

ACT I

BRIDGET'S STUDIO.

(BRIDGET stands admiring her piece of marble. MR. BONINI enters.)

MR. BONINI

You will give birth to something very large, Senora.

BRIDGET

The wood nymph, Daphne. Her father changed her into a tree.

MR. BONINI

It is very beautiful, your piece of marble.

(HE walks over and picks up two of the paintings leaning against the wall.)

MR. BONINI

Now you must find the key to unlock.

BRIDGET

You make it sound so easy. And so hard.

MR. BONINI

Do not worry. You will know what to do. Because you are an artist.

(HE crosses back and exits with the paintings.)

BRIDGET

I look at my piece of marble and I think ...

(BRIDGET SINGS. "IN THE BEGINNING")

## BRIDGET

This could be the one  
The one that I am known for  
That opens up the door to making more  
The one they can't ignore

I picture her when she is finished  
Inside a laurel tree  
Arms reaching up becoming branches  
What will it take to set her free?

She stands bathed in an astral light  
People have come to see her  
Suddenly my role is incidental  
What does she have to do with me?

But it's so easy in the beginning

Before the work begins  
Before the chips start to fall  
Before the doubts set in  
Before the demons come to call

The work begins  
And the chips start to fall  
Then the doubts set in  
And the demons come to call

But in the beginning it's so easy!



(BRIDGET picks up her chisel and positions it on the piece of marble.)

GARDEN/STUDIO.

(MOM and DAD enter, MOM carrying a tray with plastic containers and place settings. DAD sits down as MOM arranges things on the table. BRIDGET is vaguely aware of their presence.)

DAD

I remember when Bridget was a little girl.

(BRIDGET raises her hammer, ready to strike the first blow.)

DAD

She would climb up into my lap and tell me I was the most wonderful father in the whole wide world.

(BRIDGET freezes, listening.)

MOM

Remember the time she ran into the elevator and the door closed behind her?

DAD

You were hysterical.

MOM

We didn't know what floor she'd gone to.

(BRIDGET lowers her hammer. MR. BONINI comes back into the studio.)

MR. BONINI

There is a statue like this in Rome.

BRIDGET

What?

MR. BONINI

Of the girl. Who is becoming a tree.

BRIDGET

You're kidding.

MR. BONINI

I have seen in a museum. It was made many, many years ago. Maybe two hundreds. Yours will be different.

(BRIDGET becomes absorbed in looking at something on the floor around the base of the marble. LUCY enters and joins her parents.)

LUCY

It's lovely out here.

(SHE inhales deeply.)

LUCY

You can smell the magnolias.

(SHE sits down at the table.)

BRIDGET

Mr. Bonini? Will you please come over here and take a look at these spots on the floor.

(MR. BONINI comes up beside BRIDGET and together they stare down at the floor.)

BRIDGET

And those stains on the ceiling.

(They look up simultaneously.)

MR. BONINI

How long it will take to make your statue?

BRIDGET

I have six months.

(MR. BONINI counts on his fingers.)

MR. BONINI

Maggio, giugno, luglio ... it never rains from May to October. We live in Southern California. It is a desert here.

BRIDGET

That doesn't mean it never rains.

MR. BONINI

That means it never rains from May to October.

(HE picks up the other two paintings from against the wall.)

MR. BONINI

Do not worry, my son is visiting. I will send him to repair.

BRIDGET

Thank you.

(HE exits. BRIDGET calls after him.)

BRIDGET

I'd appreciate that!

DAD

Mother thought it would be nice to eat outdoors. I never liked it. Who knows what gets on your food.

MOM

Spring is in the air.

DAD

It's not spring I'm worried about.

(THEY peer into their containers.)

LUCY

I'm going to make you some soup. From the vegetables I'm growing in my garden. And I'll make some of that humus you like. It's got lots of protein.

DAD

The humus gives me gas.

(A phone rings. BRIDGET digs around in her purse.)

BRIDGET

Hello?

(beat)

How do you know?

