

The following tells a convoluted story about a man's life, as he tries to bring himself to admit that what the real defining moment of his life is. The mood should convey the switch that comes with such a moment, with everything that takes place before having a happy feel while everything that happens after being subdued and sad. This can be done with lighting or sound. The set is simple, just the items that identify the described and are interacted with by the characters, the sets that involve Davis' memories are placed pretty far back from the the apron, allowing Davis to walk around the apron without interruption.

*There are two chairs in the front of the empty stage, semi-facing each other the left one (from the perspective of the audience) is Jane, a bubbly talk show host. In the right one sits Davis Holiday, the musician being interviewed, in business casual attire, he may smile and laugh, but there is always something sad in his demeanor.*

Jane (*Leans forward*): So tell me Mr. Holiday, what would you say that your greatest inspiration is?

Davis (*sitting back in his chair, thinking for a few moments with a smile on his face*): You know to say that anything other than life is the inspiration of art, in any of its forms, would be an outright lie. So there you have it (*he waves his arm across the audience in a grand gesture*) Life. All its quirks and qualities, it's good... (*the smile is wiped from his face as he looks down as if suddenly reminded of something he doesn't want to think about*) and bad. That's really it, and it couldn't be any other way.

Jane smiles, satisfied with his answer.

Jane (*touches her finger to her ear*): Well it seems like we have time for one more question. Since life is your inspiration, what you say is the defining moment of your life?

*Davis sits back again, thinking, then stands up, as he does, the lights go out except for a spotlight on him. Jane leaves with the chairs.*

Davis (*pacing back and forth, addressing the audience*) That is a question I myself have been trying to answer for a long time. What moment made me who I am today? What action, if done differently, would have made me a completely different person?... For all I know it could have been my seventeenth birthday in 2005.

*The lights go up, revealing a family sitting around at a table behind Older Davis. Young Davis, identified by his clothes that match the older man's, sits between his mom and dad. Davis steps to the side of the stage and observes the events.*

Mom: Well thank you so much dear for being such a wonderful son, I want you to know just how proud we are.

Young Davis: Well thank you mom, I truly enjoy having you guys as parents.

Dad (*bringing a guitar out from behind the table*): Woah, can't believe we almost forgot about this!

Young Davis (*eyes bugging out, he looks from his dad to his mom and then back again in shock, he gently takes the guitar and looks it over*): I... I really can't... don't know what to say... thank you!

*Young Davis holds the guitar and strums it. The instrument's out of tune and it sounds terrible.*

*The lights fade except for the spotlight on Davis.*

Davis (*pacing back towards the center of the stage*): No... I don't think that was it. That may have been my first instrument, the one I wrote my first song, played my first show, and recorded my first album with. And receiving it may have changed my life in unknowable ways, but I wouldn't say that it what defined my life; it didn't represent any instant change in lifestyle... You know, if you put it that way you could say that the most important moment in my life was at a restaurant with a woman named Jasmine. (*He walks to to the side of the stage again to watch the scene*)

*The lights come on a table in the middle of the stage with Young Davis and Jasmine sitting across from each other. They are looking at the menus and picking what to order. Despite what happens, this has a sad atmosphere to it. Pronounced in the demeanor of Young Davis.*

Jasmine (*pointing at something on the menu*): The fettucine alfredo looks good.

Young Davis (*distantly*): Yeah, I suppose it does.

*The scene freezes and Davis walks up to the table.*

Davis (*downcast*): Of course all I could think about was Sonia. But that didn't matter in the current situation that much, except for what I did next.

*Young Davis sets the menu down and stares at Jasmine with sad eyes while she reads her menu.*

Young Davis (*almost desperately*): Jasmine...

*Jasmine looks up, smiling.*

Jasmine (*jokingly*): Davis...

*Young Davis pushes the chair back and stands up, he moves in front of the table, all the while staring at her, almost like he's in a trance, he then gets on his knees, and takes her hand.*

*Jasmine puts her other hand to her mouth in shock. The scene freezes.*

Davis (*walks around the table brushes Jasmine's hair out of her eyes caringly*): Maybe I did care for her, or I just needed someone, anyone. But either way I justed need something to take my mind off... (*he trails off then waves the thought away as if punishing himself for thinking of it, stepping back to the front of the stage, the lights fade out behind him except for the spotlight*) Never mind, it doesn't really matter anyway, in the long run, things ended up the same as they had been before. Not like... Not like the other time.

