

# LETTING GO

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*(Living room. There is a couch. On it is a photo album. There is one loose photo on the floor. BETSY is just inside of door, ZACH is standing opposite her)*

ZACH: What are you doing here?

BETSY: It's my birthday.

ZACH: I know it's your birthday. But after what you did, you think you can just come here and walk in?

BETSY: You left the door open.

ZACH: No I didn't. I never leave that door open.

BETSY: Yeah, I know. It's open now.

*(ZACH walks past her and checks. BETSY drifts to the couch)*

ZACH: Humph. It was open. *(Somewhat baffled beat)* You're the last person I expected to see tonight.

BETSY: *(Seeing photo album)* Really? Isn't that the album you were putting together as my present? I'm sure there's a picture of me in there somewhere.

ZACH: They're all of you. That was the point. But you know what I mean. I just didn't expect you to be here.

BETSY: Do you want me to leave?

ZACH: Now you ask?

BETSY: That's fair. So, how've you been?

ZACH: Oh, pretty much every way a person can be. I gave everything a try. Bitter, sullen impotence seems to work best.

BETSY: Work best in what sense? It couldn't possibly make you happy.

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ZACH: Oh, there are times when feeling bad in one way can keep you from feeling bad in a much worse way. My ex-girlfriend taught me that.

BETSY: That's all you learned from being with me?

ZACH: I don't know. I find it hard to really know what difference you made in my life...

BETSY: Oh?

ZACH: ...because I can no longer remember what I was like before you.

BETSY: I can do this all night, Zach. I know there's a smile for me someplace.

ZACH: Maybe you can find one in this album.

BETSY: (*About the photo that dropped from the album*) Looks like one of them is trying to escape.

(*Photo of ZACH and BETSY embracing is projected*)

ZACH: Oh, what is that? (*ZACH picks up the photo*) I have absolutely no recollection of this photo.

BETSY: That's us and it looks like we're in this very room.

ZACH: Yeah, but I would think I would have remembered this. This is the only photo I ever saw of you where you actually look happy.

BETSY: That's 'cause I'm in your arms.

ZACH: I like the spontaneity of it. You're not wearing that "Zach" face, the one you always put on for me.

BETSY: Oh Zach, that's not fair. In some bizarre way, I think I was more open with you than I was with myself. You certainly knew more about me than anybody else.

ZACH: Well, I obviously missed something.

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BETSY: How come it's loose? Why didn't you mount it?

ZACH: I have no idea. Like I told you, I don't even remember it. Besides, this album was supposed to be of you.

BETSY: *(Of the album)* Let me see.

*(BETSY sits next to ZACH)*

BETSY: So how did you do this, chronologically? Wait, what's this one? Just a bench?

*(Photo of bench projected)*

ZACH: Not just a bench. That's...

BETSY: Oh. In Washington Square, where we met. You took a picture of the bench?

ZACH: It seemed right.

BETSY: An empty bench?

ZACH: A blank canvas waiting to be painted on.

*(Flashback. BETSY seated, looking distracted. ZACH comes over)*

ZACH: Good evening, madam. My name is Raphael and I'll be your waiter tonight.

BETSY: Excuse me?

ZACH: We have a wide variety of specials for you this evening that I'd be happy to serve you. We have a poem by Dylan Thomas, a tale of Nasruddin, a personally embarrassing anecdote about what happened to me at work today, I could sing Lydia, the Tattooed Lady or share some reminiscences of my troubled youth. Any of these is guaranteed to bring a smile to your face.

BETSY: Well, that's out of my price range. Does this come-on actually ever work?

ZACH: Never tried it before.

BETSY: Yeah. Well, don't quit your embarrassing day job.

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ZACH: In fact, I never tried to pick up a woman before.

BETSY: Uh-huh. They usually just fall in your lap?

ZACH: That's a good question. I honestly can't remember how I connected with the one or two women I've actually had brief, dysfunctional relationships with.

BETSY: Making yourself pathetic isn't going to help.

ZACH: What would help? 'cause I'd really like to meet you.

BETSY: Why?

ZACH: I don't know. I mean you're pretty; I guess that should be enough. But there was something in your face, something else.

BETSY: *(A beat as she regards him)* Your name isn't really Raphael, right?

ZACH: Right. Zach.

BETSY: I think you're wasting your time, Zach.

ZACH: You mean pretending to be a waiter? I should go back to just being an actor?