(RICHARD enters, talking on his cell phone.)

RICHARD

A teacher saw her sneaking off campus with a boy. I was in a meeting when I got the call.

(BRIDGET takes the phone away from her ear and turns around to look at RICHARD.)

RICHARD

When are you going to get a phone installed?

BRIDGET

Soon!

(RICHARD stares at the piece of marble.)

RICHARD

My god, it's big.

BRIDGET

Did you try her cell?

RICHARD

I left a message. Are you sure you know what you're doing?

BRIDGET

No. What should we do?

RICHARD

We should go out and look for her. That's what we should do. She could be having sex this very minute.

BRIDGET

Where? At a bus stop?

(RICHARD teeters.)

RICHARD

I don't think I can handle this. I'm not feeling so well.

(HE sits down in the antique chair.)

RICHARD

Maybe it's allergies. Or I'm getting a cold.

(LUCY calls out from across the stage.)

LUCY

Come and sit next to me, Bridget.

(SHE pats the chair beside her. RICHARD looks around.)

RICHARD

You've got all your favorite things here. Haven't you?

(beat)

The painting that hung over your grandparents' fireplace. Gloating.

(beat)

The stalwart little chair that stood erect as generations fell by the wayside.

(BRIDGET crosses to the garden and sits down next to LUCY.)

RICHARD

I think you'd better go home and wait for Annie.

(HE looks around and sees that BRIDGET is gone.)

(RICHARD Sings. "THIS IS NOT WHAT I BARGAINED FOR")

## RICHARD

This is not what I bargained for  
 The frenzied moods, the dusty floor  
 I thought she was the girl next door

I never guessed she wouldn't like  
 Shopping for clothes and pretty things  
 Got no thrills from getting candy,  
     flowers, diamond rings  
 Would think that entertaining was a bore  
 Be relieved when friends were done  
     and out the door

I never guessed she wouldn't like  
 Going on weekend getaways  
 Wouldn't like lazing around on those  
     carefree summer days

She acts like there are voices  
     calling her  
 Sirens beckoning to go and do things  
     that she's prefer

This is not what I bargained for  
 I wanted something more

Your wife must always be there for you  
 Share in all the things that you do  
 Be half of one where there once were two  
 Go through life and see the same  
     wholesome view

We have only so much time in our lives  
 We must therefore stay on track  
     with our wives  
 Track with our wives

And not be consumed by urges and drives  
 To carve up stones while our lives  
     pass us by

Damn!



RICHARD'S OFFICE.

(Richard crosses to his drafting table and compulsively organizes things, then sits down to work.)

THE GARDEN.

MOM

(to Bridget)

Are you cold? We can go back inside if you're cold.

BRIDGET

No, I'm fine. Thank you.

LUCY

Look at the jacaranda. Isn't it gorgeous? I found some wool that color just the other day, on sale. I'm going to knit a sweater, for Annie.

DAD

(to Bridget)

Would you like me to get you a sweater to put over your shoulders?

BRIDGET

No thanks, Dad.

MOM

Go get a sweater for Bridget.

BRIDGET

No, really. I'm fine.

MOM

I'll go.

BRIDGET

No, sit. I'll go.

LUCY

Don't anybody move. Bridget's a big girl. She knows if she's cold.

(THEY go back to eating in the awkward silence.)

DAD

(beat)

We discovered these in the freezer section. You just pop them in the microwave. They're quite good.

BRIDGET

I got my piece of marble today.

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MOM

(to Lucy)  
She got what?

DAD

The creamed chipped beef is quite nice, too. We put it on toast.

LUCY

Her marble. To make her sculpture.

DAD

(to Bridget)  
What's wrong? You haven't touched your food.

MOM

(alarmed)  
Oh, dear! I felt a bite!

DAD

I told you not to wear those ridiculous sandals. They let the bugs in.

(HE stands and picks up his dish.)

DAD

Come inside, girls.

(MOM gets up and follows DAD.)

LUCY

I'm going to stay out here and finish my supper.

