WILLIAM/MARGARET #2

Silence.

MAGGIE: Thank you.

Silence.

MAGGIE turns, heads in.

BILLY: Maggie?

Silence.

Wasps are biting, put some shoes on. Maggie, how many times do I tell you. Can you never ever just put some –

BILLY stops –

MAGGIE heads into the kitchen. BILLY resumes winding the rope around the tree.

MARGARET: I like the feel of the grass.

MARGARET stands in a suit, her shoes kicked off. WILLIAM appears from the other side of the tree, rope in hand.

WILLIAM: What time did you get in? — START

MARGARET: Seven.

WILLIAM: Why didn't you call me?

MARGARET: I got a taxi.

WILLIAM nods, finishing stringing the hammock up. MARGARET lies on it.

WILLIAM: How was it?

MARGARET: It was OK. There were a couple of decent seminars.

WILLIAM: I called your room, but you never picked up.

MARGARET: Did you? They never said. Reception never said.

MARGARET smiles, sits up. WILLIAM kisses her. MARGARET smiles, pulls away.

You should have left a message with reception.

MARGARET heads into the house, heading upstairs.

Something smells good.

MARGARET enters into the kitchen, lifting a lid on a pot. WILLIAM watches her in the garden.

You cooked.

WILLIAM finishes stringing up the hammock, he heads into the kitchen.

You never cook.

WILLIAM: I did today.

Silence –

MARGARET: How was your week?

WILLIAM: Good. Fine. The usual.

MARGARET heads upstairs.

Let me change and I'll

WILLIAM follows her upstairs.

WILLIAM: I did call.

MARGARET enters the bathroom, closes the door, runs a bath.

I did call reception.

WILLIAM stands outside the bathroom door.

At your hotel.

MARGARET hesitates, sinks on to the side of the bath.

They said they'd not seen you all week.

MARGARET: Weird.

The silence hangs –

Bill.

MARGARET opens the door. WILLIAM stands, waiting.

Silence.

WILLIAM: I don't want to know his name.

Silence –

MARGARET: It's not –

WILLIAM: Do you love him?

Silence –

MARGARET: Billy –

WILLIAM: Do you love him?

Silence –

MARGARET: I love you more.

WILLIAM exits, into the kitchen. MARGARET goes to follow, stopping on hearing –

Don't drink.

The slam of the fridge door open, the chink of ice, the glug of a vodka bottle as WILLIAM pours himself a drink in the kitchen. MARGARET enters the kitchen.

Please don't drink.

BILLY exits, passing MARGARET.

Billy –

WILLIAM: I read an amazing article today. About time...
Our notion of time. For most of us it is linear, based on the bible, beginning with the act of creation but as we know there is no God... Then that notion of time is redundant… Anyway... It got me thinking, you know how I hate all those bumper stickers saying *One Life Live*

It and *Don't Die Tomorrow and Not Live for Today*... You know how much I hate those…

MARGARET: Bill –

WILLIAM: What if time is part of a fundamental structure of the universe. What if there's a dimension where events occur in sequence. Newtonian time they call it. It would make time travel a possibility. If your life was wired like a filmstrip. Spread out across the timeline. Or what if our notion of time is all wrong. We've seen it as this kind of container where events and life is something we 'move through' but what if it doesn't flow. What if instead we are part of a fundamental intellectual structure within which humans sequence and compare events. What if time is not an event, nor a thing? What if it can't be measured? Or travelled?

MARGARET: God you've been drinking all night.

WILLIAM: Don't you think that's interesting?

MARGARET: What?

WILLIAM: About time?

MARGARET: I don't know what you're talking about.

WILLIAM: I thought it was fascinating.

MARGARET: Yes.

WILLIAM: Because I was thinking perhaps I've got boring to you.

MARGARET sits at the table, head in her hands. WILLIAM enters from the larder, with a knife and a bag of carrots. He starts chopping.

Is it someone you work with? Is it that nerdy guy on non-fiction – ?

MARGARET: No –

Silence –

I met him last year. He was at the literature conference I went to in August. We kept in touch.

WILLIAM: How? How did you keep in touch?

MARGARET: The odd call.

Silence.

WILLIAM: What was it like?

MARGARET: It was –

WILLIAM: What was it like?

MARGARET: It was nice to be wanted.

WILLIAM laughs –

...to be wanted by someone else.

WILLIAM: Did you – ?

MARGARET: And when he asked me up to his room...
Finally...I was excited. Nervous but –

WILLIAM: I don't want to –

MARGARET: So I went upstairs with him. There was a mini bar.

WILLIAM: What?

MARGARET: We drank. And when he tried to take my clothes off –

Silence.

I declined.

Silence.

Time is linear. When we die. I think we die. But until we do...I want that time to be with you.

Silence.

Billy –

Silence.

I declined.

WILLIAM: Right –

Silence –

Is it going to happen again?

Silence.

Is it?

MARGARET: No. I said I loved my husband.

MARGARET slips her hand around his hand. BILLY's hand stills.

That I wanted to grow old with my husband. That it was with him I would be with until I died.

Silence –

WILLIAM: Dinner will be ready in half an hour.

It's only soda.

MARGARET nods, exits.

Blackout. – END

SCENE TEN

BILLY lies in bed, next to MAGGIE.

BILLY: Starlings are mimics. Car alarm, water sprinkler, the high, screeching pierce of a fox howl in the dark. They are ventriloquists, effortless in their counterfeit. The human voice can try but next to the starling, it is an amateur. Sometimes when I am lying awake, unable to sleep, I listen, searching amongst their scratchings, listening to these interlopers to see what messages, what voices they have brought from their travels to far off places, what places they will take the inconsequential moments, the endless random snatches of conversation