BETSY: No, I mean you're wasting your time with me.

ZACH: Seeing someone? Gay? Celibate?

BETSY: All three. I'm having an affair with a nun. Look, Zach. This isn't a great time for me.

ZACH: Ah. I think that's what I saw in your face.

BETSY: *(Slightly surprised beat)* You find that attractive?

ZACH: "Sorrow's interesting *(said in four syllables)* trace." Doesn't everybody?

BETSY: Hardly.

ZACH: Kismet! You've found your soulmate.

BETSY: Okay. It's beginning to grate.

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ZACH: Sorry.

BETSY: Apologizing makes it worse.

ZACH: All right, I'm channeling my inner Woody Allen and if you give me a second I know I can come up with a face-saving exit line.

BETSY: *(Beat, chuckles)* Betsy.

ZACH: Hi Betsy. Do you live around here?

BETSY: East Village. Alphabet City.

ZACH: Oh, great. Do you know B&H?

BETSY: Yeah.

ZACH: Great pierogi. Be a nice walk, we can get to know each other.

BETSY: I don't like pierogi.

ZACH: You don't like pierogi? I may have to rethink this.

BETSY: I like the borscht.

ZACH: Great.

BETSY: But Zach...

ZACH; Yeah?

BETSY: What you see in my face, it's not a distress signal, it's a warning beacon.

*(The living room)*

BETSY: Spend a lot of evenings going through this album?

ZACH: This is the first time I've looked at it.

BETSY: Ever?

ZACH: Since you left me.

BETSY: How come tonight?

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ZACH: I'm thinking you've lost the right to ask me that.

BETSY: Fair enough. But shouldn't your real criteria be whether or not you want to answer?

ZACH: (*Beat*) It's been brutal, Betsy. I don't mind telling you that. I was so used to you. I was so used to us. I don't know how to be.

BETSY: You can't just be who you used to be?

ZACH: I told you I can't remember who I used to be. That fellow is long gone. Look, I know it's pointless to ask you why...

BETSY: It is.

ZACH; But I'm going to reverse your logic. It's not about whether you want to answer, it's about what I need to ask.

BETSY: That's fair.

ZACH: Yeah, you always loved that expression. Is that just a phrase of convenience for you, or did you really care whether or not things were fair?

BETSY: I cared. I don't know that I said it for that reason, but I did care about fairness, balance. I would have thought that would have been your takeaway of me.

ZACH: It was until you decided to go.

BETSY: Okay. I'm a little slow on the uptake. Maybe we just disagree on the meaning of the word fair.

ZACH: Why *did* you leave me?

BETSY: Zach, you know me well enough to know that I don't know the answer to that.

ZACH: It's a big step to take, so to speak, not knowing why.

BETSY: That's fair – sorry. I used the f-word.

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ZACH: That's the best you can do for me? You did love me once and I am in pain.

BETSY: I still love you. And I certainly feel your pain. *(Beat)* Are you seeing anyone?

ZACH: No.

BETSY: Have you taken over for me, sitting on park benches in doleful isolation?

ZACH: No. I socialize a little. Mike and Fran are constantly asking me to dinner.

BETSY: Do you go?

ZACH: Once in a while. There's a limit to how much tempeh one can eat.

BETSY: Have they tried to set you up with anyone?

ZACH: Yeah.

BETSY: Sharon?

ZACH: Yeah.

BETSY: She was always hot for you. She loves your sense of humor. And she's really pretty.

ZACH: This isn't a good time.

BETSY: *(Of photo album)* Oh, speak of the devil, you have a Cragmoor shot in here. That upper field.

ZACH: Yeah. The summer of love.

*(Photo of BETSY in a country setting projected)*

BETSY: There *was* a lot of love.

ZACH: Sure was, although it was being rather randomly exchanged.

BETSY: There was never anything random about us. You took care of that.

*(Flashback to Cragmoor. BETSY and ZACH enter)*

BETSY: I love it up here.

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ZACH: Yeah. Nice. (*Beat*) Does – what’s her name, Frances? – is she going to be doing the cooking all week?

BETSY: (*Smiling*) Francesca, actually. No, we stage kitchen interventions from time to time and take the spatula away from her. Sorry about that.

ZACH: She’s sweet enough. I like your friends. I’m having a little bit of a problem figuring out who’s with who.

BETSY: Oh, yeah, that’s a work in progress. Fran and Yuri have been together for a couple of years, but it looks like that’s coming to an end.

