

# Phillie's Trilogy

By  
Doug DeVita

# PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

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## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

*Phillie's Trilogy*  
is dedicated anyone and everyone  
who survived growing up in the 1960s and 1970s,  
and to their mothers – who did their best.

## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

### **CHARACTERS** 3W, 1M, 3C

PHILIP MCDUGAL A writer.

PHILLIE MCDUGAL Philip at ages 5 – 30

VERONICA MCDUGAL Phillie's mother; *also plays*

SHEILA ROTH Philip's agent.

BARBARA BRADLEY QUIGLEY Philip's childhood friend; *also plays*

GRACE BRADLEY Barbara's mother aged 39. Of Spanish descent.

GRACE BRADLEY Barbara's mother aged 76.

BARBIE BRADLEY Barbara at ages 5 – 25.

KEITH QUIGLEY Phillie and Barbie's friend, at ages 11 – 30. Biracial;  
*also plays*

JUDE QUIGLEY Barbara and Keith's son.

**SETTINGS:** Philip's Apartment on Riverside Drive, The Finished Basement/Backyard/Pool House of the McDougal Home in Plandome, Long Island, The Bradley's Back Porch, next door to the McDougal's, A Barnes & Noble in Santa Monica, California.

**TIME:** Mainly: the late summer of 2009. And in memory: 1965, 1972, 1974, 1985, and 1990

As this is a memory play, the settings can be as lavish or as bare bones as the budget allows. The action should be fluid and dreamlike.

**Author's Note (and Trigger Warning):** *Phillie's Trilogy* takes place in a time when sensibilities were vastly different than they are now. There has been no attempt to soften the era in terms of its casual racism and homophobic language: it is true to the time and has a direct bearing on the events and situations that take place in scenes set in the supposedly more "enlightened" 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

*Phillie's Trilogy* (as *The Phillie Trilogy*) was first produced by The Fresh Fruit Festival (Louis Lopardi, Executive Director; Liz Thaler, Artistic Director) in association with Soar Productions in July 2017. The production was directed by Dennis Corsi and the cast was as follows:

Philip | David Sabella  
Phillie | Bonale Fambrini  
Veronica/Sheila | Teresa Kelsey  
Barbara/Grace at 39 | Karen Irwin  
Grace at 76 | Carole Monferdini  
Barbie | Maeve Press  
Keith/Jude | Daniel G. Cunningham

### **AWARDS AND HONORS**

#### **WINNER**

Fresh Fruit Award of Distinction, Outstanding Production

#### **WINNER**

Scrap Mettle Arts Emerging Playwrights Competition

#### **FINALIST**

Davenport Theatricals Reading Series

#### **SEMI-FINALIST**

- Barrington Stage Company Burman New Play Award
- Normal Avenue New American Play Series;
- Campfire Theatre Festival

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*Before the lights come up, we hear a series of voicemail messages.*

**SHEILA.** (V.O.) Hello, Philip. It's Sheila, your agent. Remember me? The one who got Spence to give you that three-book deal with Macmillan? Remember him? The one we're supposed to be having lunch with? Where the hell are you? (BEEP) Where the fuck are you, Philip? Call me back! (BEEP) PHILIP! I still haven't heard from you! You're gonna fuck up this deal! (The lights are slowly coming up on PHILIP MCDOUGAL, 49, paunchy, balding, in his robe and sitting on the floor of his apartment on Riverside Drive in Manhattan. He is sipping a martini. It's early evening on a late Summer Monday, 2009. Moving boxes, empty take out containers, and dirty dishes are scattered everywhere, an open laptop is on the sofa, and two bags of cremation ash are on a coffee table. "Wheel Of Fortune" is on TV. He disconnects his phone, picks up an old notebook and thumbs through it.)

**Contestant.** I'll buy an "I," Pat.

**PHILIP.** Why are you buying a vowel? Spin the wheel, get the money!

**Contestant.** I'll buy another vowel. "E?"

**PHILIP.** What is wrong with you? "T!" Ask for a "T!" (The intercom buzzes, startling him. He goes to the door and pushes the intercom button.) Yes?

**Doorman.** Sheila is coming up.

**PHILIP.** Oh. Shit. Yeah, thanks Jimmy. (He refreshes his drink.)

**Contestant.** I'll buy another vowel. "A!"

**PHILIP.** Seriously? You can't get this? SOLVE THE FUCKING PUZZLE!

**Contestant.** I'll solve the puzzle, Pat. RICE-A-RONI, THE SAN FRANCISCO BREAK!

**PHILIP.** THE SAN FRANCISCO TREAT, YOU IDIOT! SAN. FRANCISCO. TREAT! (He turns a cremation bag around.) Oh, dad, don't look. (SHEILA ROTH, 60, barges in.)

**SHEILA.** Where the hell were you today, Philip?

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**PHILIP.** I overslept.

**SHEILA.** You've played that game one too many times.

**PHILIP.** What time is it?

**SHEILA.** You know what time it is: four months to due day.

**PHILIP.** Martini?

**SHEILA.** Who the hell drinks martinis in the summer?

**PHILIP.** They were my mother's favorite. G&T?

**SHEILA.** No. Thanks. "Wheel Of Fortune," Philip?

**PHILIP.** My father's favorite.

**SHEILA.** Okay. Sorry. But Philip, honey... your parents... they're gone.

You have a contract and a deadline that's not going away **WILL YOU TURN THAT THING OFF?** (*Taking a manuscript from her bag.*) I've read it.

**PHILIP.** And?

**SHEILA.** Are you going to make that December deadline?

**PHILIP.** Yes, I'm going to make that December deadline!

**SHEILA.** Not if you keep writing shit like this. "If we're lucky, the people we love stick around until we're ready for them to leave. If we're lucky, they leave before things become imposs—..." You're kidding me with this, right?

**PHILIP.** I told you it was a rough draft. Did you show it to "His Heinous Gayness?"

**SHEILA.** Spence hates when you call him that. No, I didn't. I couldn't. Philip, honey, as your agent, as your friend, I keep telling you: You want a best-seller in the adult market, you gotta take the gloves off. Now listen, I've had an idea...

**PHILIP.** I hate whenever you've "had an idea."

**SHEILA.** What was your favorite book as a kid?

**PHILIP.** "Harriet The Spy." Why?

**SHEILA.** Have you ever wondered what happened to Harriet after she grew up?

**PHILIP.** Sometimes.

**SHEILA.** The first "Spruce & Maple" book came out when... '85? '86?

**PHILIP.** '84.



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**SHEILA.** Okay, so think about this: the first kids to read those books are all pushing 40 now.