*The lights come back up. Davis walks to the side and watches this happy moment in his life. Sonia stands in the middle of the stage, wearing stylish, but not formal, clothes. There is a cheering from offstage and Young Davis almost falls on stage from the direction that the*

*cheering is coming from, he's holding the guitar and waving offstage at the people cheering so that he doesn't notice Sonia standing there until he runs into her.*

Both of them: Oh my god!

*He reaches out the hand not holding the guitar and grabs her by the shoulder to stop her from falling.*

Young Davis: I'm sorry, are you okay?

Sonia: Yeah I'm fine.

*He realizes that his hand is still on her shoulder and takes it off awkwardly, mumbling an apology*

Sonia (*breaking the awkward silence*): That was an awesome show!

Young Davis (*lighting up, realizing that he didn't ruin the moment*): Thank you! I'm glad you enjoyed it.

Sonia: Do you like The Velvet Underground?

Young Davis: Oh my gosh, they're my favorite! How did you know?

*They both start walking off stage together.*

Sonia: I could tell from your songs, they sounded a lot like some VU songs I know.

Young Davis: That's the best compliment anyone has ever given me. What's your name by the way?

Sonia: Sonia

*While they are offstage you can hear Young Davis singing.*

*The lights go fade. Except for the spotlight on Davis, he listens to his younger self sing happily and carefree.*

Young Davis: Who looooooveess the sun. Ba ba-ba baaa.

*The singing stops.*

Davis (*He seems weary and tired, almost on the edge of tears*): Running into Sonia was like the icing on the cake on what was looking to be a very good life. The knowledge of her existence in my life seemed to brighten the very universe and defeat my every worry. To say I didn't know what I do without her was an understatement of the largest degree.

*Lights up on Young Davis sitting on a couch with his head in his hands, covering his face and shaking with tears (sad). There is a table next to the couch with a bottle and glass on it. A guitar lays at Young Davis' feet.. Davis looks over, as if he doesn't want to look at what he is seeing, but walks over to the couch and sits down next to his younger self. He almost puts his arm*

*around Young Davis to comfort him, but stops before he makes contact and stands again, moving around the couch to the table where he pours himself a glass of brown liquid out of the bottle.*

*He takes a sip, and looks with sad eyes Young Davis, who is still crying.*

Davis: Jane asked me what my inspiration was. Well here's her answer for that.

*Young Davis stops, wipes the tears from his eyes, and sighs before picking up the guitar, he waits for a few seconds, looking at the neck, and strums a chord, then another one, and then another. Then he plays the same chords, with a specific strumming pattern. The same chords start coming through the stages speakers. This time produced, with other instruments, etc. The lights fade. The song keeps playing during the set change. Except for the spotlight on Davis, he looks extremely old and worn out as he listens to the song. He leans back against the proscenium arch and slides down until he's sitting against it with his drink still in his hand. Saying nothing.*

*The lights come back on and Jasmine is sitting at the dinner table. There is a radio on the table, and an empty seat opposite her. Young Davis enters and she quickly turns off the radio ending the song.*

Jasmine: Hi hon, how's it going?

Young Davis (*distantly, standing behind the empty chair, resting his weight on it*): Oh, it's going alright I guess.

Jasmine (*standing up, and walking around the table to him excitedly*): I heard your song on the radio today!

Young Davis (*smiling and speaking weakly*): Oh.. That's... That's awesome.

Jasmine:: It sounds really good! (*jokingly*) Why do you write such sad music? (*he doesn't make eye contact, instead looking down at the table. She squeezes his chin, and says in a childish voice*) Awwwww, is my baby a little sad? (*then putting her hands on his chest*) Is there anything I can do to help?

*He shrugs her off.*

Young Davis: I'm sorry it's... It's been a long day. (*mumbling, almost talking to himself, as he's not looking at her*) There was a producer... and an publicist... and the meeting... hours... and an interview... three days.

Jasmine (*disappointed, and a little annoyed*): Oh, okay then. *She exits.*

*He pulls back the chair and sits down, melancholy. His older self takes a sip and stands up. He looks at Young Davis.*

*The lights fade, except for the spotlight on Davis.*

Davis: You know it's funny, how you never know the best moments in your life until they're gone, left to be enjoyed through the fading biased medium that is our memory. I suppose, looking at back on things, the happiest I ever was at the little park downtown... With Sonia.

