

WHERE WAS I?

It's 7:30 on the same Friday night in the same alternate suburban reality. Lights up on Abbie in the garage. She holds a stuffed doll—"Dolly-Doll." She is searching for something. At the top, Liz is yelling to Abbie from inside the house.

LIZ. *(Calling to her wife, from off.)* Abbie?

Little beat.

Abs?

Little beat.

Abbie, where are you?

ABBIE. *(Searching intensely, half answering Liz.)* Garage.

LIZ. ABBIE!!

ABBIE. *(Yelling to her wife.)* Garaaaage!

Abbie searches for a beat.

LIZ. *(Finally bursting into the garage.)* Hey! So listen, Tess found Monkey, Kitty, and Girailey, and I found One-Eyed Lobster, but we still can't find Dolly-Doll anywhere!

ABBIE. Here.

She tosses Dolly-Doll to Liz and continues searching.

LIZ. Well, why didn't you let us know? Tess is kinda melting down. *(Calling off, starting to go.)* Found her, Tess! *(Returning.)* Oh—and Caleb is watching—...

Abbie is still searching.

What are you doing?

ABBIE. I don't know, just looking for something.

LIZ. Oh, Okay, Well, I know it's Friday and they get to pick what they want to watch for TV time, but Caleb wants to watch *Strike Force Pandas*—the second season is available on SuperCenter Prime—and—is that okay for Tess?

ABBIE. It's fine. I vetted it.

LIZ. Well, it's a little violent, don't // you think—

ABBIE. Liz, if you don't like it, put on *Tina Tadpole Goes Exploring*.

LIZ. Caleb said he doesn't wanna watch *Tina Tadpole // Goes Exploring*.

ABBIE. *(Searching.)* Could you just handle it tonight?

LIZ. Huh?

ABBIE. Could you just get everybody down tonight for a change?

LIZ. Oh. [This is weird.] Yeah. Sure.

ABBIE. Thanks.

LIZ. Are you okay?

ABBIE. Yeah.

LIZ. Okay. [Are you sure?] Well, I think I'm gonna put on *Tina Tadpole Goes to Copenhagen*, 'cause I'm just not sure about *Pandas*, and Caleb will just have to deal.

ABBIE. Fine.

LIZ. Okay.

She starts to go; Abbie continues searching. Liz stops.

And—they—you really are a lifesaver. Thanks for finding Dolly-Doll.

Abbie is searching more intensely.

Hey! Abbie, what are you doing?

ABBIE. I'm not...sure. I came in here to find Dolly-Doll—

LIZ. Yeah, and you found her! Thanks!

ABBIE. Yeah—but I just feel like something else...is missing.

LIZ. What? >

ABBIE. I don't know.

LIZ. What's missing?

ABBIE. This is so weird.

She searches, maybe a little desperately.

LIZ. Abbie—what are you doing? What are you looking for?

Abbie doesn't reply and is still searching.

Hey! What can't you find?

ABBIE. I think it's...

A genuine discovery.

...me.

LIZ. (*Receives and processes.*) What?

ABBIE. Myself. I can't find it.

Little beat.

LIZ. Abbie: What [are you talking about]—?

ABBIE. (*Upset.*) I have no idea where it is!

Beat.

LIZ. (*Trying her best to figure out how to respond.*) Okay, okay. Well... (*Trying her best to figure out how to be helpful.*) ...um... Well, babe: It doesn't seem like it's the kind of thing you're gonna find out here.

ABBIE. Well, this is the only place I haven't looked. (*Explosion.*) God! Where is it? Have I lost it?

LIZ. (*Mostly to herself.*) I'm beginning to think that maybe you // have.

ABBIE. I mean—when's the last time you saw me?

She says this as if she's saying, "When's the last time you saw it?"

LIZ. Huh?

ABBIE. When did you see it last?

LIZ. I don't know...

ABBIE. Think!

LIZ. I don't know!

ABBIE. Liz, help me out here! Think!!

LIZ. Okay! Well...

Liz is at a loss. She thinks. Then, a realization.

...It's been a while, I guess.

ABBIE. Okay.

LIZ. A long time, actually. A long, long time. Since...before the kids.

ABBIE. What?

LIZ. Yeah, I haven't seen it—since the kids, Abbie. Since Caleb.

ABBIE. What? No, // no.

LIZ. Yeah. Now that I think about it, this is all making sense, actually. I haven't really seen you...since the kids.

ABBIE. What do you mean you haven't seen me?!, I've been right here.

LIZ. No you haven't. I mean, you're here, but I never see you. >

ABBIE. Yes, you do!

LIZ. You've kind of disappeared on me.

ABBIE. I have not disappeared! I'm right here all the time: You're the one who's disappeared! You're the one who doesn't even seem to want to *participate* in this family!

LIZ. Excuse me?

ABBIE. You're never here! You never see me because you're never here!

LIZ. What do you mean I'm never here?

ABBIE. You work! All the time! You'll never have to go through anything like this because you get to do whatever you want for yourself by yourself whenever you want to.

LIZ. What do I get to do for myself by myself?

