

a thing; the bombing of a recruiting center, a crime for which three other people are still in prison. And these visits always go the same. "Has there been any contact from anybody trying to get in touch with your son? And have you ever heard from him, and does your phone ever ring and does the other party hang up after a moment without saying a word? Do you hear breathing on the other end of the line?" *(She stops. She looks to Lyman. "I can't do this alone.")*

LYMAN. *(Quietly.)* We had been fighting. For a solid five years straight. Since Henry was fifteen and he became aware of the fact that we, his parents, were on the wrong side. Of everything. All of it. And I was not just an agent of the old guard but one of its spokesmen, and was for the war, and our fighting became more bitter, more personal, and we lost him, the way you lose people you love. *(Beat.)* And he moves to some squat in Venice, where the entire lifestyle consists of drugs and screwing and there's not even a shower, and we see less and less of him. *(Beat.)* I am helpless. Nobody knows what to do. By now we are afraid of young people. The people in his house are some sort of religionless theologians of liberation, whatever they call themselves, but one day I open the *L.A. Times*, and there's this story about a bombing, and this group in Venice Beach is suspected and I knew. *(Beat.)* I remember it so clearly, he shows up here, this filthy wraith, with long matted stringy hair, and this filthy beard, and he's practically emaciated, and his eyes are feverish and he's clearly ill — and he tells us. He tells us that he didn't know. He had no idea. And he's crying, he's a boy again, and I tell him he has to turn himself in, and he starts arguing politics like a child, "But a man is dead," I yell, and he says, "So are millions of Vietnamese and Cambodians," and I slap him across the face because I can't get through to him. And there's no coming back, he looks at me, and ... *(Lyman stops. He shakes his head.)* And he runs off, I run after him. And he's gone. *(Lyman shakes his head, lost.)*

POLLY. It all comes out. He's in the papers. We're in the papers. News people all over, going to our friends, camped outside. I go numb, I don't care, I drive around town looking for him, all over L.A. *(Beat.)* And then there he is, he somehow remembered, he knew that once a week I volunteered at the Actors' Home. I was reading Dickens to ancient actors, most of whom were deaf and blind, and I walk out to my car, and he's sitting in the backseat. His clothes smell of that rancid ripe cheese, homelessness, and he is

really unrecognizable ... *(Beat.)* It's a straight drive up. You can do it in three days if you just keep driving, almost all through the night, stopping for donuts and coffee, coffee and — and who's going to stop a lady in a blue Eldorado convertible and her clean-cut son? *(Beat.)* He cleaned up so easily, with his hair cut, he still looked fifteen, gone was the beard, gone were the rags, just put him in jeans and a Brooks Brothers shirt and comb his hair and ... it was so easy. At first we didn't speak. Almost at all. And then he talked. Most of it, still entirely self-deluded, at first, but finally, he just cried. "I have blood on my hands now, too." *(Beat.)* "Everyone has blood on their hands today." And more silence. Sleep. It was so easy, you could just cross over, day trippers, really, before terror became the ... *(Beat, disgust.)* profession that it is today.

SILDA. *(Quietly.)* Oh my God. Oh my GOD.

LYMAN. *(Quietly, he can barely speak.)* And I took a plane up to Seattle. So I could say goodbye, which we do. All three of us. On a ferry. *(Beat.)* We sit in the car. We dictate his note. This suicide note. We're crying. This apology. A night ferry, drop his old rags on the deck, the deck of the ferry. Leave the note in his ragged shoes. On the deck of this ferry. *(Beat.)* One of many ferries he will take. And I hug him, the last time I will ever see him, of course, which we all know. I will never see him again and I never have. *(Lyman starts to cry.)* And he said he was so sorry and I said so was I. And I said, "I will always love you, and we can never tell anyone about this," and he said, "But what about Brooke?" He asks us. "But what about her?" *(A low moan escapes from Brooke.)* And I said, "No child could be expected to live with such a secret, and when the time is right we will tell her, but there has to be some cost to what you were part of. Maybe this is it." *(Beat.)* And, of course, it never came. The time to tell you. I had no intention. I could have died then, I really didn't care. Your mother insisted that I live. And that we thrive. *(Beat.)* So, I get called to Bohemian Grove and I go, I host events, I have people here, and I always think, "If these men knew who I really was ..." But I can never show a trace of it. Because I think, "If I can pass as one of them, they will never know what I did." But acting, you know, it's easy for me, it's easy. And I know he's alive, there's that, we do know that, the phone, you know, it does ring. There IS a click. He is silent. He is there.

POLLY. *(Holds up the manuscript.)* The truth will out. *(A shrug, she looks at Brooke.)* He is at risk at any time anyhow, always, the

LYMAN

START

END