BRIDGET

I'll stay with Lucy.

MOM

Why don't you come in for dessert.

BRIDGET

We'll be there soon, Mom.

JIMMY'S STUDIO.

(ISABEL enters, dressed in a robe. SHE stands next to the couch where she is obviously intended to pose. JIMMY sits in front of a large canvas and prepares to paint.)

ISABEL

It's cold in here. Do you have a heater?

JIMMY

Nope, sorry. No heater.

(ISABEL begins to untie the robe, then stops.)

ISABEL

Can you work on the face? Until I warm up.

JIMMY

How will you warm up?

ISABEL

I don't know. I guess I won't.

(SHE kicks off her slippers. Starts to take off the robe.)

JIMMY

Okay. I'll give it a try.

ISABEL

Thank you.

(SHE pulls the robe around her and lies down. JIMMY stops and looks at her.)

JIMMY

This would be great if I were painting a picture titled, "The Girl in the Crimson Robe."

(ISABEL jumps up.)

ISABEL

I'll take it off.

(SHE unties the sash. JIMMY stands up.)

JIMMY

How about if I get you a nice cup of hot coffee from next door.

(ISABEL pulls the sash tight again.)

ISABEL

Thanks, Jimmy. Only, could you make it tea?

(JIMMY exits.)

THE GARDEN.

(The sisters look out into the garden.)

LUCY

(beat)

Annie called to ask if she could spend the weekend.

BRIDGET

She likes staying at your house. She likes being with you.

LUCY

No one likes their mother at her age.

BRIDGET

She said she used to lie in bed and listen to me and Richard fight. She said I acted annoyed when she came into the studio.

(SHE turns to LUCY, who continues to stare straight ahead.)

BRIDGET

I wasn't annoyed. I remember how I felt. She was the sweetest little girl.

(BRIDGET turns back, facing forward too.)

(BRIDGET and LUCY sing. "I TOLD HER")

BRIDGET, LUCY

I told her

BRIDGET

You would be a better mother

LUCY

Don't give in to too much sugar  
She'll end up diabetic

BRIDGET, LUCY

I told her

BRIDGET

I told her  
I haven't been the perfect mother

LUCY

Don't give in to all that shopping  
You must set limits

BRIDGET, LUCY

I told her

BRIDGET

You're not the kind for backing down  
Your principles do not bend

LUCY

It only takes one oversight to set off a  
downward trend

BRIDGET

Kids understand what you expect  
It makes them feel safe and sound

LUCY

It helps if your head is screwed on right  
And both feet are on the ground

BRIDGET

A hearty soul is what it takes

LUCY

The fortitude of pioneers

BRIDGET

Parents are bound to make mistakes

LUCY

A legacy that's passed down through the years

BRIDGET

I once knew a girl  
Sweet little girl  
Sat in my lap  
Down for a nap  
Kind of girl

I once knew a girl  
Sweet little girl  
Slept with a bear  
Unruly hair

I once knew a girl  
Played in the yard  
Made me a card  
Kind of girl

She is gone

If I could hold my little girl again  
If I could feel her in my arms again  
Again  
Oh, again  
Again

LUCY

It's not your job to make her happy  
She'll thank you in the end

We know that life is less than happy  
And certain things you can't mend

BRIDGET

Why do we somehow let them down  
These little girls that we tend?

I know what all the experts say  
But I still want to be her friend

BRIDGET, LUCY

I told her.



BRIDGET

I'm making the sculpture for Annie. Because I don't have anything else to give her.

BRIDGET'S STUDIO.

(ANNIE enters the studio and stares at the piece of marble.)

ANNIE

What the hell?

BRIDGET

Annie!

(SHE jumps up and crosses to the studio.)

BRIDGET

We were worried about you.

ANNIE

Where did it come from?

BRIDGET

A quarry, in Colorado.

ANNIE

What's it going to be?

BRIDGET

I'm making a sculpture of the wood nymph, Daphne.

(beat)

Where have you been?