**PHILIP.** Yeah, so?

**SHEILA.** Let “Spruce & Maple” grow up. It’s a built-in audience, once marketing makes ‘em realize they’re dying to know what happened to Spruce & Maple after they grew up. Hmm?

**PHILIP.** I was afraid this was where you were going. No. No, no, no, no, no.

**SHEILA.** Why not?

**PHILIP.** Because Barbie... That one about the priest and the altar boys really upset her. I promised her I wouldn’t write another one after that.

**SHEILA.** Yeah, that one was a kid lit groundbreaker and you haven’t written anything even half as good since.

**PHILIP.** Barbie is my oldest friend, Sheila. She’s... almost family.

**SHEILA.** Would an old friend, excuse me, almost family, ask you to give up a lucrative career?

**PHILIP.** Barbie didn’t ask. I was getting tired of writing those books.

**SHEILA.** Yeah. You know, Philip, I’ve been to at least three Christmas parties here where all your “old almost family friend” did was snipe at you while you and your mother buried yourselves in booze. When was the last time you even saw her?

**PHILIP.** My mother’s memorial.

**SHEILA.** So, February. It’s almost September. Just sayin’... I took you on because I believed you could make the jump from kid-lit to the adult market, but so far... This crap has no teeth, and if those kid’s books have one thing going for them, they have teeth. Tiny little baby teeth, but teeth. Give ‘em a full set of permanent incisors now.

**PHILIP.** I said no. I need to move away from those books if I want to be taken seriously.

**SHEILA.** Yeah, yeah, yeah, “Serious Writer Syndrome.” That’s all in your head, honey. You write a best-seller, you’re taken seriously. Period. The end.

**PHILIP.** I’ve still got four months.

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**SHEILA.** Look, Philip... You gotta stop with this high-flying pseudo-intellectual shit. No one's buying it. *(She sees the bags of ash.)* Jesus H. Christ, is that them?

**PHILIP.** Yeah.

**SHEILA.** Creepy. Think about what I said, Philip. And lay off the Rice-A-Roni.

**PHILIP.** Jeez, you sound like my shrink.

**SHEILA.** I should make as much money from you as that broad. I just don't want to hear you bitch when you see your publicity photos. And take a shower. You stink.

**PHILIP.** Yes, mom.

**SHEILA.** Cute.

**PHILIP.** I'm having lunch with Barbie next weekend when I go out to Long Island to clean out my parent's house. I'll see what she thinks.

**SHEILA.** Who the hell cares what she thinks!?!

**PHILIP.** I do.

**SHEILA.** Have you told her you're moving to LA?

**PHILIP.** She wasn't thrilled.

**SHEILA.** You were expecting hugs and a party? You know, Philip, you're never going to get away from whatever it is you're trying to get away from, so you might as well just face it. And then write it.

**PHILIP.** I thought that's what I was doing.

**SHEILA.** Yeah. No. December, Philip. *(She exits. We hear the sound of children talking. The lights become softer: we're seeing things through Philip's memory: 5-year-old Philip [Aka PHILLIE] and Barbara [aka BARBIE] playing with Legos in his backyard.)*

**PHILLIE.** Mrs. Raia used to live in your house.

**BARBIE.** I know that. My daddy bought it from her.

**PHILLIE.** She has the record with Julie Andrews. I don't. Mr. Raia died and she moved away and took the record. I miss her. She used to play it all the time. She sang "Feed The Birds" with me.

**BARBIE.** I have the record with Julie Andrews.

**PHILLIE.** You do?

**BARBIE.** Yeah. I'll sing it with you.

**PHILLIE.** Okay.

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**BARBIE.** You have a lot of Legos.

**PHILLIE.** My Aunt Nancy buys them for me.

**BARBIE.** You're lucky. Do you want the blue ones now?

**PHILLIE.** No. *(The memory fades. He picks up his notebook and starts thumbing through it. We see Phillie, Barbie, and KEITH QUIGLEY, all 11, playing "Twister." Keith is a good-looking bi-racial boy.)*

**KEITH.** LEFT FOOT RED!

**BARBIE.** Hey, watch it, Phillie. You almost knocked me down!

**PHILLIE.** Sorry, Barbie! *(Phillie loses his balance, grabbing Keith's thigh to steady himself.)*

**KEITH.** Watch the hands, Phillie! *(They fall in a heap of laughter as this memory fades. Philip thumbs a bit forward. We hear Phillie and Barbie giggling, and then the voice of his mother, VERONICA McDOUGAL as the set begins to change.)*

**VERONICA.** *(V.O.)* PHILLIE! MRS. BRADLEY AND I ARE GOING TO CHECK THE BASEMENT FOR LEAKS, SO STAY OUT OF HERE UNTIL WE'RE DONE! Honest to God, Grace, I don't know what I'm going to do with that kid.

**GRACE.** *(V.O.)* You know you're out of olives, right? Onion or Twist?

**VERONICA.** GODDAMMIT, PHILLIE! HAVE YOU BEEN EATING MY OLIVES AGAIN? *(We are now in the finished basement of Philip's childhood home in the affluent, leafy suburb of Plandome, on the north shore of Long Island. A Thursday afternoon in late November 1972. Two banquettes flanking a bar. A sliding glass door, slightly open. Veronica, 52, on the stairs; GRACE BRADLEY, 39, behind the bar mixing a pitcher of martinis. Philip stands in the shadows, watching.)*

**GRACE.** I don't think he's up there anymore, Vee. I saw him, Barbie, and Keith Quigley heading to the brook before I came over here.

**VERONICA.** And I'll just bet he took my olives with him. Onion.

**GRACE.** I like onions better with gin anyway. Vee, I have to talk to / you

**VERONICA.** / You're not going to believe this. They called me down to the school this afternoon. Phillie hit Sister Mary Dolores John. Clocked her right across the kisser.

**GRACE.** You're kidding!

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**VERONICA.** Nope. She took his notebook and began reading it. He grabbed it, she slapped him, and he slapped her right back. (*Grace serves the martinis while Veronica lights two cigarettes.*)

**GRACE.** Phillie's got guts, I'll say that for him. Sister Mary Dolores John scares the bejesus out of me. The way she hisses Mrsssss. Bradley, like my kids have no right to be named Bradley, let alone be in her school.