ZACH: Yuri misses cheeseburgers, I’m guessing.

BETSY: And Sharon and Mike work together and are kind of off and on. So, yeah, it’s a little hard to figure out who’s with who at this point.

ZACH: Right. But that’s not what confuses me. I’m wondering if I’m with you.

BETSY: (*Big sigh*) Yeah. Look, I didn’t invite you up here just to send you back after a vegan dinner. I want you to stay.

ZACH: With you?

BETSY: Definitely with me.

ZACH: But every time I’ve asked about –

BETSY: Right. It’s just so difficult for me to have you stay over at my place. I can’t stand the thought of you watching me check every faucet and every outlet in the house twenty times a night. I think I can manage better up here.

ZACH: But I’m sure I could help. I took outlet-checking in grad school.

BETSY: I know you’re joking, but that’s really the point. When you’re around trying to help, it just makes things worse.

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ZACH: How?

BETSY: I feel guilty, I feel ashamed at being essentially an invalid, but mostly I feel like you feel responsible in some way, that you're not doing enough for me or doing the right thing. And I can't stand doing that to you.

ZACH: So it's okay that you take responsibility for how I feel but I can't take responsibility for how you feel?

BETSY: That's fair. But you can't help.

ZACH: But I can make decisions for myself about whether I want to be not helping you in the same room with you or not helping you in my apartment alone. Not helping you sitting in my apartment really sucks. I can't look at you, I can't touch you, I can't feel you. You're the best thing that ever happened to me, Betsy...

BETSY: Oh please don't say that.

ZACH: *(Beat)* Can I sing it?

BETSY: No. I guess I mostly wish you didn't feel it.

ZACH: Really, Betsy? Really? Everyone, even a nondescript little nebbish like me, is entitled to have the best thing that ever happened to them actually happen to them.

BETSY: Well, okay, I guess. And thanks for coming up here with me.

ZACH: I would go anywhere with you, you know that. Even into those dark places you –

BETSY: You so don't want to go there. *(Beat)* Did your mom like that owl I made?

ZACH: Oh god, yes. She hung it right up. That's just knot tying?

BETSY: Macrame, yeah.

ZACH: Amazing. She really loved it. But you know what that means.

BETSY: Another dinner together. That's okay. She's a great cook. I like your folks.

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ZACH: Speaking of which, when are you going to introduce me to *your* parents?

BETSY: Forget it. That's not going to happen.

ZACH: What? Really? I know you're angry at –

BETSY: No way. You want to meet my dad? Just listen carefully the next time I call you in the middle of the night and start eviscerating myself. (*More to herself*) Songs my father taught me.

ZACH: I get that, but –

BETSY: (*Sharply*) No! Not happening. (*Beat*) What are you going to do tomorrow night when we have our women's group?

ZACH: (*Beat; as ZACH decides not to pursue it*) Just hang with Mike and Yuri, I guess. How long is the meeting?

BETSY: Usually about three hours.

ZACH: I guess we can go into town and pick up chicks at a bar and get laid.

BETSY: What'll you do for the other two hours and fifty-nine minutes?

ZACH: Hey, if you knew how sexy you were, you'd know why I'm so quick. (*Beat*) You know I never picked up a chick in a bar, right?

BETSY: Yes, I know. You told me. Numerous times.

ZACH: Wanna know why?

BETSY: I'm not sure.

ZACH: I don't care. I don't know why I asked you. I'm going to tell you anyway. It's because I need to love the woman I have sex with. I don't think I could even get it up with a woman I wasn't in love with.

BETSY: Okay. Actually, knowing you, that makes all the sense in the world.

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ZACH: Oh. But it's true anyway.

BETSY: Zach...

ZACH: Yeah?

BETSY: I'm sorry if I was short with you before. I'm scared, but there's no excuse for that.

ZACH: No need to apologize. Although, if you're offering to do penance... (*BETSY leans into ZACH and they kiss deeply*)

BETSY: (*Beat as BETSY stares into ZACH's eyes*) Zach, tonight will be the first time we actually spend a night together. But I want you to be clear. I can't ever be with you the way you want. I can't ever live with you.

ZACH: Betsy, I know that you –

BETSY: Non-negotiable, Zach. Are we straight?

ZACH: I guess.

BETSY: We gotta be clear on this, Zach, or –

ZACH: OkayOkayOkay. We're clear. (*Beat*) I just have one question.

