MAGGIE/BILLY #1

flattered. They go away feeling good that they have bolstered the old girl and I go away knowing more than ever I look my age.

I do it because in doing it I am telling myself, 'your mother did the same.' She cooked. And she watched TV. And she raked leaves in her garden. And she creamed her face. And maybe just maybe if I do the same I will stave off the inevitable.

I can see it's a kind of madness now.

MAGGIE peers at herself more closely at the mirror.

…The world changes and you with it.

MAGGIE puts down her pot of cream.

It's inevitable.

WILLIAM and MARGARET running up the stairs, laughing, passing BILLY just coming out of the bedroom –

MAGGIE turns listening. Suddenly she reaches out a hand, gripping the shelf, knocking the pot of cream on to the floor.

BILLY: Maggie –

BILLY stands in the landing illuminated.

You OK?

BILLY taps on the door.

MAGGIE, her face contorted in pain, wincing.

Blackout.

SCENE FOUR

Day.

MAGGIE stands in the kitchen holding up a bright Chinese lantern. She blows on it. BILLY comes down the stairs carrying a box.

START

MAGGIE: Over there. Over there.

BILLY slides the box down on the floor.

BILLY: You want them all down?

MAGGIE is already rifling through the box.

MAGGIE: Yes...yes...

BILLY: You're not the one carrying them.

MAGGIE: What?

MAGGIE pulls out a pile of old records, peering at them.

BILLY: The boxes?

Silence –

Do you really want to do this now?

MAGGIE nods.

MAGGIE: I've been meaning to do it forever. We need to get rid of this stuff. I don't want it kicking around after –

Silence –

It makes it easier. For you.

BILLY sighs, heads back upwards.

BILLY: I'm bringing down moths and silver fish from that loft with every box that's all I'm saying.

MAGGIE does not look up from looking over the records. BILLY heads upstairs, leaving MAGGIE alone.

WILLIAM: You found them.

Suddenly WILLIAM appears, a portable record player under his arm.

WILLIAM: Will you bring the blanket?

He smiles with delight, scooping up the record in passing from MAGGIE –

(Calling back.) I'll wire it up from the back of the house.

The swing of the door, WILLIAM gone. MAGGIE looking on watching WILLIAM heading down to the end of the garden –

BILLY: Guess what else was lurking up there?

BILLY enters holding up an anatomical skull, with a smile.

The other woman in my life.

MAGGIE looks up.

MAGGIE: You're right. You're right. It's madness doing this today.

MAGGIE heads upstairs. She sits on the bed in the bedroom. BILLY looks back at the skull confused.

MARGARET: No... NO... NO... NO…

BILLY turns, MARGARET smiling at him.

You weren't meant to see it yet.

WILLIAM enters through the back door.

Do you like her?

WILLIAM smiles, peering closer at the skull.

WILLIAM: I love her. What's not to love?

MARGARET: Really?

BILLY looks on, MARGARET and WILLIAM oblivious.

Happy Birthday.

They kiss.

I thought you could put her in the reception.

WILLIAM: You don't think it will put patients off?

MARGARET: Really? No… She's got such a great smile.

BILLY smiles –

WILLIAM: Where did you find her?

MARGARET laughs putting down the skull, following WILLIAM out, leaving BILLY on his own watching them through the window. He picks up the skull.

MARGARET: Be careful. She has a very jealous husband.

WILLIAM and MARGARET head to the end of the garden, BILLY looking on.

You find the hammock?

MAGGIE enters the kitchen –

MAGGIE: Huh? MAGGIE! YO

BILLY looks up, sees MAGGIE standing in the doorway.

BILLY: The hammock? Where did the hammock go?

MAGGIE: Which one?

BILLY: The one we use to sling between those trees.

MAGGIE: It rotted a few years back.

BILLY: It never happened before.

MAGGIE: It happened every year, so I changed them every year. I just didn't bother telling you.

BILLY: Oh –

MAGGIE: Oh what –

BILLY: We should string it up. Have people over to dinner. Like we used to.

MAGGIE: Like who?

BILLY: Like Don and Kate.

MAGGIE: Don doesn't like to drive at night.

BILLY: What happened to everyone.

MAGGIE: They got old.

BILLY: Not listening.

MAGGIE: They're probably staying with Sally and the children. They always spend a month there –

This time of the year.

BILLY: Yeah.

Silence.

MAGGIE: Maybe another night.

BILLY: Sure.

BILLY looks away. MAGGIE spies the skull.

MAGGIE: Where did you get that?

BILLY: You gave it to me on my 28th birthday.

MAGGIE: Did I?

BILLY: Yes. We ate in the garden.

MAGGIE looks at BILLY, smiles, shakes her head.

MAGGIE: I have no recollection at all.

BILLY: And after we –

MAGGIE already lost in packing up the boxes. BILLY watches her.

Perhaps we could eat outside tonight.

MAGGIE: Really.

BILLY: I'm going to find that hammock.

MAGGIE: No it's too cold.

BILLY hesitates, nods –

The starlings are starting to scratch and gather.

MAGGIE resumes searching through the boxes.

BILLY: Yes. . . CAT'S ON THE PROWL. — end

BILLY looks out the window.