**VERONICA.** Our names are right for this neighborhood, Grace, but everything else about us is wrong.

**GRACE.** I know, I know, you're right. But still... My family has been in this country far longer than hers.

**VERONICA.** I know, and it shouldn't matter. But to a bitch like / her

**GRACE.** / Veronica! You can't call a nun the "B" word!

**VERONICA.** She lied, Grace! She just stands there and says Phillie walked up to her and hit her for no reason. So I look her right in the eye and say "Do you think I'm stupid, Sister? I'm pretty Goddamn sure Philip wouldn't have hit you if he hadn't been provoked." Oh yes, Grace, I say "Goddamn" to a nun. You should have seen her face; I could see she was sending me and Phillie straight to hell. But without so much as a blink she says "I just asked to see his notebook and he slapped me." "And you didn't touch him?" "Oh no, Mrs. McDougal, I never touch the children."

**GRACE.** Well, that's just baloney. Robert always used to complain about her hitting him. Of course, Robert probably deserved it.

**VERONICA.** Probably. Anyway, so I'm looking at her, at Phillie, and at that new pastor, what's his name?

**GRACE.** Father Mondello.

**VERONICA.** Yeah, Mondello. So I'm looking at her, at Phillie, and that new gasbag Mondello. "OK, Sister, if you didn't touch him, would you mind explaining why the side of his face is black and blue?" I have her there. "You wanna rethink your story now?" Mondello just starts sputtering, actually sputtering like pea soup on the boil. "Now, Sister, I don't condone what Philip did, but Mr. McDougal and I will see to it he's punished appropriately."

**GRACE.** What are you going to do?

**VERONICA.** Nothing. I'm not even telling Pete. Phillie will apologize tomorrow morning and that will be that. Anyway, I lean right into that

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smirking, sanctimonious puss of hers and say “But you listen to me and listen good: this is not the first time my kids have complained about your hitting them: ten years ago you smacked my daughter Celia because she’s left-handed. You think I’ve forgotten that? I am tired of your bullshit. Mr. McDougal writes big checks every year to help maintain this school; Father, if that nun ever touches my son again, those checks stop. And Sister, your sanctimonious ass, as the kids say, will be grass. I don’t have seven lawyers in my family for nothing.”

**GRACE.** Too bad your father wouldn’t let you go to college. You’d’ve made a terrific lawyer too.

**VERONICA.** I know. That’s why I swore I’d let my kids do whatever they want. Celia wants to be a painter, I let her be a painter. And if Phillie wants to be a writer, then I want him to be a damn good one, not some hack who dreams of glory while pushing Rice-A-Roni for a living like his father. I don’t want anything standing in his way.

**GRACE.** Did they say anything?

**VERONICA.** I didn’t give them a chance. I just took the notebook from her clammy little hands, gave it back to Phillie, and we left.

**GRACE.** Well, it’s about time someone said something. I’d never have the nerve. Vee, I have to ask you something...

**VERONICA.** What kills me is she actually got to read some of what’s in that notebook. I’ve been trying to get a peek into it for years and I can’t get it away from him.

**GRACE.** What about when he’s sleeping? That’s when I go through Barbie’s stuff. Mostly empty Twinkie and Ring-Ding wrappers.

**VERONICA.** Please, Grace, do you think I’m an idiot? He’s a sneaky one. I’ve torn his room apart and I’ll be damned if I can find that thing.

**GRACE.** Barbie just leaves clues everywhere. It’s like she wants to be fat and torture me with it.

**VERONICA.** Well, if you didn’t buy the junk in the first place...

**GRACE.** Al likes Twinkies and Ring-Dings.

**VERONICA.** And Barbie has Al’s metabolism, Grace!

**GRACE.** Metabo what?

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**VERONICA.** Metabolism. You and I have high metabolisms, so we don't gain weight. Barbie and Al have low metabolisms, so they have to watch what they eat.

**GRACE.** How do you know these things?

**VERONICA.** Carol Channing on Merv Griffin.

**GRACE.** Well, I'll be!

**VERONICA.** So, what were we / talking about?

**GRACE.** / I wanted to ask you something / about Phillie

**VERONICA.** / Oh yeah, Phillie and that damned nun. He is so much harder to deal with than Celia was when she was his age, and she was no picnic either.

**GRACE.** Boys are difficult, Vee. I've just about given up on Robert.

**VERONICA.** At least he's going away to college next year. I've got six more years of this with Phillie.

**GRACE.** I'm just praying Robert doesn't get some girl pregnant.

**VERONICA.** Yeah, do you really think I'm worried about that?

**GRACE.** Barbie is fat. Do you know what it's like to shop at Lane Bryant for a 12-year-old girl?

**VERONICA.** At least she speaks to you. You think boys are difficult? Wait'll she's 15.

**GRACE.** Sometimes I think I'll be stuck with her forever. Who wants to marry a fat girl?

**VERONICA.** Talk to me when your daughter elopes to California the day after she graduates art school, as far away from me as she can get. I haven't even met my son-in-law. *(They start to laugh.)*

**GRACE.** This isn't a contest, Vee.

**VERONICA.** Can you believe us?

**GRACE.** I know. I mean, I love my kids, but sometimes I wonder if I only love them out of some sense of obligation.

**VERONICA.** Sometimes I wonder why I even had a kid when I was 40.

**GRACE.** I always assumed Phillie was an accident.

**VERONICA.** Oh no, I wanted him, Grace. Pete wanted me to go back to work so we could afford to move out here to Plandome; I wanted to stay in Queens, so I got pregnant on purpose.

**GRACE.** On purpose?

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**VERONICA.** I poked holes in his rubbers.

**GRACE.** Oh!

**VERONICA.** Didn't matter. Pete writes those "San Francisco Treat" commercials and now twelve years later I'm 52, living in a neighborhood where we don't really belong and—... Do you know what it's like being the oldest mother in St. Mary's PTA? Pour me another one of those. It's cold in here.

**GRACE.** *(As she pours them both another drink.)* Vee, when you / had Phillie *(Veronica notices the open sliding glass door.)*

**VERONICA.** / Goddammit! I keep telling Phillie to close that damn door. *(Keith Quigley, 12, appears at the door.)*

**KEITH.** Hello, Mrs. McDougal.

**VERONICA.** Jesus! Keith Quigley! You scared the shit out of me.

**KEITH.** I'm sorry. I'm "it" and I can't find Phillie and Barbie. I've been looking for half an hour.

**VERONICA.** I'm not sure where they are. Have you tried down by the brook?

**KEITH.** That's where we started.

**GRACE.** Maybe they've gone to my house?

**KEITH.** I checked there. Nope. I gotta go meet my mother at work.

**VERONICA.** How's your cousin Candy?

**KEITH.** They think they got it all. We'll know better in a couple of weeks.

**GRACE.** Such a shame about her leg.

**KEITH.** Yes, ma'am.

**GRACE.** She's in our prayers, Keith. You all are.

**KEITH.** Thank you, Mrs. Bradley. I really gotta go now. My mom said we have to get to the hospital before dinner. You'll let Barbie and Phillie know?

