

SCENE 3.

More time has passed. Donny, Emmett and Wyatt. (Peter has gone to use the bathroom.)

EMMETT

Counting. You start counting. That was first. Some people, they hear the prognosis—such as, “Fifty percent of people are six-to-eight months,” and they go, “Well that’s not gonna be me.” But, I just started counting. One more Christmas, maybe two. One more birthday, a couple dozen movies. A final season of our favorite show. And thanks to Jesse, and you guys for being there...you get thru it. And slowly, you stop counting so much. And the thing you’re waiting for, you start waiting to go away.

WYATT

What was finishing chemo like?

EMMETT

The appointments are hard to describe, but I say it’s like being disciplined while everybody is staring at you and you’re exhausted the whole time. You put each appointment on the calendar like a game of battleship. So you’re relieved for that reason when it’s over. But it’s just another thing—it doesn’t mean...

He trails off. After a beat, there’s a sudden KNOCK KNOCK and the three men wheel around toward the door, freaked out. There’s a pause. Peter walks out from the hallway.

PETER

Just kidding.

EMMETT

Asshole!

Peter puts an unlit cigarette in his mouth and heads for the door.

DONNY

Stop.

PETER

It was a joke.

He unlocks the door.

WYATT

Stop! Peter.

Peter stops, cigarette still in mouth.

PETER

Yes, Wyatt?

WYATT

Chill.

PETER

Chill. "Chill."

(turns to Donny)

Thirty seconds.

DONNY

Seriously, no. Have another drink, we'll make up for it tomorrow.

PETER

Thirty seconds!

WYATT

Don't!

PETER

(to Wyatt)

Get fucked.

EMMETT

Stop!

DONNY

(re: the sudden nastiness)

What is *that*?

PETER

The shots.

WYATT

He'd have us *all* dead at this rate.

EMMETT

Huh?

WYATT
(to Peter)

Lock the door.

DONNY

I'll get it.

EMMETT

What do you mean, "*all*" dead.

WYATT

No, I meant it like a curse.

EMMETT

Not just one, but *all* of us.

PETER

You're cursing us, all right.

DONNY

Emmett.

WYATT

I didn't mean it like that.

PETER

Go smoke this for me.

Peter flicks the cigarette at Wyatt.

EMMETT

Stop.

DONNY
(nervously)

Shots! Shots, shots. Do not come undone on me! We're having a good time till we go too far into the dark, right? Let's have these and we'll talk about something else.

Donny snaps and points upward. (no A-flat from the pianist, not yet.) The men freeze in tableau. Music starts as Peter steps forward.

ABSTRACT, OUTSIDE-OF-TIME LIGHTING

9. I TRIED

PETER

I tried.
It's done now,
But I tried.
There's nothing left to argue on my side.
Wishing it was different won't make it not be true.
Better off accepting that the problem's you.

I tried.
I failed,
But I tried.
You say she's not the one, well nor am I.
You say someday I'll look back and see it's for the best,
But maybe all there is, is what was second-guessed.

At least the gods have shot me straight.
I tried my luck and trusted fate.
Callous and grown now,
I'm on my own now.
I shut the door and lock the gate.

I tried.
So damn me,
'Cause I tried.
My tombstone will have nothing by its side.
No one told me that trying to love two
Is impossible when one of them is you.

Piano interlude.

No one tells you that trying to love two
Is impossible if one of them is you.

LIGHTS SHIFT TO CABIN.

*Back to the cabin, the pianist now plays an A-flat.
Peter walks back into the scene and joins the hymn,
or joins halfway thru.*

ALL FOUR MEN

*Holy spirits fill me up,
Drinking from a tiny cup.
And if I may swear it so,
Motherfucker down you go.*

*The pianist plays seven E-major chords. Wyatt goes
to a corner, moody.*

DONNY

You know about Aristotle's Time Paradox?

WYATT

No one's gonna die.

EMMETT

Not *all* of us at least.

WYATT

I didn't mean it like that.

Peter has wandered and picked up the book again.

PETER

Two ships, each in the night.
"What of the land?" said one.
"Aye," the other. "Behind us, be it any different. And to
you: the sea?"
"Aye," the first replied.
"Could be different, yet it's still the same sea. Change is
a constant not worth noting."
And the sea and the land listened on,
Unsure which ship was which.

DONNY

He felt that the present is so measured in the context of the past and future that it's
basically indistinguishable.