ABBIE. You get to get in your car! And drive! To work! By yourself! Do you know what I would give to be able to drive! In my car! By myself! Anywhere? You leave me here all alone, >

LIZ. I don't leave you!

ABBIE. and it's a lot for one person—*doing Everything and giving Everything*—and I am so used up by the end of every day because I have been giving and doing and giving and doing and maybe that's what this is! Maybe I didn't lose it after all, Maybe I just gave it all away, and there's just not enough of me to go around, and now I am all! Used! Up!

Little beat.

Maybe that's what this is.

Beat.

LIZ. (*Contritely.*) Abbie: I know how hard it is, w/that you do.

ABBIE. No you don't, You have // no idea.

LIZ. Okay, you're right, I don't, but listen: This is the deal we made. This is how we decided to do this. This is how *you* wanted to do this. And—you know, you don't give me much of a chance. To "participate." In this family. Because you do it all. You did it all: You *had* them, you *nursed* them...and one of us had to work, and that one of us was me, (*into attack mode.*) and so I *worked*! And I am working! So *hard*! What I do is *hard* you know!

ABBIE. (*Apologetic.*) I know—

LIZ. (*Apologetic.*) No, you don't know! I am not always here because I am making the money so that there is a here.

ABBIE. Oh, don't do that, // pull that!

LIZ. I'm not *doing* anything! I'm just saying that I make sure there is a *here* so that you can take *care* of *here*. And—you're the one who's never *here*, you know!

ABBIE. I'm here *all* the time!

LIZ. For *me*! You're never *here* for *me*!

Everything stops.

I mean—it'd be nice, you know, if you slept. In the bed. With me. More than once in a while. // But you don't.

ABBIE. Liz: Tess can't sleep without me right now, you know that!

LIZ. I know! And I'm not even upset about that, because Tess needs you, Caleb needs you...and I think that's probably where what you're looking for is—with the kids. And that's where it should be.

Little beat.

I mean, I would love for you to find yourself—or whatever—I really would. But...I don't think that's something that you get to have right now. And I don't think I get to have it either, right now. And I think...that's just the way it goes.

ABBIE. Yeah, well, right now, I don't like the way it's going very much.

LIZ. Well, tough, 'cause this is how we decided to do this.

ABBIE. Yeah, well, sometimes I hate the way we decided to do this, >

LIZ. (*Starting to go.*) Well, join the club.

ABBIE. because sometimes the way we decided to do this makes me hate you.

Liz stops. Abbie realizes what an awful thing she has just said. Liz turns and faces Abbie, processing the awful thing Abbie just said. Liz and Abbie really look at each other for the first time in a long time. And then, an apology.

Oh-my-God //—Liz! >

LIZ. Wow, >

The apology turns into a realization that Abbie has found what she's been looking for—and it's in Liz's eyes.

ABBIE. Oh-my-God!

LIZ. (*Starting inside.*) You know, sometimes >

ABBIE. (*Still realizing that she has found what she's been looking for.*) Oh-my-God!

LIZ. the way we decided to do this all makes me feel pretty much the same way, // so, we'll call it even.

ABBIE. No—Liz—wait! Look at me!

She grabs Liz by the shoulders and looks into her eyes.

Oh, my God!

LIZ. What? Come on, // let go of me.

She breaks free.

ABBIE. (*Grabbing Liz again, trying to look into her eyes.*) I found it! I think I found it, Liz!

LIZ. (*Trying to break free.*) Abbie: Can we please drop that, // please!

ABBIE. Oh-my-God, Liz!

Abbie doesn't let Liz go and looks deep into her eyes.

(*Shaken to her core.*) There it is. Right there. I found it.

Little beat.

There I am.

Little beat.

And there you are.

A little beat as Liz catches on.

LIZ. Yeah. Here I // am.

ABBIE. Oh, God!

She hugs Liz.

I've been looking in all the wrong places.

Liz does not return the hug.

I'm so sorry, I don't hate you. >

LIZ. I know.

ABBIE. I love you. >

LIZ. I know.

ABBIE. So much.

LIZ. I know.

Beat.

ABBIE. We'll figure this out, right? We'll figure this out.

Liz is still hurt; she wants to say, "Yes," but the best she can give Abbie is:

LIZ. People have been figuring this stuff out for a long time, so...

Little beat. She starts to go.

All right. Well, I'm gonna go do tubby time and tinkle time and book time and bed time.

ABBIE. No, I'll do it.

LIZ. Abbie! No! Tomorrow. Take tonight off and do it with me tomorrow.

ABBIE. Liz—

LIZ. Abbie—tomorrow!

ABBIE. All right.

Liz starts to go.

I'm sorry.

LIZ. Me, too.

ABBIE. But—just so you know—we've already watched Tina Tadpole Goes to Copenhagen, and we're up to Tina Tadpole Goes to Istanbul now, so...

Beat. Liz stops, gives Abbie a look...and exits. As she does so:

LIZ. (Yelling off.) Caleb! Tess! Two minute warning!

Lights fade on Abbie in the garage.

Existential space vacuum sound/music/transition. And we move on to...