**VERONICA.** Go on, honey, I'll let them know. *(Keith goes.)*

**GRACE.** What an awful thing to happen to a child.

**VERONICA.** Almost makes me feel bad I can't stand Candy's mother.

**GRACE.** Veronica!

**VERONICA.** Oh come on, Grace. You can't stand Maureen Walsh either. You've said so yourself.

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**GRACE.** It's still awful. It's bad enough we have to worry about broken bones, chicken pox, upset stomachs, colds, science fairs... But your child losing a leg? I don't know if—... that would just about kill me. *(They both take long drags on their cigarettes.)*

**VERONICA.** What kind of God gives a kid cancer? *(They sit quietly for a bit, then Grace blurts out:)*

**GRACE.** I'm pregnant, Vee. *(Veronica takes one more drag on her cigarette, stubs it out, and lights another.)*

**VERONICA.** Did you watch "Maude" last week?

**GRACE.** Father Mondello told us we'd be excommunicated if we watch that show!

**VERONICA.** Yeah, and then he goes and gives "Best Halloween Costume" to Jamie Furlong wearing Lorraine's sweater vest and a gray wig. Father Mondello can go to hell.

**GRACE.** VEE!

**VERONICA.** I just get so frustrated sometimes. If I'd known what having this kid was going to be like—... Does Al know?

**GRACE.** I haven't told anyone yet. Not even my mother.

**VERONICA.** How old are you now?

**GRACE.** I'm almost 40.

**VERONICA.** Think about it, Grace. Do you really want to be the oldest mother in St. Mary's PTA?

**GRACE.** What else am I going to do? I can't very well disappear for 9 months and then put it up for adoption, can I?

**VERONICA.** Come on, Grace, it's 1972, not 1872. You've got options. If Maude can have one...

**GRACE.** That's a mortal sin!

**VERONICA.** You still believe all that?

**GRACE.** Don't you? You go to mass every week, you take Communion...

**VERONICA.** I don't know what I believe anymore. All those kids my mother has, all the ones she buries, the priests and the nuns telling us it's God's will, and I believe it, every single word of it. And today a nun lies to me? Flat out lies and the pastor would've let her get away with it if I hadn't said anything? I've played by the rules. I've done what's expected. And what have I got? A husband who's never home, a daughter who



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barely speaks to me, a son I don't understand and who's probably queer... It's hell, Grace. Especially since I know it doesn't have to be that way anymore. I could leave Pete. I could get a job like Brenda Quigley did when Keith's father ran out on them. Or I could go back to school, get a degree in... something. But maybe I'm too old. And maybe, just maybe, Phillie really does need me. I don't know what Pete knows or thinks, but truthfully if the kid's queer, he's queer. Wouldn't be the first in the family. Pete's nephew Glen. And my sister Vivian. I think. It's a tough, lonely life, and he'll need someone who believes in him. Or can at least fake it. Does that make me an awful Catholic? And if it does, then do I really want to be Catholic anymore?... I'm sorry, Grace, I'm just going on and on... So? What are you going to do about the baby?

**GRACE.** I don't know.

**VERONICA.** Just think about it.

**GRACE.** It is legal in New York now, isn't it?

**VERONICA.** My nephew Michael is a doctor. He's very discreet.

**GRACE.** I guess it wouldn't hurt just to talk to him. Good Lord, look at the time! I've got to get dinner on the stove.

**VERONICA.** Jesus, me too. *(They make no effort to leave.)*

**GRACE.** You wouldn't really leave Pete, would you?

**VERONICA.** I've thought about it. But then I look at Keith Quigley and think "do I really want that kind of life for Phillie?"

**GRACE.** I feel bad for Brenda. I mean, can you imagine having to live with your kid in the servant's quarters of your sister's house?

**VERONICA.** Oh, don't kid yourself. I'd make sure I get the house. And then I'd sell it and move back to Queens. ... You know, I don't feel like cooking. Let's take the kids to Scobee's. I like their burgers.

**GRACE.** But that's all the way in Little Neck!

**VERONICA.** *(Swigging the rest of her martini.)* I'll drive. *(Veronica stubs out her cigarette. Grace puts hers in the ashtray, absentmindedly leaving it still burning. They start up the stairs.)*

**GRACE.** What about Pete and Al?

**VERONICA.** Leave a note and let 'em nuke a Swanson's.

**GRACE.** You can't nuke a Swanson's, Vee. Trust me, I know. *(And they're gone. A moment, then one of the banquette seats lifts. Phillie, 12,*

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*climbs out with his notebook, a copy of "Harriet The Spy," and a jar of olives. He stubs out Grace's cigarette and opens the other banquette.)*

**PHILLIE.** *(Whispering.)* It's okay, Barbie. They're gone. *(Barbie, also 12, climbs out. She stuffs a Twinkie in her mouth. He pops an olive into his. They sit quietly, trying to absorb what they've just heard. Philip begins to write in his notebook.)*

**BARBIE.** Am I really that fat? *(Phillie silently takes the Twinkie out of Barbie's hand and continues writing. The sound of car doors slamming snaps Philip out of the memory, and he shudders as he hears BARBARA and her son JUDE arguing next door.)*

**BARBARA.** *(O.S.)* Jude, calm down. Really, what were you expecting? Narek Hagopian is a junior, you're a freshman. You should be thrilled you came in second...

**JUDE.** *(O.S.)* THRILLED TO COME IN SECOND TO A FUCKING ARMO STINKIAN!?! *(The scene shifts to Grace's back porch next door. Patio furniture, a BBQ Grill, etc... Barbara, 49 and excruciatingly thin, enters carrying a few grocery bags, followed by her son Jude, 14. He is the spitting image of his father, Keith. The now 76-year-old Grace is asleep on a chaise, a book in her lap.)*

**BARBARA.** JUDE! That's enough! I told you to stop calling him that!

**JUDE.** Dad calls him that!

**BARBARA.** Yeah, well you and your father are in no position to talk about anyone that way! *(Jude heads into the house, kicking Grace's chaise as he passes, waking her up.)*

**JUDE.** And just where the fuck were you?

**GRACE.** What? What? What?

**BARBARA.** Jude! Don't talk to your grandmother like that! Apologize!

**JUDE.** *(Slamming the door behind him.)* Sorry.

**BARBARA.** JUDE! I'VE TOLD YOU OVER AND OVER NOT TO SLAM THAT DOOR!

**GRACE.** Your kid's a brat, Barbie.

**BARBARA.** *(Putting the grocery bags on a table.)* He's upset, mom, he just lost the race. And where the hell were you? I told you I'd pick you up in front of St. Mary's after the track meet!