WYATT

Right.

PETER

(scoffs)

Oh sure, Wyatt gets it.

EMMETT

So he thought nothing exists presently.

PETER

(holding up the book)

I don't think that's what this means.

DONNY

Aristotle.

PETER

Oh oh.

Peter closes the book.

DONNY

Right.

PETER

Well that seems needless.

DONNY

What does?

PETER

Philosophizing on what "future" *is*. It's just future.

EMMETT

I agree.

PETER

It—like everything—doesn't matter.

DONNY

Well the conversation is the "present," and anyway it's just a conversation.

WYATT

Yeah we're just talking.

DONNY

No I mean Aristotle isn't trying to redefine anything.

PETER

Thanks though, Wyatt.

WYATT

I hope *you* die.

DONNY

I think ultimately time is best defined by what's within the scope of *our* reality.

PETER

(to Wyatt)

Try not talking when you don't know what you're talking about.

DONNY

The past of our present is earlier today, not a year ago.

WYATT

Fuck you.

DONNY

(resigned to talking to himself)

Not a thousand years ago.

PETER

The past is past and presently Wyatt is dying alone.

EMMETT

Stop!

WYATT

You're a dick.

DONNY

The future, however...

WYATT

I'm alone by *choice*.

DONNY

Also only immediately relatable.

(snaps out of it)

Guys stop.

PETER

Acceptance *is* a choice, I'm proud of you.

I get girls all the time!	WYATT
Where!	PETER
In the city.	WYATT
Guys.	EMMETT
“In the city,” sure.	PETER
What about Mary?	WYATT
Stop.	DONNY
Yeah, lay off.	WYATT
No, stop with the Mary.	DONNY
Who’s Mary?	EMMETT
Stop!	PETER
Mary!	WYATT
We know. “Mary.”	DONNY
Know what?	EMMETT
His one made-up story.	PETER

WYATT

It's not made-up, and she's just *one* story.

PETER

Yeah—*the* one story.

WYATT

More than a story. I met her at Faye's Cafe.

EMMETT

Faye's!

PETER

This story gets sillier every time!

WYATT

Donny, line 'em up.

DONNY

Why.

Music starts.

10. I WAS THERE

PETER

Don't.

EMMETT

I want to hear this.

PETER

It's fantasy, it didn't happen.

WYATT

It was a beautiful evening. All right? Everyone had just gotten off work, the city was packed. After weeks of talking, she had agreed to meet me.

It was a Thursday,
 Maybe a Friday.
 Either way my day got exciting!

Beautiful music,
 Beautiful menu,
 Beautiful Mary—so inviting!

The way she walked, the way she glided along up to
me.
The way she talked was like she's singing a song just
for me.

I was there, I was there, I was there!

After a cocktail,
Paying for dinner,
Inviting me over like a winner!

She was enamored,
A little bit hammered,
Pulling me close you bet I stammered!

The way she kissed, I nearly fell to the ground a puddle.
Her luscious lips! She took me straight to her room "to
cuddle."

I was there, I was there, I was there!
I was there, I was there, I was there!

Sun-up is stirring...
Something occurring...
Suddenly *tied up* without warning.

Turns out she cuffed me,
Handkerchief-stuffed me.
Says to me, "Oh hello, good morning!"

You're much too handsome to be letting you go, no
never!
I'll set you free if you can promise to stay forever."

I was there, I was there, I was there!

PETER, DONNY, EMMETT

He was there—*sure!*—he was there, he was there.

EMMETT

So what'd you do?

WYATT

I said, "I love you!
More than the roses love the sun.
I love you.
Maybe you finally found the one!
I love you!

More than the angels love the snow!
Let's call our families so they know!
No wasting time to take it slow.
How 'bout a morning cup of joe?"

She went to the kitchen,
But first unlocked and set me free.
I sat like a kitten,
Domesticated devotee.
The second she left me
I'm on my hands and on my knees.
My clothes are missing—
Also my phone. Also my keys.

The window!
Maybe that's all that I need.
The window.
God made a man to watch him bleed...
The window!
Ground floor apartment for the win.
Suited in nothing but my skin.
Heart in my chest, my throat a lump.
Opened it up and then I got the fuck out.

*By this point it's clear the guys are just humoring
him.*

I was there, I was there, I was there!

PETER, DONNY, EMMETT

He was there, he was there, he was there.

