

## ACT III Scene 1

*In the darkness, the sound of a match being struck is heard and a small flame appears. It dies out. Another flame appears and makes an elaborate, zigzag path. A pool of light slowly comes up, and we see a young teenage BOY downstage in jeans and a baggy short sleeve shirt with his sleeves rolled up. There is a pack of cigarettes tucked into his rolled up shirt sleeve. He awkwardly lights a cigarette dangling from his mouth and takes a drag, then affects an exaggerated smoker's pose for a moment before he begins to cough. At the same time, the sound of DAD gasping for air and coughing a smoker's hack is heard in the darkness. Lights dim on the boy as they come up on DAD, who is lying quietly in a hospital bed upstage center, under the glare of fluorescent lamps overhead, surrounded by monitors. An oxygen mask covers his nose and mouth and he appears to be asleep, but his hands are tapping out a tune on the sheets on either side of him. The beeping and whirring sounds of monitors and compressors is loud at first, then slowly fades as MOE enters, carrying a small suitcase, putting away a cell phone. Throughout the scene, MOE can not see nor hear BOY.*

MOE

Start → Dad? What happened?

DAD

*[DAD gives a muffled response then points to his mask. MOE sets down his overnighter, then lifts the mask up and rests it on top of DAD's head.]*

MOE

Better?

DAD

Better without the jock strap on my face! I'm fine! Told your mother I want to see a doctor. Next thing, I'm on life support. It's a racket.

MOE

Sign the consent forms, Dad.

DAD

I don't need to give consent to find out I'm strong as an ox. Let's go home!

*[DAD moves to get out of bed and is overcome by a wracking cough. MOE settles him back on the pillow, putting the mask back over his face.]*

MOE

Take it easy! Lie back, Dad. Deep breaths. C'mon.

*MOE takes a few deep breaths for DAD to copy. BOY copies the slow, deep breathing, then DAD copies.*

BOY

*(in a sing-song voice)*

This is the church. And this is the steeple. Open the door. And see all the people!

MOE

Dad, there was a suspicious finding on the x-ray. It's probably nothing. Rest tonight and see the pulmonary guy in the morning. They'll treat you like one of their own.

DAD

*[DAD lifts the mask to speak, then lets it hang on his chest]*

I am one of their own! 27 years I was staff physician in this joint! Now I'm retired they act like I'm...I'm...

BOY

... a retard!

DAD

...a retard!

MOE

'Mentally challenged.'

DAD

Retard. Retired. It's all the same to these folks. They didn't say anything about a 'suspicious finding.' Is that why your mother sent you here? I thought she acted strange...They think it's cancer, don't they?

MOE

Nobody says it's cancer. It's boogers, probably.

BOY

What's 'boogers?'

DAD

Kolangot!

MOE

Yeah! Kolangot. Just a big ol' hunk of kolangot.

DAD

*[DAD laughs a silly, high-pitched giggle. MOE checks his watch.]*

I want to go home! If it's my time to go, I'm ready to meet my Maker. 'Til then, your mother can't open the jars...her applesauce...without me.

MOE

Relax, Dad. Mom can do without applesauce for one day. She wants you to stay and have the tests.

DAD

Tests. Schmests. We could go out for a beer, you and me! We haven't done that since you married!

MOE

*[Moe looks at his watch, then catches himself.]*

I have a plane to catch, Dad. Please, just sign the forms. Stay here tonight and get a decent night's rest. We'll go out when I get back, OK? **||**Here.

*[MOE hands DAD a plastic cup full of juice from his food tray.]*

It's not quite beer, but it kind of looks like a Guinness, doesn't it?

BOY

Prune juice makes you poop!

DAD

Yeah. Just like Guinness. Go on then, Moe. Go catch your plane. I'll be fine.

End →