**GRACE.** You did? I didn't know where you were, so I walked home.

## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

**BARBARA.** Isn't this why I gave you a cell phone?

**GRACE.** I don't know how to use that thing. What's the big deal? It's a nice day, it's not that far.

**BARBARA.** It's more than a mile, Mom! What if it were raining? Or snowing?

**GRACE.** Snowing? In September? Please, Barbie doll, I'm fine!

*(The scene shifts back to Philip in his basement. He shakes his head, takes a sip of his drink and returns to reading his notebook. We see Veronica, now 54, sitting on one of the banquettes, cigarette in one hand and newspaper in the other. Phillie, now 14, is on the floor with a well-worn copy of "Harriet The Spy" and his notebook. It's an afternoon in late June 1974. "Mildred Pierce" \* is on "The Afternoon Movie;" he's reading and mouthing along. \*use of movie soundtrack pending approval from the film's rights holder.)*

**Veda Pierce.** (V.O.) "You've got to help me. Give me another chance. It's your fault I'm the way I am!"

**VERONICA.** Are you going to tell me what happened at school today?

**PHILLIE.** Shhhh! I'm watching this.

**VERONICA.** You've seen this movie 5,000 times. What the hell happened at school?

**PHILLIE.** I don't want to talk about it. *(The phone rings.)*

**VERONICA.** Either turn off that Goddam TV or read your book until I get back. How many times have you read "Harriet The Spy" now, anyway?

**PHILLIE.** You'd better answer that. It might be dad and you know how he gets when he can't get a call through. *(Veronica stomps upstairs.)*

**VERONICA.** You'd better hope it's not your father because I just might tell him what a pain / in the ass

**PHILLIE.** / Yeah, yeah, yeah. Like you ever tell him anything. *(The phone stops ringing.)*

**VERONICA.** (O.S.) Goddammit! *(She stomps back down. Phillie is still reading and mouthing along.)*

**Mildred Pierce.** (V.O.) "Darling, I'm sorry. I did the best I could."

**Veda Pierce.** (V.O.) "Don't worry about me, mother. I'll get by."

## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

**VERONICA.** I told you to turn that thing off! (*Not looking up from the book, he picks up the remote and turns off the TV.*)

**PHILLIE.** It's over now anyway. I'm freezing.

**VERONICA.** I don't care how cold you are, Phillie, it's hot as hell out and I'm not turning off the air.

**PHILLIE.** Sister Irmalita Simon said we should all spend at least one day a week without air conditioning to remind us of the suffering of St. Joan at the stake.

**VERONICA.** Sister Irmalita Simon has a couple of screws loose if you ask me. Go and get a sweater if you're cold. (*Phillie gets up. He and Veronica see his notebook. They eye each other as he grabs it and stomps up the stairs just like she did.*)

**PHILLIE.** Nice try, mom.

**VERONICA.** (*To herself.*) Dammit! (*To Phillie.*) PHILLIE! The whole damn house is shaking. Can't you go up the stairs like a normal person?

**PHILLIE.** (*O.S.*) NO, I CAN'T!

**VERONICA.** JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT INVITED TO THAT PARTY TONIGHT, DON'T TAKE IT OUT ON ME! IF YOU'RE MAD, / GET GLAD, DAMMIT!

**PHILLIE.**

/ MAD, GET GLAD, DAMMIT!

**VERONICA.** WATCH YOURSELF, PHILIP! (*To herself.*) Who the hell lets their kid throw a party on a Wednesday night anyway? (*Looking at her watch.*) 4:30. Oh, what the hell. (*Taking a jar of olives out of the fridge.*) THANKS FOR LEAVING ME AN OLIVE!

**PHILLIE.** YOU'RE WELCOME! (*He pounds down the stairs wearing a cardigan.*)

**VERONICA.** You want a Coke?

**PHILLIE.** No.

**VERONICA.** No, what?

**PHILLIE.** No, thank you.

**VERONICA.** Phillie, I know you're upset about that / party,

**PHILLIE.** / IT'S NOT ABOUT THE PARTY, MOM!

**VERONICA.** Don't yell at me, Philip! I know it's about that party and I understand / why

## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

**PHILLIE.** / No, you don't. And I am telling you right now: when she dies I am not going to her funeral.

**VERONICA.** Candy Walsh is not going to die, Phillie.

**PHILLIE.** Of course she is, Mom, she's got cancer. Why do you think she won class president?

**VERONICA.** Those campaign slogans you wrote for her, maybe?

**PHILLIE.** Nope. She's got cancer and everybody feels sorry for her and she gets everything she wants and she will until the day she dies.

**VERONICA.** Well, she's not going to die today.

**PHILLIE.** She's a bitch. And I am not going to her funeral.

**VERONICA.** So don't go to her funeral. But don't call her a bitch.

**PHILLIE.** Why not? You call Mrs. Walsh a bitch all the time.

**VERONICA.** If I talked to my mother the way you talk to me / I wouldn't be alive today!

**PHILLIE.** / You wouldn't be alive today! I'm the only one in the  
WHOLE GODDAMN CLASS SHE DIDN'T INVITE TO HER  
GODDAMN PARTY!

**VERONICA.** Watch your language! And you don't like anyone anyway!

**PHILLIE.** THAT'S NOT THE POINT, MOM!

**VERONICA.** I told you, Phillie, you have two choices: you can just show up, or you can forget it and I'll take you into the city to see whatever show or movie you want.

**PHILLIE.** *Any* movie?

**VERONICA.** I am not taking you to see "The Exorcist!"

**PHILLIE.** Then forget it. I don't want to go to the movies. I don't want to see a show. I don't want to go to that party. I just want / to

**VERONICA.** / Sit home and sulk. Fine. Be that way. Honest to God, Phillie, I don't know what I'm going to do with you. Why do you let those kids get under your skin like this?