BETSY: What?

ZACH: Will you marry me?

(*BETSY reacts with incredulous desperation morphing into a smile*)

(*The living room*)

BETSY: Man, was that a crazy week.

ZACH: Yeah. I mean I was just so into you and us being together, I think I missed something. When did the bed-swapping light get lit, exactly?

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BETSY: Some women's group, huh? I mean Yuri and Fran were now Mike and Fran and Mike and Sharon were now Yuri and Sharon and we had our group and no one said anything about it. Did you guys talk about it?

ZACH: A little bit, in guy talk. I don't remember what we said.

BETSY: Okay.

ZACH: But I remember that night in bed with you, you were insatiable.

BETSY: Was I? *I* don't remember that.

ZACH: Oh. I should have taken a picture.

BETSY: Yeah. That's a picture I would like to look at.

ZACH: Any picture of you would show that.

BETSY: It would?

ZACH: You're a sexy dame, as my pop would say. Why am I enjoying you? This is just making it worse.

BETSY: How *are* your folks?

ZACH: Heartbroken. For you and for me.

BETSY: Yeah. Collateral damage.

ZACH: (*Beat*) So, is it any better?

BETSY: What?

ZACH: So, now that you're not with me anymore, are things better, have you found some refuge from the storm?

BETSY: The storm is inside me, Zach. You know that.

ZACH: You know what I mean. You chose to leave. You must have been looking for something, although I can't imagine what. At least that's what I keep telling myself.

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BETSY: I wasn't looking for anything. But I want to be sure that you don't think you did anything wrong, or that you drove me away. You were wonderful. *We* were wonderful. I was the one that wasn't wonderful, which you always knew. It took its toll. What's happening with you at work?

ZACH: Same old bureaucratic bullshit pushing me one way, the kids pushing me the other. The struggle every day is that you just want to cuddle them for five minutes to show them that love is possible.

BETSY: You'd be a great dad.

ZACH: Well, that's not going to happen now, is it?

BETSY: That's up to you. There are unborn kids out there that you are depriving of the joy of having a wonderful father.

ZACH: That's another topic you have no right to talk to me about.

BETSY: Okay. But if you ever change your mind, I have more to say.

ZACH: I'll let you know. *(Beat. Then with a smile)* Fuck you. You're not the easiest person in the world to stay angry with, you know.

BETSY: That's a good thing, right?

ZACH: Depends on the day.

BETSY: *(Back to album)* The Botanical Gardens. I guess if you're going to get married in the Bronx, that's the spot to do it.

*(Photo of BETSY at the Botanical Gardens hot house projected)*

ZACH: It *was* a magic night.

BETSY: You were in great form, I must say.

ZACH: What was Mike thinking, making me best man?

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BETSY: Mike is really close to both his brothers, so he was looking for a way not to have to pick one over the other.

ZACH: So he shanghai'd some hapless third party.

BETSY: I don't know about hapless. That speech was so funny. You had everyone there in stitches.

ZACH: They were all drunk. I could have read Bush's second Inaugural.

BETSY: And then the hot house.

*(Flashback. Botanical Gardens hot house)*

BETSY: Oh god, not again.

ZACH: *(ZACH takes a photo)* Hold it. Good.

BETSY: Are we supposed to be in here?

ZACH: I gotta show you something. It's over here somewhere.

BETSY: The lights aren't even on.

ZACH: There it is. Read the sign.

BETSY: I can barely make it out, it's so dark. "Deliciousness itself said Mark Twain about the fruit of this tree, Annona Cherimola..."

ZACH: I mean, if it's good enough for Mark Twain.

BETSY: It says it tastes like a blend of pineapple, papaya, peach, banana and strawberry. Yum.

ZACH: Native only to Central and South America. So I'm proposing that we take a trip down there and taste the Annona Cherimola, also known as the custard apple.

BETSY: Now?

ZACH: In the morning.

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BETSY: Wait, Cherimola. I wonder if that's the cherimoya, I guess it must be. They sell those sometimes at Balducci's.

ZACH: Okay. Slight change of plans. Tomorrow morning we go to Balducci's. Cheaper.

BETSY: Not really when you factor in what those suckers cost.

ZACH: Oh, and over here, check this out.

BETSY: What is it?

ZACH: A cork tree.

BETSY: Oh, a cork tree. Hmm. The cork is the bark, I guess.

