

The Way Home

by

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Cast of Characters

JASMINE: 16
HELEN (mother): 40's
GORDON (father): 40's

Place
Living room

Time
Evening

2.

Setting: The play takes place inside a large spacious living room. Wooden flooring with a large throw rug under the three piece sofa at center stage. At the sides of the sofa are side tables with lamps. A large wooden coffee table with magazine on top of it sits in front of the sofa.

At Rise: The play opens with both Jasmine and her mother sitting on the sofa, facing one another.

HELEN: I don't know what your father is going to say. I mean, I know exactly what he's going to say, but I have no idea as to how he's going to react.

JASMINE: Couldn't you soften him up?

HELEN: You're only sixteen.

JASMINE: So?

HELEN: I don't even know if it's legal for you to own your own home and live on your own Jasmine.

JASMINE: Why wouldn't it be legal? I can prove that I support myself financially, therefore I can declare myself emancipated by the court.

HELEN: Don't your parents have to agree to that?

JASMINE: (*shrugs.*)

HELEN: Too smart for your own good.

JASMINE: If I can build a million dollar business, why wouldn't I be capable of living independently?

HELEN: Just, slow down. You've—this is all happening way too fast—why do you want to live alone? Is your family all that terrible?

JASMINE: I feel like I'll be able to do more on my own.

HELEN: How?

JASMINE: I'll have a more focused life. There are too many distractions taking place here.

HELEN: What kind of -

JASMINE: Mom, you know I'm different than my siblings. I work on a different frequency than they do, and that's not their fault or my fault for that matter..I love Todd and Samantha more than anything, but they get in the way, and so do you and Dad quite frankly, and I just feel like in order for me to zero in on what I do more effectively, I need to remove anything that is getting in the way.

HELEN: You wish to remove your family?

JASMINE: I admit, this probably comes across as harsh -

HELEN: It is harsh!

JASMINE: I'm trying to communicate this to you as best I can.

HELEN: You're doing a terrible job of it.

JASMINE: See! It is this!

HELEN: What? What's THIS?

JASMINE: The emotional stuff. I can't let it get in the way anymore.

HELEN: My daughter wants to leave me! How do you expect me to react?!

(Pause.)

JASMINE: ...I'm not leaving you, Mom.

HELEN: This is all too much for me.

JASMINE: Mom...

HELEN: ...What?

JASMINE: There's a house in the neighboring town. We could look at it together.

HELEN: You've already been looking at houses?

JASMINE: Mom, it's beautiful and it's only a ten minute car ride from here. Literally, one road and two turns.

HELEN: Show me.

Jasmine takes out her phone and scrolls through photos.

Jasmine hands her phone to her mother.

JASMINE: That's the front—scroll left from there.

HELEN *(Staring into phone.)*: This is the house?

JASMINE: Yes.

HELEN: It's beautiful.

JASMINE *(Laughing.)*: I know.

HELEN *(Scrolling through the phone.)*: It has a fountain in the backyard? In-ground pool..there's a whole separate guest house?

JASMINE: Yes, for when you and Dad want to stay over.

HELEN: You'll put us in the guest house?

JASMINE: Well -

HELEN: Why not the main house?

JASMINE: I'm just saying if you wanted your privacy.

HELEN: Hmm.

JASMINE: What do you think?

HELEN: It's stunning.

Helen cries.

JASMINE: Aww Mom...why are you getting upset like this for? Don't cry.

HELEN: It's just...you're all grown up. I knew it. By the time you were four, you were acting twenty-one. (*Beat.*) How much are they asking?

JASMINE: One point two.

HELEN: Million?

JASMINE: Yes, Mom.

HELEN: Right, right.

JASMINE: What do you think Dad will say?

HELEN: His first response will be no, but I think he'll come around...maybe.

JASMINE: I'm not asking for anarchy. Only my independence. I've earned it. Haven't I? I feel like I deserve to have my own individuality. There is so much I wish to do in my own life. For so long, I've always depended on you and Dad's opinions. But, I need to grow up, Mom. And it's not like we won't see each other because we will, all the time, I promise...I just, I need my freedom. I need time, time to think and be in my own thoughts with things, I want to be my own person, Mom. To see what else this world has to offer, and I don't want to wait forever, I want to understand things more and see what I have to offer this world. I do want a home base, I need my family, but I also want to travel, have experiences, live, learn, and do more. I want to be an adult, I need to be. And if you and dad support me on this, I promise to never let either of you down. All I'm asking for is my own time, for you both to trust me, that I'll be okay, on my own, I'll be okay. I am young, I know that, but I've also built this business, with my own two hands, I've got this far and I know I'll be alright.

HELEN: I know you will, Jasmine. I am here for you, but like I said, your father, that's a different issue.

JASMINE: Maybe talk to him first.

HELEN: I can. We'll see.

JASMINE: Let him know how much this means to me.

Gordon appears from the living room hallway.

GORDON: I know what it means to you.

HELEN: Gordon! Were you eavesdropping this whole time?

GORDON: I was.

HELEN: Why? When did you get home?

GORDON: Early enough to hear that Jasmine wants to buy her own home and move out.

(Beat.)

JASMINE: Well...

GORDON: The answer is no.

JASMINE: Dad!

GORDON: Let me talk.

HELEN: At least we should all discuss this.

GORDON: You just did, I listened, I thought, so no. No, no, no.

JASMINE: But Dad -

GORDON: What's the rush?

JASMINE: There is no rush, it's simply where I feel I am in my life.

GORDON: No.

JASMINE: Stop saying that! You shouldn't be so close-minded!

GORDON: You're my daughter. I'm your father. You're too young. That's it.

JASMINE: I'm not too young to build a business.

GORDON: That's different.

JASMINE: How? How is that different?

