

MOLLY's father puts her coat over her as she sits on the bench.

MOLLY

What are you doing in New York? And how did you know I was at the skating rink?

FATHER

I'm a doctor of the mind.

MOLLY

Dad...

FATHER

I'm in here in New York because that's where you are. I called your mom at the hotel and she said you were here.

Listen, it's not a big deal but from what I saw out there I think you're having a small breakdown.

MOLLY

That's weird, I can't think of why.

FATHER

Probably because of your arrest and not knowing what's going to happen next.

MOLLY

Old man, do you really not recognize sarcasm?

FATHER

Do you? Drink this.

He's handed her a Styrofoam cup.

MOLLY

I'm an alcoholic I can't drink but thanks for remembering.

FATHER

It's hot chocolate.

MOLLY

Okay.

FATHER

And for diagnostic purposes, do you think that we're in a cocktail lounge right now? You see waiters with trays of champagne? I want to check your pulse.

MOLLY

(pause)

He takes her wrist and looks at his watch.

MOLLY

(pause)

Have you found a pulse?

FATHER

Yeah...just admiring my watch.

MOLLY

I can see you're getting warmed up but I really don't have the emotional bandwidth to defend my "as usual irresponsible behavior."

FATHER

I know, I got your e-mail. I get that I'm not welcome in your life right now as your father though you should know I could give a shit if I'm welcome or not. But I'm not here in my capacity as your father. I'm indifferent to whether your father lives or dies. I'm a very expensive therapist and I'm here to give you one free session.

MOLLY

You think what I need right now is a therapist?

FATHER

(almost laughing)

Yuh-huh!

MOLLY

I have to be back in my lawyer's office soon.

FATHER

Do you like your lawyer?

MOLLY

I wasn't asking for money when I called you, dad, I just needed my dad. God forbid you part with a nickel.

FATHER

Yeah Tiny Tim, you grew up on a lake and you've skied all over the world, were those work houses tough?

MOLLY

(getting up)

I gotta go.

FATHER

Molly—

MOLLY
I gotta go.

FATHER
Molly, sit the fuck down!

MOLLY does as she's told. There's a long silence before...

FATHER (CONT'D)
(pause)
Alright. We're gonna do three years of therapy in three minutes.

MOLLY
How?

FATHER
I'm gonna do what patients have been begging therapists to do for a hundred years--I'm just gonna give you the answers.

MOLLY
To what?

FATHER
Well let's start with this. Why does a young woman who, at 22, has a gold-plated resume--why does she run poker games?

MOLLY
Why did I choose to make a ton of money, that's a head scratcher.

FATHER
You were gonna be a success at anything you wanted and you know it. If you'd gone to law school you'd have owned a law firm by now. Why did you do the other thing instead.

MOLLY
(beat)
I don't know. Drugs.

Her father waves that off—

FATHER
You didn't start with drugs until the end. They weren't the problem, they were the medicine. It was so you could control powerful men. Your addiction was having power over powerful men.

MOLLY
Is that what you really what you think?

FATHER

No, I know it for sure. You've now completed your first year of therapy.

MOLLY

I saw an opportunity, it wasn't about you.

FATHER

Nah, it wasn't just about me.

MOLLY

It wasn't at all about you.

FATHER

It was. Second year, second question.

MOLLY

Do you think you were a good husband?

FATHER

What do you care?

MOLLY

I care because you were married to my mother! I care because my father's an asshole!

FATHER

Congratulations, you've completed Year Two. And for the record, your father raised three kids on a college professor's salary. One of them is a two-time Olympian, a sixth round draft pick of the Philadelphia Eagles and a leading philanthropist. Another is a cardiothoracic surgeon at Mass General and the third managed to build a multimillion dollar business using not much more than her wits.

MOLLY

I'm about to plead guilty in federal court.

FATHER

Well, nobody's perfect. The point is I did a few things right. Last question.

MOLLY

No. I have to go.

FATHER

Last question, Mol. I'll answer it but you have to ask it. You have to ask it.

MOLLY

Why didn't you like me as much as my brothers?

FATHER

There it is. I did. It only from time to time appeared that I didn't.

MOLLY

(pause)

It only appeared that you didn't?

FATHER

Yeah.

MOLLY

That is some Schedule-One bullshit. Why would—"It only appeared"--
Why would--Okay, I had an attitude problem. I talked back, I broke some
normal adolescent rules. I snuck phone time after curfew, I took your
car when I wasn't allowed to—

FATHER

--you drove it into a McDonald's.

MOLLY

And kids get punished for that but they don't...

FATHER

Did you not see the McDonald's? I mean did you misunderstand
What DRIVE-THRU meant?

MOLLY

--you turned into a different person—and your voice, your face, it was—

FATHER

(under his breath)

--because I knew you knew.

MOLLY

I didn't hear what you said.

FATHER

I said, I knew you knew.

MOLLY

You knew I knew what?

FATHER

That I was cheating on Mom. I knew you knew.

MOLLY

No, I didn't know that until I was 20.

He shakes his head "No"...

FATHER

No, you'd known since you were five. You saw me in my car. And you didn't really know what you saw. (beat)

You knew, honey, and I knew you knew. And that's how I reacted to the shame. And you reacted by showing seething contempt for me, by driving my car into McDonald's--

MOLLY

--and wanting to have power over powerful men?

FATHER

No, that was a red herring just to make you mad.

MOLLY

You're such an asshole, dad—

FATHER

YOU TRIPPED OVER A STICK!

(beat)

OKAY?!

(pause)

Twelve years ago you tripped over a stick. It was a one-in-a-million thing. You tripped over a stick. That's what you did wrong.

(pause)

There's your session. It's funny how much faster you can go when you're not charging by the hour. I'm your father. Trying to comprehend how much I love you would be like trying to visualize the size of the universe.

(pause)

I didn't know you'd gotten beaten up until I read it in your book, it was a helluva way to learn about it. You should know that I'm hiring someone to find the guy who did it and then I'm hiring someone to kill him.

MOLLY

(smiles)

Don't even joke about that.

FATHER

I'm not.

MOLLY

It wasn't a purse snatcher, Dad, it was the mafia.

FATHER

I don't care if it was the leader of Hamas--

(beat)

--Someone put their hands on you...they're gonna suffer.

MOLLY looks and sees to her surprise that her father is crying. She holds him—

MOLLY

Dad, I'm fine.

Her father is holding her tight—

FATHER

No they're gonna suffer.

MOLLY

Dad, I'm all right.

FATHER

They're gonna suffer. (he cries)

MOLLY

Really, I'm fine.

They hug.

END SCENE