

VERA SIDES #1

Reader reads MARJORIE

Vera: Want the lights out?

Thomas: Please.

(Vera and Marjorie exit. Andre and Thomas have a quiet moment)

Thomas: Thank God *they're* gone.

(no answer. Andre adjusts, reaches down and massages his shins and feet)

Thomas: Neuropathy?

(Andre glances at him, then looks away)

Thomas: Epsom salts and a warm bath, I've seen it work wonders.

(Andre lies back down and turns his back.)

Thomas: How old are you?

(no answer. Andre turns off the light.)

Thomas: Ok. Good night.

SCENE 3 - For Jacob

That night

(Vera and Marjorie enter a hallway downstairs. Marjorie heads towards June's desk)

Marjorie: Sorry, I'm such an idiot. *Are you okay?* Should I go back and apologize?

Vera: We all do it. Honestly. Don't punish yourself.

Marjorie: Thomas was in a mood tonight.

Vera: You should've seen him yesterday. I'm hoping having a roommate again will help.

Marjorie: I don't know how you do this job. Are you married?

Vera: No.

Marjorie: Going home to an empty house after this...

Vera: I have a girlfriend.

Marjorie: Oh. That must help.

Vera: Sometimes.

(Marjorie sets to work: she gets a fresh candle out of a box, takes the old candle off the stand on June's desk, puts the new one on)

Vera: Who's the candle for?

Marjorie: Jacob.

Vera: We lit one for him two days ago.

Marjorie: We actually didn't. It was already burning for Morris, and then we kept it lit for Curt, so then this afternoon should have started for Jacob but the candle burned out.

Vera: Oh. You are way past the end of your shift.

Marjorie: It takes a minute.

Vera: *(beat)* No, sure. Yeah.

Marjorie: *(gestures the candle to Vera)* I know you were close to-

Vera: No you go ahead.

(Marjorie picks up the matches, strikes one, and lights the candle)

Marjorie: For Jacob.

Vera: For Jacob.

(A beat as they reflect. Vera closes her eyes and takes a deep breath.)

Marjorie: It's too bad he isn't around for the big visit.

(Vera opens her eyes and looks around, ensuring no one heard, shushing Marjorie)

Marjorie: Everyone's in bed.

Vera: Still.

Marjorie: *(quietly)* I feel like he would have loved it.

Vera: *(laughs)* He would have screamed.

Marjorie: I can't wait to see everyone's faces. When are you telling them?

Vera: Jane wants us to spread the news first thing tomorrow.

Marjorie: It's so exciting!

Vera: Yes, it will be. We have to get there first.

Marjorie: It's on the 25th. She's coming in a week!

Vera: No Marjorie. She's coming in seven days. **END**

(Lights shift. They exit)

SCENE 4 - Frankies and Diana

The next morning - October 18, 1991

(The bedroom. Thomas and Andre are in their beds. Andre is sleeping)

Thomas: Marco.

(no answer.)

Thomas: Marco.

(Andre stirs slightly, opens his eyes)

Thomas: Marco!

Andre: *(sits up in bed, startled)* Jesus. What?

Thomas: You're supposed to say Polo.

Andre: You woke me up.

Thomas: Just making sure you're still here. *(beat)* You were awake, I saw you. It's nine, they're doing rounds soon.

Andre: *(rolling over, burying his head in his pillow)* They can just wake me up when they get here.

Thomas: Sure if you'd rather be roused by the calloused hands of a certain resident nurse, suit yourself.

(Marjorie enters abruptly)

Marjorie: Marco!

Thomas: Polo!