

JASON. You know. Miss the grind. Feeling the pinch. But Lester says it'll all work out.

BRUCIE. I've heard that before.

*Jason moves toward Brucie.*

JASON. Yo, everyone's been—

BRUCIE. I'm fine. Take a step back.

JASON. All right. All right.

*Jason moves to the bar.*

CHRIS. You can't do that. Disappear? Look at me. Where've you been?

BRUCIE. Around.

CHRIS. Mom won't say it, but she's worried as hell.

BRUCIE. Well, she has a damn funny way of showing it.

CHRIS. Nobody's seen you in a month. What's going on? What the hell? You stopped walking the line?

BRUCIE. ...Yeah.

CHRIS. Dad! I'm talking to you! Where've you been?!!

BRUCIE. Um, crashing at your Uncle Cliff's crib, for now.

CHRIS. You need to pull yourself together! This bullshit's got to stop.

BRUCIE. I'm trying. Hey, don't give me that look. I'm trying. Okay?

CHRIS. ...

BRUCIE. I'm TRYING.

CHRIS. You high?

BRUCIE. I'm a grown-ass man, I don't gots to report to nobody. Especially you, boy! So step off.

CHRIS. That's all you got for me? Then go be a zombie, I don't give a shit.

*Chris goes to sit at the bar.*

JASON. Leave it.

*A moment.*

BRUCIE. C'mon. Chris. I didn't come down here for this. C'mon.

CHRIS. What's going on with you? Earl and Saunders, both of'em called me.

BRUCIE. I dunno. Can I tell you something that happened a couple of weeks ago?

CHRIS. You know what, I don't wanna / hear your bullshit—

BRUCIE. Chris...please! Chris!

*Chris walks over to Brucie.*

CHRIS. What?

BRUCIE. I was doing my rotation on the line, same as always. And it began to rain, all at once a downpour, folks fled, but I...I just stood there...couldn't move. I got soaked through to my skin. I still couldn't move. And...and finally someone pulled me into the tent to get dry, but my whole body was shaking, wouldn't stop. It was scary. And I hadn't had that feeling of being outta control since my mother died.

CHRIS. You okay? Don't let'em do this to you.

BRUCIE. ...

CHRIS. You hear me?

BRUCIE. Yeah. Yeah. I'm okay. Will you buy me a drink?

CHRIS. ...Sure.

BRUCIE. Thank you. Thank you.

*Chris crosses to the bar. Stan pours a beer.*

And you...you guys awright?

CHRIS. It's been rough. Man, they're testing us. Folks are getting real hot.

JASON. Tell me about it!

CHRIS. I see those dudes / heading into the plant and I wanna smack'em—

*Clenches his fist.*

JASON. Fucking pricks!

BRUCIE. I hear that. But whassup? You start school?

CHRIS. Nah, I didn't enroll this semester.

BRUCIE. Why? What's your mom think about that?

CHRIS. Things have been a little strained between us. So—

BRUCIE. You need to tell her.