

## **Characters**

CASPIAN - the youngest sibling, early- to mid-twenties, ambiguous gender, neon green hair, piercings, dramatic eyebags

AMAYA - a woman a few years older than Caspian, dressed whimsically with strange jewelry, excitable

PAUL - a man a few years older than Amaya, long hair, excessive mustache, purple makeup, relaxed demeanor

ARCHIE - a man the same age as Paul (fraternal twins), wearing an apron and long rainbow-striped socks, warm, smiling

OLD LADY (MARIE) - strong Norwegian accent, extremely thick glasses, swathed in various knits, next-door neighbor to the siblings

OLD MAN (JOHN) - button-up and suspenders, cane he primarily uses for gesturing, baseball cap, next-door neighbor to the siblings

## **Setting**

*The fronts of three brownstones side-by-side behind a stretch of street. On the opposite side (by the front of the stage) a metal trashcan and a streetlight stand left of center stage. There are some flowerpots near the steps; the houses aren't modern or spotless but comfortably well-kept.*

## **Act I, Scene I**

*Start with CASPIAN standing at the foot of the steps of the central brownstone, looking hesitant and uncomfortable.*

CASPAIN: *(to himself)* it's just a house. *(Pause.)* I mean it's not even our childhood home, it's not like I have any bad memories here. *(Sighs, starts to pace.)* Mom and Dad aren't even stateside anymore! *(Increasingly frustrated)* I shouldn't be freaking out about this. God, I'm such a LOSER!

*CASPIAN freezes after his final exclamation, not having intended to be so loud. He looks at the front door in panic before dashing across the street and hiding behind the trash can. This should be played comedically, he should be cartoonishly contorted in his hiding spot. In the house, AMAYA opens the window and peers out before shrugging and closing it again. CASPIAN peeks over the trashcan to see it close and sighs.*

CASPIAN: *(To himself)* that was close. *(Long pause, reflective, then he stands and walks across the street and halfway up the steps before stopping.)* If I can't even make myself knock, I should probably just leave. Who shows up at their adult siblings' porch after five years at the circus? They're going to think I'm a total freak. *(He walks back down the stairs and leans against the neighboring brownstone to the left and stares at the ground, dejected, quiet)* but... it would be so good to see them again...

OLD MAN: *(Bursting out of the brownstone CASPIAN is leaning against, gesturing wildly with his cane)* git off my lawn!

CASPIAN: I'm not on your lawn?

OLD MAN: Don't backtalk me! All leaned up against my walls with your dirty feet all over my grass, pants in tatters, metal stuck all over your face! *(Gestures at the ground where Caspian is standing, which is a concrete sidewalk.)* Degenerate! Git off my lawn!

CASPIAN: *(overwhelmed)* geez, okay, I'm sorry! *(He stops leaning against the wall.)*

Better?

OLD MAN: (*inexplicably more enraged*) No! I won't stop until people like you are out of my country! It's bad enough having those folks next door comin' and goin' at all hours of the day, lookin' like it's a goddamned circus, but this!

*Suddenly, an old woman emerges from the front door of the house on the other side of the central brownstone.*

OLD LADY: John, what on earth is all this racket about?

OLD MAN (JOHN): (*suddenly sheepish*) aw, Marie, don't be that way. (*Growling*) I was just telling this clownish, low-down, good for nothin'-

OLD LADY (MARIE): (*interrupting*) Now, John, don't go talking like that about this nice young man. Man? (*She turns to CASPIAN, seeking clarification.*)

CASPIAN: Uhhhhh... (*a long pause, awkward but not tense*) Sure.

OLD LADY (MARIE): (*A brief pause.*) Well. He seems like an upstanding citizen to me, member of a circus or not, John, so why don't you go back to watching your golf match and I'll take it from here, okay?

OLD MAN (JOHN): (*Visibly deflated, placated but grumbling*) Well, if you're sure you don't need me to show him what-for...

OLD LADY (MARIE): I think we'll be just fine.