ZACH: Yeah, I don't think the corks hang from the trees like fruit like in - what was that kid's story?

BETSY: Ferdinand. God I loved that book. "Once upon a time in Spain..." I always wanted to go there and sit next to him.

ZACH: So why don't we? I'm sure we can find that tree. I don't have to do that camp this summer. You can get time off, a couple of weeks, right? And we're not going to Cragmoor until the end of August.

BETSY: Well...

ZACH: I'll take that as a yes. *(Sung to California here I come) Barcelona, here we come.*

BETSY: Whoa, Zach, traveling is really hard for me.

ZACH: And dare I suggest it would be the perfect honeymoon location?

BETSY: *(Beat)* I was having such a good time.

ZACH: Oh, Bets.

BETSY: Things haven't changed from what I told you that first night we made love, sweetie. I can't marry you.

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ZACH: You won't marry me, you mean.

BETSY: I can't, I won't, I live at the intersection of can't and won't.

ZACH: Okayokayokay. Let me dream a little if nothing else.

BETSY: See, here's the problem with dreaming, Zach. (*Musses his hair*) I've seen what you look like in the morning when you wake up.

*(BETSY lightly kisses ZACH)*

BETSY: You know, this - and by this I mean us - is *all* a dream for me. I escape to it.

ZACH: Nah, you're turned around. It's like a zebra. You think you're looking at a white animal with black stripes but no, it's just the reverse. You and I are what's real. Those dark realms you sink into are the dream.

BETSY: Yeah. That's just what I would expect someone in one of my dreams to tell me.

ZACH: I book us for a couple of weeks in Spain. If it gets too much for you, you tell me and back we come. Forget about the honeymoon part. Wait, wait. One more thing to show you. See that?

BETSY: It's like a palm tree of some kind.

ZACH: It's hard to read, the print is so small 'cause they had so much to say on there, but what it says is that this tree, if those things count as trees, produces a kind of fruit that's poisonous. But if you go through about five different steps, they actually list them there I guess so you can do this at home, you can finally make it into something that's edible. And the natives of that island live on it.

BETSY: How did they ever discover that? I mean if it still kills you off after the first two steps, wouldn't you think they'd just move on to the next tree?

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ZACH: Exactly. You got to keep persevering to get to something edible. I'm not quitting on you.

BETSY: No. Don't quit on me.

ZACH: Ever had hot house sex? Deliciousness itself.

*(They start to kiss)*

*(The living room)*

BETSY: What's this, Rhinebeck? The crafts fair?

ZACH: Yeah. That's outside of Amy's booth.

BETSY: Is this the day you got me those earrings?

ZACH: Yeah. I think so.

BETSY: They were so perfect.

ZACH: I always knew what kind of jewelry would work for you. If it looked like a camel sat on it, you'd like it.

BETSY: Amy did such exquisite work. Was she an ex?

ZACH: Nah. Back in high school, she had been institutionalized for some reason and when she got out it was New Year's Eve and my friends were concerned about her, and I actually was babysitting for someone, 'cause of course I couldn't get a date, so I suggested she could keep me company, and she did and we became friends. There was never anything between us though.

BETSY: But she was so beautiful, ethereal. Not to mention stacked. Really, nothing?

ZACH: No, I mean I did think she was a knockout but...

BETSY: Too crazy?

ZACH: *(Pointedly looking at BETSY)* Maybe not crazy enough.

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*(BETSY playfully punches ZACH)*

ZACH: Sorry.

BETSY: That was a love tap. Taking that kind of a liberty with me I assume means you're starting to defrost.

*(BETSY starts to turn page of album. ZACH stops her)*

ZACH: Waiwaiwait, something just occurred to me. This picture you found *(ZACH picks up photo that had been on the floor)*

BETSY: Yeah.

ZACH: That's us, here.

BETSY: Sure looks like it.

ZACH: Who took it?

BETSY: *(Broad smile)* That's an excellent question.

ZACH: There was never a time when you and I were here with anyone else.

BETSY: No, I think you're right.

ZACH: So who took it?

BETSY: *(Makes an "I don't know" face)* Does that mean I can't turn the page until we figure it out?

ZACH: No. I just...it's weird, that's all.

*(Photo of ZACH's phone projected)*

BETSY: What is that? Your phone? Why did you include this?

ZACH: It's a dot.

BETSY: What?

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ZACH: It's a dot, like in connect the dots. I thought if I laid out the dots right, when I looked through the album I could connect them and make a picture of you, of the whole of you.

