WILL

Yes, you tell stories, Dad. You make stuff up. And I'm wondering if it's all to conceal something you don't want people to know.

EDWARD

You got me. My secret identity.

(dramatically)

Superman!

(Not amused, WILL cuts to the chase)

WILL

Can we talk about Ashton, Dad?

EDWARD

Ashton? I grew up there. You know that.

(a shift)

WILL

So why did we never visit? It's not that far a drive.

EDWARD

Nothing to see there.

#15C: PRE RIVER BETWEEN US

WILL

Dad, I'm about to have a kid of my own here. It would kill me if he went through his whole life with...doubts.

EDWARD

It would kill you, huh?

(sitting up)

Let's hear it, then. What exactly are you accusing me of, Will?

WILL

I'm not. I'm just trying to get a handle on some things.

EDWARD

Handle 'em as you will. I think we're done talking.

WILL

Dad...

EDWARD

GET OUT!

*(WILL takes the folder...he crosses with
SANDRA as she enters)*

SANDRA

Will--What did you do?

WILL

I didn't do anything.

JOSEPHINE

(intercepting)

Calm down. Calm down, Will.

WILL

I know you're trying to protect me. But you can't.

(WILL and JOSEPHINE move stage right)

SANDRA

(to Edward)

What happened?

EDWARD

He attacked me. Come after me like I'm a villain.

(SANDRA helps EDWARD to bed)

#16: THIS RIVER BETWEEN US

WILL

(to JOSEPHINE)

EACH TIME HE TELLS ANOTHER TALE
HE DRIFTS ANOTHER STEP FROM ME

EDWARD

(to SANDRA)

He's got it wrong. I'm not the bad guy.

WILL

I WISH I KNEW THE REASON
HE CHOOSES FANTASY
INSTEAD OF FACING FACTS
(re folder)
SOMETHING HIDDEN
SOMETHING HE FEARS
WILL I LEARN THE TRUTH BEFORE HE DISAPPEARS?

(As WILL moves downstage, JOSEPHINE exits)

WILL

THIS RIVER BETWEEN US GROWS WIDER EACH DAY
HE TALKS BUT HE MOSTLY HAS LITTLE TO SAY
I BEG HIM TO SEPARATE THE TRUTH FROM THE TALE
BUT THE RIVER INVITES HIM
AND EDWARD SETS SAIL

THIS RIVER BETWEEN US GROWS HARDER TO BEAR
HE'S STANDING BESIDE ME BUT NOT REALLY THERE
HIS FLIGHTS TURN TO FANCY AS SOON AS HE'LL START
BUT HIS FANCY EXCITES HIM
SO EDWARD TAKES HEART

SIDE 2

#5B: AFTER STRANGER

SANDRA

(to offstage WILL)

I wanted to tell you right away, but your father didn't want anyone to know he was sick. How dare anyone think Edward Bloom is mortal.

(WILL enters with the lawn chairs...he and SANDRA set them up, wiping off the dust)

SANDRA

The treatment was a longshot. But your father was convinced it would work.

WILL

What does Dr. Bennett say?

SANDRA

He says comforting things. But we all know where this is headed.

WILL

I'm so sorry, Mom. I want to do something. How can I help?

SANDRA

I'm just glad you know. Family shouldn't have secrets.

WILL

Mom, have you and Dad talked about money?

SANDRA

We have plenty of money.

WILL

Is the house paid off?

SANDRA

Years ago. The day we sent in the last check, we had champagne. Your father opened it with a sword.

(demonstrates)

There was glass in the carpet for weeks.

WILL

Mom, you won't mind if I look for the mortgage? The insurance...
(off her reaction)
I'm worried about you, about what's going to happen. We have to
keep a roof over your head.

SANDRA

I am not worried about the house. I'm not worried about me--I'm
worried about you.

WILL

I'm fine, Mom. I'll be fine; you don't...

SANDRA

Oh, "I'm fine." You sound like your father.

#6: MAGIC IN THE MAN

SANDRA

IS HE DIFFICULT
ONE COULD ARGUE
THERE'S A CHALLENGE IN EVERY DAY
IF YOU THINK I DON'T UNDERSTAND HIM
GIVE A LISTEN TO WHAT I SAY
SOMETIMES HE'S LIKE A TANK FULL OF LAUGHING GAS
SOMETIMES HE'S LIKE A PAIN IN THE ASS

BUT THERE IS MAGIC IN THE MAN
FOOLISH MAGIC IN THE MAN
AND YOU, NO DOUBT
ARE NOT ABOUT TO BREAK THE SPELL
WHEN THERE IS MAGIC IN A MAN
PAY ATTENTION IF YOU CAN
AND MAYBE YOU WILL DO JUST HALF AS WELL

WILL

He never met Gandhi. He didn't invent the microwave.