**PHILLIE.** They're all creeps. I am not going to graduation tomorrow either.

**VERONICA.** You are going even if I have to drag you there and Krazy Glue your ass to the pew.

**PHILLIE.** You wouldn't dare!

**VERONICA.** Oh no? Try me.

## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

**PHILLIE.** You spent too much money on that graduation gown to ruin it with Krazy Glue.

**VERONICA.** What the hell is wrong with you today?

**PHILLIE.** NOTHING! It's time for Lucy. (*Veronica snatches the remote from him.*)

**VERONICA.** I am sick and tired of these reruns of reruns of shows you've seen a million times! Now you are going to tell me what the hell is wrong / before I

**PHILLIE.** / I HATE IT HERE!

**VERONICA.** I hate it here too, Phillie, but this is where your father wants to live so this is what you're stuck with until you're 18.

**PHILLIE.** Then I am not going to St. Mary's for high school.

**VERONICA.** Oh, yes you are. Your father's put too much money into that school so / you and Celia

**PHILLIE.** / It's always about money with you. It's not like we're poor.

**VERONICA.** Yes, Phillie, we have money – but that doesn't mean I want to waste it! You are going to St. Mary's Boys High. It's been paid for. End of discussion.

**PHILLIE.** Then I'm going away to college.

**VERONICA.** Fine. I'll buy your plane ticket.

**PHILLIE.** And after / that I'm going

**VERONICA.** / After that you can go to Timbuktu and do whatever the hell you Goddamn please. I can't wait until we ship you off to LA next week and you're your sister's problem for the summer.

**PHILLIE.** You and me both, sweetheart!

**VERONICA.** That's it! Get out of my sight before I... (*Barbie knocks at the sliding glass door. She's lost weight but is still curvy. Phillie lets her in.*)

**PHILLIE.** Hey.

**BARBIE.** Hey. Hi, Mrs. McDougal. My Grandma Lena's here and mom wants to know if you can come over for dinner tonight? She said to call her.

**VERONICA.** Isn't that nice. Phillie?

**PHILLIE.** I don't care. (*Noticing Veronica's "look."*) Yes, I think that would be nice.

## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

**VERONICA.** I'm going say yes. Damn, I keep telling your father we need an extension down here.

**PHILLIE.** He said to just put one in, he doesn't care.

**VERONICA.** He said no such thing!

**PHILLIE.** I heard him, he said "Do whatever you want, Veronica, it's fine with me." You just don't want to spend the money.

**VERONICA.** Philip Michael McDougal! I swear to God, one of these d— ... When did you hear him say that? Phillie? *(The phone rings.)*

**BARBIE.** That's probably my mother.

**VERONICA.** *(As she stomps back up the stairs.)* We'll talk about this later, Philip.

**BARBIE.** Ooh, she called you Philip Michael! You're in trouble now.

**PHILLIE.** Yeah, I almost blew it. *(Barbie hops onto one of the banquettes.)*

**BARBIE.** She still thinks these things hide water pipes?

**PHILLIE.** Yup.

**BARBIE.** By the way, don't call my grandmother "Lena Lamont" tonight. She hates when you do that.

**PHILLIE.** I know. That's why I do it.

**BARBIE.** PHILLIE!!!

**PHILLIE.** She calls me a pequeño maricón all the time. What does she think I am? Dumb or something? I know what that means.

**BARBIE.** She calls everyone who annoys her that. *(She lights a cigarette and offers one to Phillie.)*

**PHILLIE.** No, thanks.

**BARBIE.** You'd be a lot cooler if you smoked.

**PHILLIE.** I don't care.

**BARBIE.** Up to you.

**PHILLIE.** I'm never going to smoke. It's not good for you.

**BARBIE.** I don't care. I've lost a lot of weight since I started.

**PHILLIE.** I don't need to lose weight. I have a high metabolism. You don't.

**BARBIE.** Shut up. Okay, so what the hell happened this morning? You were in with Father Mondello for more than half an hour.

**PHILLIE.** I didn't have anything to confess so I made something up.

## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

**BARBIE.** And?

**PHILLIE.** And what?

**BARBIE.** Honestly, Phillie, you are so dense sometimes. WHAT DID YOU TELL HIM?

**PHILLIE.** I told him I had an impure thought. I thought he'd just give me a lecture and a few Hail Mary's, but he kept asking questions.

**BARBIE.** Like?

**PHILLIE.** Have I ever seen a grown man naked? Have I ever touched another boy? Do I get excited when I see another boy or a man in a bathing suit? Really weird shit.

**BARBIE.** I heard Jamie Furlong went to Mondello's room last fall, and all kinds of stuff went on.

**PHILLIE.** Well, I'm not an altar boy. I just kept making things up, but he wouldn't stop. I told him about Jamie's boner in math class last week.

**BARBIE.** Oh my God, you didn't!

**PHILLIE.** He asked me if I thought Jamie was good looking. Then he started talking about Keith.

**BARBIE.** Keith Quigley?

**PHILLIE.** Do we know another Keith? YES, KEITH QUIGLEY YOU DOOFUS!!!

**BARBIE.** Okay, okay, okay, calm down!

**PHILLIE.** He wanted to know if I thought Keith was good looking too, and then he started going on and on about temptation and I shouldn't give in to it, I mean really, really weird shit about self-abuse and living an unnatural life and risking eternal damnation ... *(He pauses.)*

**BARBIE.** AND?... What? What? WHAT?

**PHILLIE.** He started breathing heavy and suddenly gasped. I think he was jerking off.

**BARBIE.** IN THE CONFSSIONAL!?! Ewwww, gross.

**PHILLIE.** Then he just looked at me funny, gave me ten rosaries, and slammed the window shut.

**BARBIE.** Guy's a creep. My mother likes him.

**PHILLIE.** Everybody likes him. He looks like Chad Everett and gives short sermons.

**BARBIE.** You think he's that good looking?



## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

**PHILLIE.** Don't you?

**BARBIE.** No way. You gonna tell your parents?

**PHILLIE.** Nope. My mom'll blow up and my dad'll just act like it's my fault.

**BARBIE.** Yeah, don't tell them, it'll only make it worse. (*The doorbell rings.*)

**PHILLIE.** I don't ever want to see him again. I don't ever want to see anyone at St. Mary's again.

**BARBIE.** What about tonight?

**PHILLIE.** I wasn't invited. You know that.

**BARBIE.** I could bring you as my date. She'd die.

**PHILLIE.** Poor choice of words, Barbie. No thanks, I don't want to go.

**BARBIE.** Do too. Even with your windows closed I heard you screaming about it all afternoon.

**PHILLIE.** I want to be invited. Doesn't mean I want to go.

**BARBIE.** Oh. Well, maybe I won't go. We could go to the movies or something?

**VERONICA.** (*O.S.*) PHILLIE, KEITH QUIGLEY'S HERE.

**BARBIE.** Oh for chrissakes, what the hell does he want?

**PHILLIE.** How the hell would I know? OK. TELL HIM TO COME DOWN.

**BARBIE.** Are you crazy?

**PHILLIE.** I thought you like him.

**BARBIE.** Not anymore. He's gotten... weird.

**PHILLIE.** Whaddya mean, weird? Like Jamie Furlong weird?

**BARBIE.** I don't know, just... flaky. He's always staring at me and grinning. Ya know? Weird. (*She looks up and bolts out through the sliding glass door just as Keith comes down the stairs.*)