*Lights up. Sonia and Davis are sitting next to each other on a park bench. They are both smiling.*

Sonia: Have you seen the new Aronofsky movie?

Young Davis (*looking her with interest*): Why, no I haven't.

Sonia: It's supposed to be really good.

Young Davis: When is it showing?

Sonia: Well it just so happens to be playing tomorrow at the theater just down the street. (*she gestures off to the side, over Young Davis' lap. He looks down and takes her hand.*)

Young Davis (*looking into her eyes*): Sounds like a date.

*Sonia looks at their hands, a little shocked, then she looks him in the eyes and smiles.*

Sonia: And that sounds... Fantastic!

*She jumps up and pulls Young Davis with her.*

Sonia: Hey, you know what sounds amazing right now?

Young Davis (*Obviously trying to contain his happiness*): What?

Sonia: There's this italian place a few blocks from here that has the most *excellent* fettuccine alfredo you've ever had.

Young Davis: Lead the way.

*Sonia runs offstage, practically dragging Young Davis with her. Davis watches them leave, smiling through his obvious envy. He takes another drink. The lights dim, except for the spotlight on Davis.*

Davis: I could say that that was the defining moment in my life, but somehow, it just... Doesn't feel right. It would be too happy, too carefree. I could wallow in the memories of the following nights for years and years. But time has soured them, the knowledge that I now have has sucked the sweetness right out, and left me with... A kind of longing, longing to just stay there for the rest of my life. I suppose that every life involves some kind of disillusionment, be it war, or poverty, a forclosed house... Or just a few words.

*The lights come back up, revealing Jasmine sitting at the table center-stage with the radio on it. Young Davis enters.*

Jasmine: Hey, how's it going?

Young Davis (*distantly*): Oh, it's going alright.

Jasmine (*annoyed with his constant distance*): That's what you say every day.

Young Davis: Well it's true.

Jasmine: Well it's not okay. I didn't say yes to marrying you so that it could be "alright" every day. Why don't we go somewhere, do something. *(She stands up and steps towards him, you can tell there's hope for it to work out)* There's a new movie showing downtown tomorrow that looks good, do you want to go see it?

*She's said the wrong thing so he shrinks back and bites his knuckles.*

Young Davis: Oh, uhhh I really don't think I should.

Jasmine (*angry*): Why not?

*She moves closer to him*

Young Davis (*avoiding the real answer*): Oh i don't know, I have to work on this new...

*She steps in again. He moves back.*

Jasmine: Why not!

*Again with the stepping in and moving back.*

Young Davis: The record company wants this album recorded by next week and I...

Jasmine: Goddamn it! I don't want anymore excuses Davis, just tell me the real reason!

*Young Davis brushes past her and goes to the table. He takes a breath and turns towards her.*

Young Davis (*now angry as well*): You want to know the real reason! Are you *sure* you want to know! Well here you go! *(Starting forcefully and trailing off)* It's too painful, I can't go to the movies tomorrow with you, because it would remind me too much... to much of her.

*He sits down at the table and looks down at it as he picks it with his fingers.*

Jasmine: Who is she? I know she's there, you never talk about her, but somehow it's all you ever say! Is she just some sweetheart you never got over? Is that it?

*She pauses and Young Davis says nothing but clenches his jaw.*

Jasmine: Is she the one who all your songs are about?

Young Davis (*shaking his head*): Jasmine.

Jasmine: Is she the reason you always say that it's going "alright" and never "good" no matter what amazing things happen to you?

Young Davis (*weakly*): Jasmine please.

Jasmine: I've known you for three years and this is what it comes to.

Young Davis (*begging, bangs his fist on the table*): Jasmine please stop! Can we talk about this tomorrow?

Jasmine: Tell me, right here and right now, did you ever love me.

*There is a long pause. Young Davis hangs his head.*

Young Davis (weakly): I'm sorry.

*Jasmine takes a long look at him, sitting there at the table, hanging his head.*

Jasmine: Goodbye Davis.

*She turns to exit. Young Davis stands up and reaches after her, as if trying to catch her.*

Young Davis: Jasmine please, I can't go through this again, can we just...