SANDRA

SOMETIMES HE BENDS THE TRUTH WITH A WRECKING BALL
SOMETIMES HE'S BORED WITH FOLKS WHO THINK SMALL
I CALL IT MAGIC IN THE MAN
ALL THE WAYS HE'S BETTER THAN
BUT ALL YOU SEE IS HIM AND ME WITH MILES TO GO
IF YOU SAW MAGIC IN THE MAN
RATHER THAN A BATTLE PLAN
YOU MIGHT BE GLAD THAT HE'S THE DAD YOU KNOW

SIDE 3

(THUNDER)
(EDWARD screams, disoriented...SANDRA enters, scared to see EDWARD in this state)

SANDRA

Edward? Honey?
(he recoils, a startled animal)
It's me. You're okay! Let's calm down. Tell me what happened.

EDWARD

I was drowning. It was...
(beat)
It's all got kinda blurry.
(He crumples to the floor...SANDRA joins him)

SANDRA

It's okay honey. It was just a nightmare. You're right here with me.
(They both listen to the rain...more thunder)

EDWARD

The roof should hold up. The shingles still got at least ten years in 'em. You'll be fine.
(off her reaction)
Ah, honey. What'd I say?

#17: I DON'T NEED A ROOF

SANDRA

IN YOUR FACE
I SEE A LIFETIME
IN THIS PLACE
I FEEL AT EASE
WALLPAPER PEELING
PAINT WEARING THIN
HERE'S WHERE I END AND BEGIN

I DON'T NEED A ROOF TO SAY I'M COVERED
I DON'T NEED A ROOF TO KNOW I'M HOME
THERE COULD BE A SINGLE SHINGLE DANGLING OVERHEAD
I DON'T NEED A ROOF TO MAKE MY BED

(EDWARD lays his head in SANDRA's lap)

SANDRA (CONT.)

CLOSE YOUR EYES
I'M STILL BESIDE YOU
NO GOODBYES
NEEDED TODAY
HEAR WHAT THE RAIN SAYS
KNOW WHAT IT KNOWS
AFTER THE RAIN SOMETHING GROWS

I DON'T NEED A ROOF TO SAY I LOVE YOU
I DON'T NEED A ROOF TO CALL YOU MINE
I DON'T NEED ADVENTURE IN SOME FAR AWAY FRONTIER
I DON'T NEED A ROOF TO FEEL YOU NEAR

ALL I NEED IS YOU AND YOU FOREVER
ALL I FEEL IS TRUE AND ABSOLUTE
I DON'T NEED A LEGAL DEED TO HELP ME PLAY MY PART
I DON'T NEED A ROOF TO HOLD MY HEART
STAY WITH ME
STAY WITH ME

*(As EDWARD and SANDRA exit, segue to outside
a tidy little house...a rocking chair on the
porch...JENNY HILL enters, kneeling at the
river's edge to fill up her watering
can...her back is to WILL as he enters
carrying the red folder)*

#17A: JENNY HILL 2

SIDE 4

AMOS

(introducing himself)

Amos Calloway. What's your name, Giant? You got a name? Doesn't matter. More exotic if you don't.

KARL

It's Karl.

AMOS

That works. Say, Karl, have you ever considered a career in the world of entertainment? More importantly, have you ever heard of this term--wait, what is it?--um--"unconscionable contract?"

KARL

It's an agreement in which one party grossly misrepresents facts in order to take advantage of the other party's perceived ignorance.

AMOS

Well. That's a thorough definition.

KARL

I want thirty percent off the top and all the food I can eat.

AMOS

Ten percent.

KARL

Twenty--and I won't do nudity.

AMOS

No one's asking!

KARL

Done.

(EDWARD returns, defeated)

KARL

Edward. What's wrong?

EDWARD

Karl, I just saw the woman I'm going to marry. I know it. But then I lost her.

AMOS

Heartbreaking! Most men gotta get married before they lose their wives. But good news! I'm gonna make your friend here a star.

EDWARD

That's great. 'Least one of us should be happy.

AMOS

Jesus, kid. This girl--real pretty? Blue dress? Red hair?

EDWARD

(grabs AMOS)

Who is she? Where does she live?

(AMOS snarls, then catches himself)

AMOS

Kid--don't waste your time. I know her daddy. She's out of your league.

EDWARD

What do you mean? You don't even know me.

AMOS

Lemme guess--you were the Hero of Hickville, a big fish in a small pond. This here is the ocean, and you're drowning. Take my advice and go back to Puddleville. You'll be happy there.

EDWARD

Look, I may not have much, but I have more determination than any man you're ever going to meet. I'm gonna find that woman and marry her and spend the rest of my life with her.

AMOS

Go write your Harlequin Romance somewhere else. I got a circus to run.