**KEITH.** Hey.

**PHILLIE.** Hey.

**KEITH.** Barbie just left?

**PHILLIE.** Yeah.

**KEITH.** Oh.

**PHILLIE.** You like her, don't you?

**KEITH.** She's alright.

## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

**PHILLIE.** You like her! You loooove her!

**KEITH.** I do not! *(Keith punches Phillie and they wrestle. Loudly.)*

**VERONICA.** *(O.S.)* KEEP IT DOWN, BOYS! I'M TRYING TO TALK UP HERE! *(Laughing, Phillie undoes Keith's belt buckle.)*

**KEITH.** Your mom's upstairs!

**PHILLIE.** She's talking to Mrs. Bradley. They'll be yakking for hours! *(Phillie reaches for Keith's zipper.)*

**KEITH.** No, don't.

**PHILLIE.** You wanna go to my pool house instead? *(Phillie again reaches for Keith's zipper. Keith pushes him away, knocking him to the floor.)*

**KEITH.** I SAID DON'T!

**PHILLIE.** Jesus, Keith!

**KEITH.** I'm sorry, Phillie. It's just... uhm... I don't want to do that anymore. *(Keith re-buckles his belt.)*

**PHILLIE.** Then why the hell did you come over here?

**KEITH.** Barbie's mother said she was here. *(Trying to save face, Phillie grabs the martini, takes a swig, and eats the olive.)*

**PHILLIE.** Oh. Martini?

**KEITH.** Uhm, no thanks. You got a Coke?

**PHILLIE.** Sorry. We're out. *(Phillie picks up the cigarette, takes a puff, and chokes. He stubs it out.)*

**KEITH.** I didn't know you smoked.

**PHILLIE.** What? Oh, yeah, since 5th grade.

**KEITH.** My cousin should have invited you to her party tonight. It wasn't really her. Bitsy Ford told her not to. Bitsy doesn't like you.

**PHILLIE.** Well, I don't like Bitsy either.

**KEITH.** My mother said you can come as our guest.

**PHILLIE.** No, thank you. ... You were in the confessional with Mondello a long time today.

**KEITH.** So were you.

**PHILLIE.** Did you tell him about us?

**KEITH.** No, I didn't.

**PHILLIE.** Are you sure? 'Cause he was asking me a lotta weird questions.

## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

**KEITH.** I SAID I DIDN'T!

**PHILLIE.** Uh huh.

**KEITH.** Phillie... Father Mondello said—... He—... Never mind. ... If you change your mind about the party bring your trunks. My uncle had them open the pool today.

**PHILLIE.** I've got my own pool. With a slide. Remember?

**KEITH.** Okay. Well.

**PHILLIE.** See ya.

**KEITH.** Yeah. See ya. ... Phillie? Why doesn't Barbie like me anymore?

**PHILLIE.** How the hell would I know? Ask her. You know where she lives.

**KEITH.** You shouldn't smoke, you know. They say it causes cancer.

**PHILLIE.** Yeah. I know. *(Keith exits. Veronica starts down the stairs. The phone rings. She turns around. Phillie gets a Coke and starts writing in his notebook.)*

**VERONICA.** *(O.S.)* PHILLIE! CANDY WALSH IS ON THE PHONE!

**PHILLIE.** TAKE A MESSAGE! *(Veronica storms down the stairs.)*

**VERONICA.** You get your ass up there and talk to her, young man!

**PHILLIE.** NO!

**VERONICA.** You go talk to Candy and if she invites you to that party you say yes. And take a shower, you stink. We have to be next door at 5:30. And don't try and fool me with your father's Aqua Velva again.

**PHILLIE.** *(As he stomps up the stairs.)* You really should put in that extension. Or get an answering machine, like the Bradley's. *(Veronica picks up her empty martini glass.)*

**VERONICA.** GODDAMMIT, PHILLIE, STOP EATING MY OLIVES! *(She lights a cigarette and pours another drink as Philip finishes his drink and pours himself another. His phone rings. The scene shifts back to Grace's porch. Barbara is on her phone. Grace lights a cigarette.)*

**BARBARA.** He's still not answer—... MOM!

**GRACE.** WHAT?

**BARBARA.** What did I tell you about smoking in the house? *(She takes the cigarette from Grace.)*

**GRACE.** We're on the porch. And it's still my house, Barbie doll.

**BARBARA.** I keep telling you Jude is allergic to cigarette smoke.

## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

**GRACE.** You don't have to cover for your husband's no-smoking baloney anymore.

**BARBARA.** Keith is an oncologist, mom. I think he knows something about the link between smoking and cancer. (*Grace goes to the table and peers into the grocery bags.*)

**GRACE.** What's all this?

**BARBARA.** Stuff for later. Can you help me get it ready? Philip will be here in a few minutes.

**GRACE.** Phillie's coming? I like Phillie.

**BARBARA.** Yes, mom, I told you.

**GRACE.** You never told me he was coming, Barbie.

**BARBARA.** I most cert—... Yes, he's coming. But he likes to be called Philip now. Remember what a big deal he made out of it at Veronica's memorial service?

**GRACE.** So? You don't like being called Barbie anymore. Philip. Sure. ... Phillie was always such a nice little boy. Why you didn't marry him when he asked you I'll never know.

**BARBARA.** He never asked me to marry him. He's gay, remember?

**GRACE.** But you two slept together, didn't you? New Year's Eve, '84? '85? Wasn't it you two, or was it Robert and that puta he got pregnant?

**BARBARA.** Oh dear God! That's enough, mom!

**GRACE.** No, I'm pretty sure it was you two. I mean, why would Robert be sneaking over to Veronica's house at four in the morning?