ANNIE

I liked it better when we were poor and you worked in an office.

BRIDGET

I loved being home with you. That's why I stopped working. And because Dad got a better job.

ANNIE

You stopped working so you could SCULPT. I hate that word.

BRIDGET

I started sculpting after I stopped working. Remember all the things we made? Unicorns with blue manes. Castles with orange turrets. We had them piled up all over the windowsills.

ANNIE

You made them. I was a little girl. It scared me the way you were so obsessed.

(BRIDGET can't believe what she's hearing.)

ANNIE

Then when you made the garage into a studio, you couldn't wait to get rid of me.

BRIDGET

That's not true.

ANNIE

Remember the time you left me at school all night?

BRIDGET

(laughs involuntarily)

I didn't do that.

ANNIE

You left me there until the end of the next day.

BRIDGET

That's impossible. They would never let a child spend the night.

ANNIE

I thought you were never coming back.

BRIDGET

I'm sorry, Sweetheart.

(BRIDGET tries to put her arms around ANNIE, but ANNIE pulls away.)

ANNIE

And I don't like your giant household appliances. They're stupid.

LUCY'S KITCHEN.

(LUCY chops vegetables. RICHARD sits on a stool watching her.)

LUCY

It was bound to happen sooner or later. Bridget's way too easy on her. You have to be firm. You have to set limits.

(beat)

What's she planning to make, anyway?

RICHARD

Some kind of a girl.

LUCY

A girl. Do you think she's up to it?

RICHARD

I don't know. The figurines she made in the beginning were pretty good. We had them around the house. In the garden. On the mantle. Behind the doors. Under the beds.

LUCY

Then she started making those giant household appliances. The ten-foot vacuum cleaner. The six-foot blender.

RICHARD

After that it was reptiles with human faces.

LUCY

Men's faces. There was a lot of anger in them.

RICHARD

White, upper-middle-class anger. Watch out!

(LUCY chops harder and faster. RICHARD looks at the large pile of vegetable pieces.)

RICHARD

What are you making?

LUCY

Soup, for Mom and Dad. I'm worried about their diet. Everything's frozen.

RICHARD

I'm not eating so well either.

(LUCY puts down her knife and wipes her forehead with the back of her hand.)

LUCY

What can I get you? I've got cold chicken. Grilled vegetables. Bread I baked this morning. Cheese! I've got the most wonderful cheese from Marin County.

RICHARD

No, thanks. I'm not hungry right now.

(LUCY goes back to her chopping.)

BRIDGET'S STUDIO/LUCY'S KITCHEN.

BRIDGET

She must have fallen asleep.

(RICHARD looks up.)

RICHARD

What?

BRIDGET

Annie said I left her at school overnight. She must have taken a nap. Then when she woke up, she thought it was the next day.

RICHARD

You did forget to pick her up sometimes.

BRIDGET

No, I didn't. I forgot to pick her up once. When my mother had her accident.

RICHARD

It seems to me it happened more than once.

BRIDGET

One time I didn't pick up Annie. When I went to the hospital to see Mom. And I called the school.

RICHARD

Whatever.

BRIDGET

Not whatever! It happened once!

(RICHARD returns to his office. BRIDGET sits in her antique chair and buries her head in her hands. JIMMY enters.)

JIMMY

I saw them unloading your piece of marble. You must be a brave woman.

(BRIDGET stands up and turns around.)

JIMMY

Bridget!

BRIDGET

Hello.

(THEY stare at each other for a moment, then JIMMY puts out his hand.)

JIMMY

I can't believe it. How are you?

(THEY shake hands, then hug awkwardly.)

BRIDGET

I'm good, thank you.

JIMMY

You look great. Just as beautiful. And here you are, my new neighbor.

BRIDGET

Do you live in LA now?

JIMMY

New York was too bloody cold. I'm surprised we didn't run into each other sooner.

BRIDGET

I stay at home a lot.

JIMMY

But, here you are. You have your own studio.

(JIMMY looks around, stops at the piece of marble.)