BETSY: But your phone?

ZACH: I spent more time with you on that phone than I did anywhere else. It was definitely a dot.

*(Flashback to phone call. During the following, BETSY is always either crying or fighting tears. BETSY's "beats" are her crying silently in great pain)*

ZACH: Hey, sweetie, what's up?

BETSY: Zach. Zach. *(Beat)*

ZACH: I'm here. Tell me what –

BETSY: I know you're there. I know. I'm sorry, Zach.

ZACH: That's okay.

BETSY: I'm sorry, Zach. *(Beat)*

ZACH: Take your time. Tell me what's going on.

BETSY: My dad...my dad.

ZACH: Now what did he do to you?

BETSY: He was in an accident.

ZACH: Oh my god, is –

BETSY: He's all right, he's all right, oh, I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

ZACH: Okay, good. What happened?

BETSY: His car. His car is totaled. *(Beat)* He's all right.

ZACH: Okay, but you're not. Is that why you're so upset?

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BETSY: I'm sorry I'm calling you. Were you sleeping?

ZACH: No. It doesn't matter.

BETSY: He came over tonight. He was giving me such a hard time.

ZACH: What else is new?

BETSY: Oh god, I'm so sorry. I did this. I did this.

ZACH: Umm, Betsy, don't start that again.

BETSY: And I told him to leave –

ZACH: Good for you, babe.

BETSY: – and he stormed out. And I was just so angry at him, so angry at (*Beat*) ...

ZACH: Okay.

BETSY: And he pulled his car out in front of a taxi.

ZACH: Wow. But he's okay?

BETSY: (*Beat*) I did this, Zach. I was so angry at him. I did this.

ZACH: Betsy, it just doesn't work like –

BETSY: I wanted it to happen, I was so angry. (*Beat*)

ZACH: Betsy, I want you to listen to me.

BETSY: Okay. Okay. I'm listening.

ZACH: Just 'cause you were angry –

BETSY: I wanted something to happen to him. And it did. (*Beat*)

ZACH: You have to listen. We've been through this before.

BETSY: I know. I know.

ZACH: You know it doesn't make any sense.

BETSY: Okay. Okay.

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ZACH: You do understand that, right?

BETSY: I know. I know. But I can't stop thinking it. *(Beat)*

ZACH: Should I come over?

BETSY: No. You can go back to sleep.

ZACH: Are you all right?

BETSY: No. What if I get angry at you? *(Beat)*

ZACH: No problem. I've been wanting to buy a new car anyway.

BETSY: Okay *(BETSY begins to calm down)*.

ZACH: You okay?

BETSY: Yeah. I'll be okay.

ZACH: I'll see you Friday.

BETSY: Okay. Thank you for listening to me.

ZACH: I love you.

BETSY: Okay. Good night, Zach.

ZACH: Okay, sweetie. Good night.

*(ZACH hangs up. BETSY hangs up and then starts her silent crying again)*

*(The living room. BETSY is puzzled by a photo)*

ZACH: That's you over there, I think. This was in Ibiza, when I was parasailing. You were on the nude beach with that crazy lecherous gypsy.

BETSY: He wasn't a lecher, and I don't think he was really a gypsy. But he was definitely crazy, and he was definitely nude.

ZACH: Never did find a cork tree.

BETSY: Didn't need to. Those were the best two weeks of my life.

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ZACH: Yeah? Well, if you say so.

BETSY: (*BETSY closes the album*) Well, that was great. Good job.

ZACH: There's one more.

BETSY: I know. I know what it is, I can connect dots too.

ZACH: (*ZACH re-opens album to final page*) Indulge me.

BETSY: I never thought of you as being particularly morbid.

ZACH: It's the last picture I have of you. And it's the image that pops into my mind whenever I think of you.

(*Photo of BETSY on a hilltop projected*)

BETSY: Yeah, I get that. That's one of the reasons I came tonight.

(*Flashback. Cragsmoor*)

ZACH: Are you tired?

BETSY: I'm okay. Why are you asking?

ZACH: You didn't sleep last night, did you?

BETSY: I don't remember. Am I keeping you up again? Shit.

ZACH: And I didn't realize it was such a hike to get all the way up here.

BETSY: Worth it. Our last day. It's nice to have you to myself.

ZACH: Yeah. Work tomorrow, yecccch.

BETSY: You know you love your job.