**BARBARA.** Just forget it, okay?

**GRACE.** Well, someone wanted to marry you.

**BARBARA.** I was engaged to Thad, mom, and he broke it off!

**GRACE.** That's right! Thad, that guy you met at law school. Why didn't you marry him? I told you Keith wasn't marriage material.

**BARBARA.** And I've told you I don't want to talk about Thad, or Philip, or why I married Keith, okay? Why do you have to bring it up all the time? Just stop.

**GRACE.** You've got such a lovely figure now. Why do you hide it with those awful blue jeans? They do nothing for you, especially from behind. Phillie's coming?

## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

**BARBARA.** Philip! I am never going to get used to calling him that. Yes, mom, he was stopping next door first, to “check the basement for leaks.”  
*(Grace mimes knocking back a drink.)*

**GRACE.** That’s code, Barbie doll.

**BARBARA.** Yes, mom, I know. *(She calls Philip again as the lights come up on him. He looks at his phone, sighs, and answers. We hear a crash inside the house.)*

**JUDE.** *(O.S)* FUCK! FUCK, FUCK, FUCK, FUCK, FUCK!

**BARBARA.** Oh God! *(To Philip.)* I gotta go. Get your ass over here. *(She disconnects as Philip replies.)*

**PHILIP.** Yeah. No one could resist an invitation like that. *(He mixes another martini, pours it into his water bottle, and puts a jar of olives in the pocket of his cargo pants. The focus shifts back to Grace’s porch.)*

**BARBARA.** Jude, watch your language! What happened?

**JUDE.** *(O.S.)* Nothing.

**GRACE.** If you broke another one of my Hummels I’ll beat you within an inch of your life! Little brat’s been a pain in my butt since he was born. *(She takes out a cigarette, sees Barbara staring at her, and puts it down. Jude comes to the door.)*

**JUDE.** It’s not one of your damn Hummels. I knocked into the China cabinet. A bunch of those purple glasses broke.

**BARBARA.** Not my Amethyst Waterford Goblets! Jesus, Jude, you’ve got to get your anger—... We’ll talk about this later, after your Uncle Philip leaves.

**JUDE.** That faggot is not my uncle.

**BARBARA.** JUDE! Don’t you ever call him that!

**JUDE.** Why not? Dad calls him a faggot all the time.

**BARBARA.** Your father... 5. 4. 3. 2. 1. ... That doesn’t mean you should. Am I clear?

**JUDE.** Yeah, sure, whatever. *(Barbara pushes Jude inside and follows.)*

**BARBARA.** Go upstairs and take a shower. GO! NOW! Mom, would you mind putting out the snacks while I clean up that mess?

PhilliedammitPHILIP will be here in a minute. *(Grace takes the snacks out of the bag.)*

## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

**GRACE.** Gluten-free Chips with No Trans-Fats? Dairy-free Tofu Onion Dip with No Trans-Fats? Extra Mild, Fat-Free Salsa? Fat-free Cheddar Cheese? Meatless Salami? BARBIE, I TOLD YOU TO GET SOMETHING TASTY!

**BARBARA.** (O.S.) It's better for you, mom! (*Grace puts the stuff back in the bag. She lights a cigarette, and happily takes a drag.*)

**BARBARA.** (O.S.) I CAN SMELL THAT, YOU KNOW!!!

**GRACE.** I can't smoke. I can't drink. I can't do anything in my own house anymore. I should've kicked her and that damn husband of hers out years ago. (*Taking one last drag, she puts the cigarette in an ashtray but doesn't stub it out. She sits, picks up her book and reads. Philip enters, swigging from a water bottle and carrying a cake box. We see Phillie stubbing out Grace's cigarette in the past, while Philip stubs it out in the present. The memory ends, and Philip puts the cake box on the table.*)

**PHILIP.** Hi, Grace.

**GRACE.** Who are you? BARBIE?

**PHILIP.** It's okay, Grace, it's me, Philip. Remember me? I used to live next door, we get together at my apartment in the city every year for Christmas?

**GRACE.** Philip? Oh, yeah, Phillie! You got so fat! You used to be such a skinny little thing! Your mom and I used to call you "Mr. Malnutrition."

**PHILIP.** Yes, you did.

**GRACE.** Where's Veronica? I haven't seen her around. Did she go down to Florida early this year?

**PHILIP.** She died, Grace. Last winter.

**GRACE.** I knew that. Dammit, I knew that. And your father too. Right after.

**PHILIP.** Pete just couldn't get over her dying first.

**GRACE.** I miss them. We were friends for so long. And now I'm the only one left. Al went first. Did you know that? Of course you knew that. 15 years ago now. Heart attack. Dead before he hit the floor. Only 67. I miss them all.

**PHILIP.** I miss Al too. He was the only dad in the neighborhood who didn't seem to mind I cared more about Mickey Mouse than Mickey Mantle.

## PHILLIE'S TRILOGY

**GRACE.** It hurts like hell, doesn't it, Pete?

**PHILIP.** Pete was my father, Grace.

**GRACE.** Of course. You're Phillie. You look so much like him. Except he kept his hair.

**PHILIP.** They're still around, Grace. They haunt me... Almost every night. Last night I dreamt we were all together on the boat. You, Al, Celia, all of us, and we were going to scatter their ashes in the bay, but they were there. Pete and Al were knocking back scotch after scotch, my mother was mixing martinis, screaming at me to stop eating her olives. Everyone was laughing and having a good time, but Barbara kept lecturing us to "be quiet, this is a solemn occasion." My father said "They're my ashes, Barbie, I'll laugh about it if I want. Go ahead, Phillie, toss 'em!" And all I wanted to do was get off that boat, just get away from all the laughter and the pain.

**GRACE.** I have those dreams. I think everybody does. That's what hurts the most: they're not here when you wake up, ya know?

**PHILIP.** Yeah, I do. (*Barbara enters and quietly watches them.*)

**GRACE.** Your mother was my closest friend. When we first moved out here, I didn't know you don't set up your chairs in front of your house and talk to the neighbors like we did in Ozone Park. But your mom, she didn't ignore me like everyone else. She just sat down and talked to me, invited me over for coffee, and we were friends from then on. Was it coffee? Or was it martinis? She liked her martinis. She was from Queens, too, and she hated it out here. (*Veronica appears. Philip speaks along with her.*)

**VERONICA.** Our names are right for this neighborhood, Grace, but everything else about us is wrong.

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