*Jasmine turns around.*

Jasmine: No, we can't. And for the record, I loved you more than anyone else I've ever seen. I sincerely hope you have a good life.

*She turns and leaves and Young Davis lets his hand fall to his side before slumping back down into the chair.*

Davis: Truth be told, I wasn't really sad about her leaving. Callous I know, but.. True.

Young Davis (to Davis, standing up from the table): What is wrong with you? You just expect everyone to feel sorry for you, day after day, year after year. Too self absorbed to stop yourself from causing the pain that supposedly ruined your life in someone else?

Davis (forcefully, to Young Davis): To say I wasn't sad is *not* to say I wasn't guilty, if I could take back everything I did to Jasmine both you and I know I would!

*Young Davis sits down and hangs his head, defeated.*

*Lights fade, except for the spotlight on Davis.*

Davis: After Jasmine left, things went back to the way they were before I met her. I was alone, but I wanted to be. So to say that her leaving me defined my life would be a lie. It didn't, it just brought it back in line. There is really, if I'm being totally honest, one moment that can truly be categorized as defining my life.

*Lights up. Sonia and Davis are standing together center-stage, in front of the park bench, facing each other and holding hands. Davis leans in for a kiss and Sonia steps back and lets go of his hands. As she does this the lighting dims.*

Sonia: Davis... I'm sorry, but this... This isn't going to work. It was... Fun.

Young Davis (Shocked): Well, I'll, I'll see you...

*Sonia nods sadly and turns, exiting. Leaving Young Davis alone with Davis. Davis walks up to Young Davis and slaps him with the hand that's not holding the drink.*

Davis (*angry in a sad way*): Say something else goddamnit!

Young Davis: Like what?

Davis (*yelling*): Thank her for being the best thing that'll ever happen to you! Tell her that you'll never forget her! (*quieter*) Tell... her that... tell her that you love her.

Young Davis (*gesturing after Sonia*): It's too late, she's gone now.

*Davis turns away and finishes the drink. Behind him, Young Davis stands, rubbing his face where Davis slapped him.*

Davis: It was like having the light that lit up the universe go out. Sure, I could still function, I could eat and talk and work, but it was all a blur, and most of it I don't remember. (*Young Davis exits, to the opposite side as Sonia did*) I didn't see her again for five years. Until I was on the way back to the hotel from a meeting in New York.

*Young Davis enters wearing a coat and carrying a briefcase. Sonia enters from the other side. Both are hunched over, protecting themselves from the wind so they don't notice the other until they run into each other.*

Young Davis: Oh! I'm sorry.

Sonia: No it was totally...

*She trails off as they recognize each other. The mood changes from sad to happy.*

Young Davis: Sonia?

Sonia: Davis?

Young Davis: How's it going? It's been so long?

*As Davis talks, Young Davis puts his arm around Sonia and they sit down at the park bench.*

Davis: And just like that the light had been flicked back on, I could see again in the dark room that was my life. It was like her absence had made her sudden presence that much better. Only a few souls are ever lucky enough to experience such a feeling.

Young Davis (*to Sonia*): Living without you wasn't living, but some hollow shell of existence that constantly dragged me down. Our time together has been the best moments of my life. No matter what happens, I'll never forget you.

Davis: Of course I'd like to think that I got to say all of those things after we ran into each other on the street, that we got back together and ran away to little cottage next to stream in the mountains. (*Sonia gets up and leaves*) But the truth is, that never happened. (*regretfully*) The last thing I ever said to her was "I'll see you" and she walked away and I never saw her again. I never did tell her that she was the best thing to ever happen to me, that I would never forget her, that I love her.



Young Davis (*standing up, moving to the front of the stage confronting Davis*): Why did you do this to yourself?

Davis: Do you think I would be here if I knew that?

Young Davis: Well you've sure spent enough time thinking it over. All you do is stand there and beat yourself up about things that happened ten years ago!

Davis: I'm sorry, I just want to know how to do it right next time.

Young Davis (*incredulous*): Next time? Next time? Who says there's going to be a next time? You're zero for two and have already gone and wasted three years of someone else's life because you felt sorry for yourself! You don't deserve a "next time". Do you know what the definition of insanity is? Trying the same thing over and over again and expecting different results!

Davis: Then what is life.

The end