JIMMY

What's it going to be, your beautiful rock?

BRIDGET

The wood nymph, Daphne.

(JIMMY looks at the drawings on the walls.)

JIMMY

Why inside the tree?

BRIDGET

Her father changed her into a tree because he thought her life was in danger.

JIMMY

Cool.

BRIDGET

What are you doing these days?

JIMMY

Portraits. Men with books. Women with dogs. Children with attitude.

(HE stops in front of the landscape painting.)

JIMMY

(distracted)  
I tried painting other things. Tomatoes. Freight trains. But,  
no one was interested.

(beat)  
Spain?

BRIDGET

Italy.  
(beat)  
I saw an exhibit of your work. Down in La Jolla, about six years  
ago. Sort of folk art portraits. Bright colors, big heads.

JIMMY

They were really just glorified caricatures.

BRIDGET

No, they weren't. They were beautiful. I stayed in the gallery  
for a long time, staring at them.

JIMMY

What did you see?

BRIDGET

When I got really close, I could see what looked like trees and  
hills and gullies. In the eyebrows and cheeks. Around the  
features. Like miniature landscapes.

JIMMY

My revenge for being pigeonholed.

BRIDGET

Then it wasn't my imagination?

JIMMY

No, but you were the only person who noticed.

BRIDGET

Oh!

JIMMY

Yes, oh.  
(beat)  
I thought I was being so clever.

BRIDGET

I thought you were.

(JIMMY turns away and looks back at the drawings on the  
wall.)

JIMMY  
These are good.

BRIDGET  
Thank you.

(SHE turns away and looks at her rock.)

JIMMY  
Are you still with that guy?

BRIDGET  
Richard. Yes, we're still married.

JIMMY  
Any children?

BRIDGET  
One.

JIMMY  
I'd better get back to work. I have someone waiting for me.  
We'll get caught up.

BRIDGET  
Soon.

JIMMY  
Right.

(HE goes back to his studio. RICHARD looks up briefly from his work. BRIDGET suddenly fans herself frantically.)

BRIDGET  
Mr. Bonini!

(SHE goes to the door and calls out.)

BRIDGET  
Mr. Bonini!

(In a few seconds, MR. BONINI enters.)

BRIDGET  
It's hot and stuffy in here. I can't breathe. And the windows are painted shut.

MR. BONINI  
You must not open the windows. We have very good conditioning.

BRIDGET

But, you don't understand. There's going to be a lot of dust.

MR. BONINI

Do not worry. I will make it nice.

(HE pats her shoulder.)

MR. BONINI

You make your statue.

BRIDGET

I can't seem to get started. There are so many distractions.

MR. BONINI

When you know what you want to say, you will find the way to say it. Because you are an artist.

(HE exits.)

BRIDGET

I am an artist. I am an artist.

RICHARD'S OFFICE.

(ANNIE sits in a chair while RICHARD works at his drawing table.)

ANNIE

May I go home, please?

RICHARD

No, I want you to stay here. Where I can keep an eye on you.

ANNIE

What am I supposed to do? Count ceiling tiles?

RICHARD

Homework.

ANNIE

I don't have any.

RICHARD

If you're finished with your homework, then you can always review.

ANNIE

Review what?

(SHE reaches for a magazine.)



RICHARD

Do you know what this is?

ANNIE

Some fancy-ass pencil.

RICHARD

I am going to use this pencil to draw something fantastic. For which I will get paid lots of money. So we can pay for your cell phone, and internet access, and digital this and digital that.

(HE examines some photos. ANNIE picks up the magazine again.)

RICHARD

(distracted)

This one's complicated by a tree. A favorite tree the client wants me to incorporate into the design.

ANNIE

I can't wait until I get a place of my own. Then I won't cost you anything.

RICHARD

I don't want you to go. I just want a little credit!

THE PARK.

(LUCY enters and sit down on a bench. SHE takes a pair of glasses and a book out of her bag and begins to read. BRIDGET sneaks up behind her.)

