

MARY We're all so thrilled to have your father here, playing King Lear.

NIGEL (*drily*) Yes indeed! Do you know the piece at all?

JESSICA We did it in high school, remember Dad?

JEFFERSON No.

JESSICA That's cos you weren't there.

To NIGEL.

Anyway, he is perfect casting.

JEFFERSON Really?

JESSICA Lear is an arrogant egomaniac and a lousy father all rolled into one.

More awkward silence. DOROTHY fills the gap.

DOROTHY Well you must be tired - let's get you sorted out with a room.

JEFFERSON I'll help you with your bags.

JESSICA When - tomorrow?

JEFFERSON, MARY and JESSICA *exit. More awkward silence as they all look at each other.*

NIGEL (*very jolly*) At last! Some drama!

We hear the FOOL's song sung by DOROTHY.

DOROTHY/FOOL

FATHERS THAT WEAR RAGS SHALL MAKE THEIR
CHILDREN BLIND/BUT FATHERS THAT BEAR BAGS SHALL
SEE THEIR CHILDREN KIND.

Scene Six

In the bed and breakfast.

JEFFERSON and JESSICA.

JEFFERSON So long as you're here, you might as well make yourself useful. Test me on my lines. Act Four Scene Six.

JESSICA Do I have a choice?

JEFFERSON That's the spirit!

He tosses her the text. There is a pause. A long pause.

JESSICA "When".

JEFFERSON Sure, I knew that. "When..."

JESSICA "When we".

JEFFERSON "When we...er...were..."

JESSICA "Are..."

JEFFERSON "When we are..."

JESSICA "born".

JEFFERSON That's it... "When we are born..."

JESSICA This is hopeless Dad.

She puts down book, recites the speech perfectly.

When we are born, we cry that we are come To this great stage of fools...

She takes a puff from her inhaler.

JEFFERSON You still taking that stuff?

JESSICA Like you're interested.

JEFFERSON I'm your father. Of course I'm interested.

Pause.