GORDON: Jasmine...I really don't want to get into all this right now.

JASMINE: But at least be open to the idea.

GORDON: No.

Jasmine growls and charges upstairs.

(Pause.)

HELEN: What's wrong with you? You're not yourself.

GORDON: Because I'm not myself.

HELEN: What happened?

GORDON: I collapsed.

HELEN: You what?!

GORDON: Shh, lower your voice, Helen. *(He sits.)* Had a blackout.

HELEN: When? Where?

GORDON: At work, in my office, just after the boardroom meeting. I remember getting up from my office chair and don't remember anything after that. When I woke up, the place was completely empty, the entire floor, everyone already went home...hours had gone by. I was all alone, Helen.

HELEN: How do you feel now?

GORDON: I feel fine. Like I had a full nights rest.

HELEN: You've been working yourself to death. I've warned you. You need to take time off immediately.

GORDON: It isn't that.

HELEN: It must be.

GORDON: Helen, I feel fine.

HELEN: Maybe you're ill.

GORDON: How can I be ill if I feel fine?

HELEN: You should go to the doctor.

GORDON: I hate going to the doctors.

HELEN: Too bad, you're going.

GORDON: I don't wish to go.

HELEN: It's time for your yearly check up, both of us, we will go together.

GORDON: (*Sighs.*)

Helen feels Gordon's forehead.

GORDON: What are you doing?

HELEN: No fever.

GORDON: Told you I feel -

HELEN: Nothing strange?

GORDON: Huh?

HELEN: Did you bump your head perhaps?

GORDON: I would remember if I had bumped my head Helen.

HELEN: What did you eat today?

GORDON: Nothing out of the ordinary...tasted fine. Usual.

HELEN: Then what the hell caused you to blackout?

GORDON: I have no idea.

HELEN: Doesn't that concern you? Don't you want to find out?

GORDON: ...Not really.

HELEN: Between you and your daughter, you are all going to be the death of me.

Helen exits off in a storm.

Gordon goes to the bottom of the stairs.

GORDON: Jasmine...Jas -

JASMINE: What?

GORDON: Come down here.

JASMINE: Why?

GORDON: I'd like to have a word...

Gordon sits.

*Jasmine comes downstairs and joins him
on the sofa.*

GORDON: Have you really thought through what you're asking of me and your mother?

JASMINE: Of course I have.

GORDON: Are you telling me that you can't seem to remain organized?

JASMINE: That's not what I'm saying.

GORDON: Do you fear your family is jeopardizing the growth of your business?

JASMINE: No, Dad.

GORDON: Do you feel that by removing a few obstacles, you can expand not only your company, but your own persona?

JASMINE: Yes.

GORDON: And you feel you're ready to cross that bridge?

JASMINE: It's been on my mind, but I haven't said anything until now.

*Enter Helen. Crossing from one room to
another.*

HELEN: *(To herself.)* She wants to leave the flock and he's dropping dead.

Exit Helen.

JASMINE: What happened with you today Dad?

GORDON: Were you eavesdropping?

They both chuckle.

You take after your old man...you know that, don't you?

JASMINE: I do.

GORDON: I'm proud of you Jasmine...everything you've accomplished in your short life...sixteen years. It's wondrous really. You are an amazing human being and your mother and I love you to bits...you are so special to us...not sure your mother and I are ready to, to hand you over to the world just yet...you may be ready but we're—from the day you were born we've been trying to keep up with you. *(Smiles.)* You have a house picked out?

JASMINE: Well, it's just, I mean, it's a house, an idea, it caught my eye and I figured, I don't know -

GORDON: Can I see it.

Jasmine pulls out her phone. She hands it to her father.

JASMINE: Scroll left.

Gordon observes the photos in the phone. He hands the phone back to his daughter.

GORDON: Lovely.

JASMINE: YEAH?

GORDON: Let's look at it. Schedule an appointment.

JASMINE: Really, Dad?!

GORDON: There's no harm in seeing the property, is there?

JASMINE: Does this mean that you -

GORDON: It means that we can look at the property. We'll go from there, take our time. Get me some water sweetheart.

JASMINE: You okay, Dad?

GORDON: I'm perfectly alright. Just parched.

Jasmine goes to get her father water.

Enter Helen.

HELEN: What's going on?

GORDON: Talking with my daughter, is that alright?

HELEN: Of course it's alright. I meant with you. You okay?

GORDON: I'd wish you'd stop asking me that Helen. I'm perfectly okay.

*Enter Jasmine. She hands her father water.
Gordon guzzles it down.*

GORDON: That all?

Jasmine exchanges glances with her mother.

JASMINE: Want more?

GORDON: Yes, please. I'm awfully thirsty...

HELEN: Get your father more water.

GORDON: *(Chuckles.)*

HELEN: What? What's so funny?

GORDON: We have a good family, don't we?

HELEN: Why...I hope so? One would think.

GORDON: We do, don't we?

HELEN: Yes, darling, of course.

Enter Jasmine - handing her father water.

Gordon guzzles it down.

GORDON: That's good. So thirsty.

JASMINE: Do you want -

GORDON: Yes, please.

Jasmine and Helen exchange glances again.

Jasmine exits the room.

GORDON: Bring the whole jug, sweetheart..just in case. *(To Helen.)*
Mind if I rest my head in your lap?

HELEN: My lap? Why, yes, of course? Wouldn't you rather a pillow?

GORDON: Your lap is all I need.

*Enter Jasmine with a glass of water and
a jug of water. She rests both on the coffee
table.*

JASMINE: You okay, Dad?

GORDON (*Eyes closed.*): I'm fine. Why wouldn't I be okay? Just need..rest...but..yes, we will find you a home, a new home, a wonderful home.

Lights slowly fade to black.

END OF PLAY