BRIDGET

What are you reading?

(SHE playfully grabs the book.)

BRIDGET

"Take Control: Be the Captain of Your Life." Is that what you're doing?

LUCY

Yes, as a matter of fact.

BRIDGET

(sarcastic)

Good luck!

(BRIDGET hands the book back, giddy.)

BRIDGET

I'm sorry, that's not fair. I think taking control of your life is a good thing. If you can pull it off.

LUCY

Why are you in such a good mood?

BRIDGET

Because. Look at the sky. It's the most beautiful shade of blue. And the flowers. Have you ever see such vibrant colors?

(beat)

Look, butterflies! And little birds hopping around on the grass.

LUCY

Are you taking anti-depressants?

BRIDGET

No. I've been in my studio all day. I didn't realize it was such a beautiful day.

LUCY

In love?

BRIDGET

I'm married, silly.  
(beat)

There is a painter down the hall who's kind of cute.

LUCY

Take my advice, don't get involved with an artist. They're way too self-centered.

BRIDGET

I'm not going to get involved. I don't do that.  
(beat)

Do you think I'm self-centered?

LUCY

I'm not talking about you. You got married. You raised a child. You had a job.

BRIDGET

Why do you think I went to art school?

LUCY

Because you fell in love with an artist?  
(beat)

Just kidding.

(BRIDGET nods at the book in LUCY'S lap.)

BRIDGET

What's on your mind that can't wait six months?

LUCY

I'm moving to Seattle.

BRIDGET

What?

LUCY

I'm flying up on Saturday to check it out.

BRIDGET

You can't leave.

LUCY

I want to make a fresh start.

BRIDGET

Are you sure moving to another city will make a difference?

LUCY

Thanks.

BRIDGET

I mean I think there are things you need to work out, that won't go away just because you move.

LUCY

As if you're perfect. Like what things?

BRIDGET

Like your tendency to fall in love with men who put you down. Your defensiveness. Your anger. Your self-loathing.

(beat)

Just kidding.

LUCY

I knew you'd try and talk me out of it.

(beat)

You'll have to take up the slack with Mom and Dad.

BRIDGET

It's not a good time for me.

LUCY

I can't stay because of you. I can't stay because of them. I have to do what's best for me.

BRIDGET

You have to be the "Captain of Your Life."

LUCY

Don't make fun of me.

(beat)

The housekeeper gave notice.

(BRIDGET sings. "IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY")

BRIDGET

It's a beautiful day

LUCY

You'll have to help them find a new one.

BRIDGET

A warm summer day

LUCY

Are you listening?

BRIDGET

A housekeeper.

I'm sitting on a bench  
A bench in the park

LUCY

I suggest you put an ad in the paper.

BRIDGET

The trees are blooming  
Isn't that enough?

LUCY

That's what I did the last time.

(MOM and DAD enter and sit down next to LUCY.)

BRIDGET

It's a beautiful day

MOM

Once a week we do our shopping.

BRIDGET

A warm summer day

DAD

It's getting too hard with all those bags.

BRIDGET

I'm sitting on a bench  
A bench in the park

LUCY

No more than ten minutes of direct sun.

BRIDGET

The earth is turning

Isn't that enough?  
 (MOM and DAD and LUCY close their eyes and turn their faces  
 to the sun.)

BRIDGET

I want to fly  
 To soar and to glide  
 On currents rising high  
 Wings spread  
 Descend  
 Down to rest among the  
 Sheltered boughs  
 A downy nest

I want to grow  
 To sprout and to leaf  
 To shoot my roots down below  
 To pull  
 The light  
 Inside my veins and bloom anew  
 A blushing bride

MOM

Did you know Ethel's having knee surgery?

DAD

It's a mistake at her age.

LUCY

I certainly hope she doesn't expect to walk again.

BRIDGET

Why do I feel?  
 What do I feel?  
 Longing  
 Like there is something just beyond  
 With darkness all around

I want to hold it  
 I want it in me  
 I am afraid