DONNY

I've got a story,
Also for glory.
If we're telling tales, it shouldn't bore ye!

Up on a rocket,
Nothing could knock it.
Hardly a breath, I couldn't talk it.

It's 1969 and I'm on the moon "mankinding."
Yet during this the flag is waving around behind me.

WYATT

Don't be a dick.

DONNY

I was there on the moon, I was there!
On the moon, on the moon!

EMMETT & PETER

He was there, he was there, he was there!

EMMETT

Speaking of pelvis—
Thinking of Elvis.
Thinking he died—I couldn't sell this.

I was in Vegas,
I shouldn't say this—
Out on the strip I saw him: "Hey, this

Cannot be true! I must be making it up in my head!"
I yelled, "Hey you!" He said, "The rumors are true: I'm
not dead."

And he was eating a *regular* peanut butter and jelly sandwich!

I was there, he's not dead, I was there!
He's not dead, he's not dead!

DONNY & PETER

He was there, he was there, he was there!

WYATT

You think I couldn't pull talent like that? It happened. Mary took me home and it happened. I'm not lying!

PETER

President Reagan—
Clearly a pagan—
Hated the birds and went to slay them.

Sure he was crazy,
But It was the eighties!
So you could say, "Let's make them robots."

He said, "With cameras they'll be looking at you
discretely.
No one can stop me, while they twitter around so
sweetly."

WYATT

Birds aren't real, I get it. I'm telling the t—

PETER

I was there, birds aren't real, I was there!
Birds aren't real, birds aren't real!

DONNY & EMMETT

He was there, he was there, he was there!

WYATT

You guys think you're so fucking clever, assholes! I'm telling you!

PETER, DONNY, EMMETT

I was there, I was there, I was there!
On the moon, birds aren't real, Elvis is not dead!

The three collapse in laughter as song ends.

WYATT

(pointing at each man)

Fuck you. Fuck you. And fuck you. You guys have been assholes this whole damn night.

DONNY

We're just having fun.

PETER

Oh, get over yourself!

EMMETT

Wyatt, it's just a joke.

WYATT

You think I couldn't do it? You think I'm not strong?

PETER

"Think."

WYATT

Big word, right?

DONNY

Wyatt.

EMMETT

Stop.

PETER

It's fine.

WYATT

(to Peter)

You're a dick. You're a loser, that's what it is. You're a fucking loser. Angie knew it.

DONNY

Guys!

PETER

Wyatt, calm the fuck down. It's not that I don't believe you, it's that I don't care. This one story you tell over and over just keeps getting further away. It's not your past anymore, it's just a story! If there's an origin, it's of you being a shitty storyteller.

EMMETT

Peter.

PETER

Just stick to what you know, which is *hoping*. Okay? Your reality, your present is *hoping*. A life of “could’ve”s that wander aimlessly while you’re just walking a fixed line. For some of us that line goes somewhere, but for you it just goes *out*. It goes *on*. Like a run-on sentence.

(to Donny)

Without an ending.

WYATT

You’re a fucking loser. You’re saying as much right now.

PETER

Maybe so. But at least I’m in *this* story.

DONNY

(trying to diffuse)

We’re drunk.

PETER

And how dare you mention Angie?

EMMETT

Please!

WYATT

You keeping treating me like I’m afraid. I’m not afraid.

PETER

You should be.

EMMETT

Stop!

DONNY

You guys, stop it now.

Wyatt’s eyes dart around intensely.

WYATT

I’ll show you how strong I am.

He goes to the drawer by the door, opens it and grabs the knife. He holds it up at the others threateningly.

Hey!

DONNY

Oh my god!

EMMETT

Wyatt, what the fuck.

PETER

Music starts.

You see this? Who's scared now!

WYATT

Buddy, buddy. Stop.

DONNY

You're out of your goddam mind.

PETER

I'm not!

WYATT

It's okay—slow it down. We're all right.

EMMETT

11. LONG NIGHT

EMMETT

It's been a long night and we're tired,
 So let's not shout and we'll hear you out.
 It's been a long night and we're wired.
 All these jokes and things are just what drinking brings.
 It's just what dinking brings,
 It's all these things.

DONNY

It's been a long night giving you flak.
 All this talking trash gave us all whiplash.
 Let's take a minute, *put the knife back*.
 And we'll take a break before making a mistake.