ZACH: When I'm there, I guess. It's the whole notion of getting back into that routine.

And of course, we see each other so much less often during the school year.

BETSY: Yeah.

ZACH: What was that about last night? I'm sorry, I know you don't like it when I pry.

Letting Go

BETSY: It's not prying. You have to put up with it, of course you want to know.

ZACH: Your father again.

BETSY: You know better than that, Zach. It's not him. It's never him. It's always me.

ZACH: I can't stand when you start blaming yourself.

BETSY: It's a survival mechanism. If I blame anyone else, then I have to depend on that person to make a correction, to fix whatever it is. And I have no faith that that's going to happen. I don't trust people.

ZACH: I get why you could never trust your dad. I think I can even understand why you don't trust yourself. But what frustrates me is why you don't trust me.

BETSY: I trust you more than anyone I've ever known to take care of me. Where I don't trust you is that I don't believe you'll make the right decisions to take care of yourself – as long as I'm around.

ZACH: I really don't like the sound of that. You know how much I love you.

BETSY: Yeah. A wonderful gift these last few years, having you in my life. I've known more happiness with you than I've ever known before.

ZACH: So far so good. Is there a but coming?

BETSY: (*BETSY is struggling*) No, no buts.

ZACH: We'll fight through this, babe. Here you *can* trust me.

BETSY: Yeah. (*BETSY looks deeply at ZACH*) Boy, was the Wizard ever turned around.

ZACH: The Wizard?

BETSY: In the Wizard of Oz. He tells the Tinman when he gives him a heart that it's not how much you love that's important, it's how much you *are* loved. That's just so wrong.

Letting Go



The true treasure in life is having someone *to* love. And that's what you've given me.

*(BETSY hugs ZACH)*

ZACH: That's what we've given each other. Whoa, was that a raindrop?

BETSY: A sun shower. Oh, that usually means a rainbow.

ZACH: *(Looking around)* Hmm. Maybe over in the west.

BETSY: You want to unpack the lunch?

ZACH: Okay.

BETSY: I'll take a look over there for that rainbow.

ZACH: Okay. Wait, one second.

*(ZACH snaps photo of BETSY which was just projected)*

BETSY: Can I go now?

ZACH: Sure.

BETSY: Thanks. *(BETSY takes a step and stops and turns to ZACH)* Zach? Thanks.

*(BETSY walks to the far end of the stage looking out over the edge)*

ZACH: *(Checks pictures on phone, then stops)* Betsy? Betsy, are you okay? *(Frightened)*

Betsy! *(ZACH leaps up and runs in her direction and sees her)* NO!

*(The living room)*

BETSY: I have something I need to say. I would have come sooner but I don't think you would have heard me before tonight.

ZACH: What?

BETSY: I think you need to forgive me.

ZACH: Forgive you for what? Jumping?

BETSY: Oh sweetie, I didn't jump. I fell.

Letting Go

ZACH: Betsy, please, I was there. I saw it.

BETSY: I was falling when you met me, I kept falling all through our time together, although most of the time it felt like floating, and that day I continued my fall until I could fall no longer. I'm sorry you had to see it. But even an amazing magician like you can't defy gravity. If you don't forgive me, you'll never be able to move on.

ZACH: That means letting go of my anger and my sorrow. That's all I have left of you.

BETSY: *(Mildly imploring)* Zach.

ZACH: *(Petulantly)* I'll work on it.

BETSY: And also the second part of it. You need to move on.

ZACH: Okay, I understand that. It's just not like taking a pill, you know.

BETSY: That's fair. But I'm going to help you. I'm going to haunt you like my dad did me. Every time you turn down a chance at happiness, I'm going to be in your head reminding you: If you want to keep loving me, then this is how you do it. Make me happy by knowing the man I love is happy.

ZACH: *(Fighting tears)* I don't think I'm close to being able to do that.

BETSY: Here's a start. *(BETSY picks up the album)* You wanted this album to make a picture of me. Connecting to that last dot distorts everything. You need to replace the last photo, maybe with this one *(the loose photo)*. 'cause if you don't include one of us together, you'll never have a true picture of who I was – who I am.

ZACH: That's fair. *(ZACH looks at photo)* Betsy, will I ever see you again?

BETSY: *(BETSY touches his head and then his heart)* Did I ever really leave?

*(They embrace, creating the tableau in the "loose" photo of them, which is projected)*

Letting Go

**end of play**