

Small beat. Erik drinks. Richard and Brigid prepare food in the kitchen alley.

RICHARD

Work's good, Erik?—you're still at—it's a Catholic high school, right?

BRIGID

St. Paul's, for twenty-eight years . . .

RICHARD

Wow, / that's impressive . . .

ERIK

Well . . .

BRIGID

They created a whole position for him.

ERIK

Don't make it sound—I headed up maintenance and coupla years ago they needed a, an equipment manager, so—

BRIGID

It's a big job, it's a triple-A school, he handles all the phys-ed classes, / manages the weight room, the kids love him . . .

ERIK

All right, okay . . . hey enough . . .

RICHARD

That's impressive.

ERIK

It's practical. Got the girls free tuition. You don't pick up after other people's kids for twenty-eight years unless you really love your own, you know?

RICHARD

(toasting)

Well, hey, to twenty-eight years . . .

BRIGID
Twenty-eight years . . .

ERIK
Cheers.

UPSTAIRS:
Toilet flush.

DOWNSTAIRS:
Brigid—who was waiting for the bathroom to be free—starts up the staircase.

RICHARD
Yeah, no it's crazy, our generation, we're lucky if we stay in a job for *one* year, right Bridge?

ERIK
Are you guys even *in* the same generation?

BRIGID
Dad, that's / not funny—

ERIK
What, I'm not allowed to joke?

BRIGID
No.

UPSTAIRS:
Deirdre exits the bathroom.

DOWNSTAIRS:
Richard continues meal preparations.

RICHARD
You decide on an architect for the lake house?

ERIK
Uh, no, that's a ways away.

Erik drinks.

BRIGID

(arriving upstairs, seeing Deirdre)

Hey . . .

DEIRDRE

Your bathroom doesn't have a window . . .

BRIGID

I know, go downstairs.

DEIRDRE

. . . I love you, I'm just saying.

Brigid enters the bathroom.

Deirdre goes into the other upstairs room to get her purse, she pulls out two wrapped presents. She moisturizes her hands. At some point on her way back to the stairs, she stops to eavesdrop on Richard and Erik's conversation.

RICHARD

I actually like having the design process to look forward to, I like the planning stages.

ERIK

Yeah, well our budget's—we're gonna use one of those places where, they've got predesigned homes you can choose from? / . . . but . . .

RICHARD

Sure, good idea . . .

ERIK

. . . yeah, and the place we're looking at has *good* designs, you know? . . .

RICHARD

Yeah, no that's great.

Richard prepares for dinner during the following exchange. He's listening, but multitasking.

ERIK

I'll tell you, Rich, save your money now . . . I thought I'd be settled by my age, you know, but man, it never ends . . . mortgage, car payments, internet, our dishwasher just gave out . . .

RICHARD

Oh man . . .

ERIK

Yeah, yeah . . .

(small beat)

. . . don'tcha think it should cost less to be alive?

RICHARD

Ha, absolutely . . .

ERIK

I even started cutting my own hair to try and save a few bucks . . . messed it up pretty good. Thank God I'm married.

Richard smiles. Erik drinks. Beat.

RICHARD

ERIK

So you want—no, sorry what? Brigid said you're—

ERIK

[Nothing, nevermind.]

Erik drinks.

RICHARD

You want some ice?

ERIK

Uh, sure.

RICHARD

(getting the ice)

So you've been . . . having some weird dreams too?

ERIK

Huh?

RICHARD

. . . just . . . you can hear a lot through the [hole where the spiral staircase is], just caught that you haven't been sleeping, thought maybe—I've been having weird dreams all week, think it's because of the move . . . last night I was polishing a silver refrigerator and . . . my dog was caught inside it? . . . and I don't have a dog? / . . . just weird stuff . . .

ERIK

Oh man . . . sounds like it . . . no, I don't remember my [dreams] . . . even when I have one of those ones where, uh . . .

Erik takes a sip of beer.

RICHARD

What?

ERIK

. . . [no, nothing important] . . . you know the ones where you need a minute just to . . . figure out it isn't / actually [real] . . .

RICHARD

Oh, sure—

Knocking at the downstairs door startles Erik a bit—he spills his beer. Richard moves to help—

ERIK

Sorry about that, Rich, I got it, I got it . . .

RICHARD

Don't worry about it—

More knocking. Richard opens the door as Erik cleans up his spill. Aimee wheels Momo inside.

RICHARD

Welcome . . . / come on in . . .