*OLD MAN (JOHN) grumbles disappointedly as he ambles back inside. The door slams behind him.*

OLD LADY (MARIE): (*turning to CASPIAN*) now, dear, what can I do for you?

CASPIAN: (*Embarrassed*) oh, I'm okay. I'm all good now.

OLD LADY (MARIE): (*raising an eyebrow, gentle but skeptical*) Are you sure?

*CASPIAN hesitates, then nods. MARIE, looking unconvinced, walks to the door of the central brownstone and examines it.*

OLD LADY (MARIE): Hmm. So do you plan to stand in front of this place all night?

*CASPIAN slowly, haltingly joins her in front of the door. Shoves his hands in his pockets, fidgets, blushes.*

CASPIAN: Well, I- I don't- I mean, I'm not-

OLD LADY (MARIE): I'm only teasing, dear. I'm sure whatever you're scared of can't be all that bad; most things aren't.

*OLD LADY (MARIE) suddenly rings the doorbell, then knocks quite loudly for good measure. CASPIAN turns to stare at her, aghast, but she hurries back into her own house, giggling mischievously, before he says anything.*

ARCHIE: *(from inside the house)* coming!

*CASPIAN looks around, frantic, but doesn't find a place to hide before the door swings open, revealing ARCHIE. Both are frozen for a moment, staring at each other.*

ARCHIE: *(hesitantly)* ... Caspian?

CASPIAN: *(choked up)* Hi, Archie.

ARCHIE: *(still shocked)* Amaya, Paul, you'd better get down here!

AMAYA: What? What is it?

*AMAYA dashes into the doorway, nearly knocking Archie over. PAUL follows a moment later, more sedately. Both appear shocked upon seeing CASPIAN.*

AMAYA: *(practically shouting with excitement)* Caspian!?

PAUL: What're you doing here?

CASPIAN: *(misinterpreting the question, resigned but rambling)* Look, I know I've changed-

AMAYA: Caspian-

CASPIAN: -and I know it's been a long time, I'm sorry to have shown up out of the blue like this-

ARCHIE: Caspian-

CASPIAN: -and I'm sorry I didn't stick around, y'know? Sorry to bring this stuff back up-

PAUL: Caspian, please-

CASPIAN: -and if you don't ever wanna see me again, I get it, I know I look like a freak and your neighbor thinks I'm a degenerate and maybe he's right, maybe I never should've come here, so- so I can go, now, if you want. *(Pause, still looking down)*. I just wanted to see you guys.

AMAYA: *(exasperated)* Caspian!

CASPIAN: *(expecting to be hurt)* what?

ARCHIE: We're so happy to see you again.

*ARCHIE, AMAYA, and PAUL embrace CASPIAN. CASPIAN flounders for a moment, overwhelmed, before reciprocating. When the hug disbands, all are smiling. Caspian examines his sibling's appearances: PAUL's makeup, AMAYA's jewelry, ARCHIE's clothes. He snorts.*

CASPIAN: Now I get what that old man meant about this place looking like a circus.

PAUL: Yeah, you should feel right at home.

*AMAYA sends PAUL a warning look.*

PAUL: What?

CASPIAN: No, I don't mind.

AMAYA: Does this mean we get to make fun of you for running away to the circus now?

*PAUL sends AMAYA a warning look.*

AMAYA: (*disgruntled*) what?!

CASPIAN *just laughs*. ARCHIE, AMAYA, and PAUL *all stop to listen*. They've missed this.

PAUL: (*softly*) your laugh is the same.

CASPIAN: (*a little startled, shy*) I guess.

ARCHIE: (*warmly*) why don't you come on in? We're having stew for dinner tonight.

CASPIAN *hesitates*. ARCHIE, AMAYA, and PAUL *are tense*. Then, CASPIAN *smiles*.

CASPIAN: I'd like that.

*The siblings all go inside, chatting and laughing. Lights come on throughout the house as they walk inside, illuminating the windows with a warm glow. Outside, the door closes and the streetlight flickers on. It's nighttime.*

**Fin**