SIDE 5

SANDRA

You're the boy from the circus--

EDWARD

I am!

SANDRA

-- I wasn't sure you were real. I imagine things a lot.

EDWARD

Then imagine us together--Mr. and Mrs. Edward Bloom.

SANDRA

Wait, Edward Bloom?

EDWARD

Yes.

SANDRA

From Ashton?

EDWARD

How did you know?

SANDRA

The boy I'm engaged to, he's from Ashton. Don Price.

EDWARD

Don Price?! They let him into college?

SANDRA

He's studying political science.

EDWARD

He'd fail gravity if it were a subject!

SANDRA

(smiles)

I help him where I can.

EDWARD

Bandage his knuckles where he drags them on the ground?

SANDRA

That's a terrible thing to say.

EDWARD

A terrible Price to pay. Don't marry that cretin.

SANDRA

Don.

EDWARD

Moron.

SANDRA

(looking past him)

No, Don.

*(EDWARD turns to see DON PRICE approaching
with a bunch of his FRATERNITY BUDDIES...DON
PRICE is pissed)*

EDWARD

Oh, hey, Don.

DON PRICE

Bloom?! What the hell are you doing?

SANDRA

(to Don)

Promise me you won't hurt him.

EDWARD

I promise.

DON PRICE

This is my girl. Mine. Look!

*(DON roughly grabs SANDRA's hand to show
EDWARD the diamond ring)*

SANDRA

Don!

EDWARD

Take your hands off her.

DON PRICE

Or what? You're not so big without a giant to back you up.

EDWARD

But I'll always be the bigger man.

*(DON PRICE suddenly clobbers EDWARD...his
BUDDIES join in...true to his word, EDWARD
doesn't fight back)*

SANDRA

Don, stop! Stop! Don, I will never marry you.

(takes off ring)

This was a mistake.

DON PRICE

What? You actually love this guy?

SANDRA

He's almost a stranger, yet I prefer him to you.

*(She hands him his ring...disbelieving, DON
and his BUDDIES exit)*

DON PRICE

Witch lover.

ZACKY PRICE

(weakly imitating)

Witch-lover.

SANDRA

Are you alright?

EDWARD

ONCE A MONTH
A SCRAP OF NEWS
IT FELT LIKE YOU WERE THERE
ONCE A MONTH
I HEARD YOUR VOICE
I HELD YOU, SOLITAIRE

AMOS SAID THAT YOU LOVED MUSIC
SAID THAT YOU WERE COLLEGE BOUND
BUT ONE THING
MORE THAN ALL THE REST
FILLED THE HEART INSIDE MY CHEST
HE TOLD ME YOU LOVED DAFFODILS

EDWARD (CONT.)

AND COUNTLESS AS THE STARS THAT SHINE
THEY STRETCHED IN NEVER ENDING LINE
'TIL ALL I SAW WERE
DAFFODILS
BESIDE THE LAKE BENEATH THE TREES
ALL FLUTTERING AND DANCING IN THE BREEZE
AND LIKE THAT MOMENT RIGHT BETWEEN ASLEEP AND WAKING
I THOUGHT I SAW TEN THOUSAND STRONG IN ONE QUICK GLANCE

BUT WHEN I SAW YOUR FACE
I KNEW BEYOND MISTAKING
A MILLION FLOWERS COULDN'T STAND A CHANCE
SO, I'LL PRETEND THE
DAFFODILS
ARE JUST AN INTRODUCTION TO
THE BLOSSOMING OF ME AND YOU

BESIDE THE LAKE
BENEATH A TREE
BEYOND MISTAKE
PLEASE MARRY ME
PLEASE MARRY ME

SANDRA

But you hardly know me...

EDWARD

I have the rest of my life to find out.

(The ENSEMBLE enters, dressed in their story characters...each carries armfuls of daffodils that they place in a circle around EDWARD and SANDRA)

EDWARD

These, these, and these...

(builds)

THESE ARE FOR YOU
ONLY FOR YOU

EDWARD & SANDRA

LET'S BUILD A WORLD OF DAFFODILS
THAT NEVER FADES AND NEVER DIES
I SEE THE ANSWER IN YOUR EYES

EDWARD

YOU'LL BE THE BRIDE
I'LL BE THE GROOM

SANDRA

I'LL BE THE BRIDE
YOU'LL BE THE GROOM

EDWARD, SANDRA & ENSEMBLE

A DAFFODIL IN EVERY ROOM

EDWARD

AND I WILL SHOWER YOU WITH FLOWERS
OR MY NAME ISN'T

EDWARD

EDWARD...

(Enjoying the anticipation of the joke...)

EDWARD & SANDRA

BLOOM

(EDWARD and SANDRA lean in...and they kiss)

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT ONE