

"THE STORY OF THIS FATHER": FULL-LENGTH PLAY

SYNOPSIS

Peter Pilar is the patriarch of the Pilar Family. He is a pragmatic businessman. He lived through the Philippines' major political upheavals, from the declaration of Martial Law to the current Duterte administration, by way of his compliance to the ruling authority and political nonpartisanship.

For years, he has attempted to instill these values that helped him survive to his family, but his philosophy of political nonpartisanship seems to have reached only his eldest son, Fidel.

He struggles to keep the family together through a very volatile and divisive political climate, hoping that their doesn't crumble due to the pressure created by differing political ideals

Will his philosophy of pliant political pragmatism triumph as it did before, during Martial Law, or will lines be drawn among family?

CHARACTERS

NARRATOR	30-40 years old.
PETER "PETE" PILAR	53 years old. Businessman.
MERCEDES "MERCY" PILAR	52 years old. Mother of FIDEL and BEN.
FIDEL PILAR	30 years old. Sustainability Expert.
BENIGNO "BEN" PILAR	27 years old. Digital Communications Expert.
PEARL RIVERA	28 years old. Agricultural Lawyer.
EMERALD "EMY" RIVERA	56 years old. Mother of PEARL.
RUBY RIVERA	22 Years old. Sister of PEARL.

SETTING

The action takes place in PETE PILAR's house and in various places in Manila of today.

ACT 1

Scene 1

SETTING:

At the PILAR FAMILY home.

AT RISE:

A soft drum beat is heard.

PETE and MERCY are at the dining table. PETE is reading a newspaper. His wife, MERCY, is setting the table.

She goes around the table arranging plates and the glassware. When she is done, she sits across PETE, at the opposite end of a rectangular table.

PETE looks at his watch impatiently. NARRATOR walks on stage.

The music of SONG 1. THE STORY OF THIS FATHER begins to play. PETE and MERCY freeze.

SONG 1. THE STORY OF THIS FATHER

NARRATOR

(NARRATOR starts singing to the music.)

THE STORY OF THIS FATHER BEGINS LIKE ANY OTHER

ON A TABLE WITH A PAPER, WHILE THE MOTHER SETS THE SUPPER.

THEY'RE WAITING FOR THEIR CHILDREN TO ARRIVE; THEY'RE DELAYED

AND THE MOTHER AND THE FATHER ARE BOTH WONDERING WHY

THEY'RE LATE

MERCY

(MERCY stands from her seat and sings.)

WE BEGAN TO ARGUE 'BOUT THE DAYS OF MARTIAL LAW

WHEN THE FILIPINO PEOPLE HAD TO LIVE WITH FEAR AND AWE.

WE AGREED TO DISAGREE ON THE MERITS OF A FIGHT;

OF THE EDSA REVOLUTION THAT'S SUPPOSED TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT.

PETE

(PETE stands from his seat and sings.)

THERE'S NO DIFFERENCE, IT'S THE SAME; POLITICS IS JUST A GAME.

AND THE GAME IS OFTEN WON BY A LEADER WHO'S INSANE.

IF YOU WANT TO STAY ALIVE, YOU HAVE TO STAY OUT OF THE WAY.

YOU CAN BELIEVE ALL THAT YOU WANT, JUST BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU
SAY.

*MERCY and PETE sit down. PETE resumes
reading the paper and looks at his watch
impatiently.*

NARRATOR

THE STORY OF THIS FATHER BEGINS LIKE ANY OTHER

ON A TABLE WITH A PAPER, WHILE THE MOTHER SETS THE SUPPER.

THEY'RE WAITING FOR THEIR CHILDREN TO ARRIVE; THEY'RE DELAYED

AND THE MOTHER AND THE FATHER ARE BOTH WONDERING WHY

THEY'RE LATE

*At the end of the song, the narrator exits the stage
to the left.*

PETE

(moderately annoyed; with genuine curiosity)

MERCY, where are the boys? They said they'd be here at seven. Did they text that they'd be late?

MERCY

You know how it is these days, PETE. The traffic is horrible at all hours. Also, there's a protest rally in Luneta about the Marcos burial.

PETE

MERCY, I'm rarely late, and I live in Manila too. I don't think it has anything to do with traffic. I think it's a discipline thing. You know if they grew up during our time, they'd be far more conscious of time.

MERCY

(with a hint of irony)

Of course! Because, back then, losing track of time and violating a curfew could get you shot.

PETE

Every administration has its faults, MERCY. They're all the same to me.

MERCY

You know that's not true, PETE. Some are worse than others.

PETE puts down the newspaper he was reading.

PETE

(exasperated)

And the worse they are, the more we have to be careful. But these boys, my goodness!

MERCY

The boys are fine, PETE.

PETE

(with genuine frustration)

They both talk too much! They spend all day posting Internet drivel. Are you sure they have jobs?

MERCY

(laughs)

PETE, I think their jobs involve posting Internet drivel. Besides, we all need a little social awareness.

PETE

Yes, it's good to be socially aware; to know what's going on! They can be aware all they want! I just wish they'd keep their opinions to themselves.

MERCY

I don't know, PETE. I think I'd rather have kids who participate in the political discourse.

PETE

(with bitter cynicism)

MERCY, we had plenty of friends who participated in political discourse. Most of them are dead. Some died in the mountains, some of them died in prison, some disappeared, and some ended their own lives, unable to live with the traumas they've gone through. There's your political discourse.

MERCY

They were part of the revolution, PETE. We were all part of it. We are free today because some people had the courage to take on a dictator.

PETE gets up from his chair as the music of SONG

2. WHERE'S YOUR REVOLUTION NOW?

begins to play.

SONG 2. WHERE'S YOUR REVOLUTION NOW?

PETE

No, MERCY. We are free, more importantly, we're alive, because we didn't play politics with powerful people. What did the revolution do anyway?

(PETE starts singing to the music.)

WHAT HAS CHANGED IN THE LAST 30 YEARS?

ARE WE SOMEHOW FREE OF EVERYTHING WE FEARED?

IS THERE NO CORRUPTION OR COERCION NOW?

ARE WE ANY BETTER NOW? WAS IT WORTH IT SOMEHOW?

IT'S ALL THE SAME! WE'RE STILL RULED BY THE SAME FAMILY NAMES.

IT'S JUST A GAME! THAT ENDS WITH A NEW OPPRESSOR PROCLAIMED.

JUST ANOTHER LIAR WITH A DIFFERENT VOW, WHERE'S YOUR

REVOLUTION NOW?

IT'S JUST ANOTHER SACRED COW. WHERE'S YOUR REVOLUTION NOW?

HAS OUR SENSE OF NATION BEEN FORTIFIED?

WAS JUSTICE EVEN SERVED TO THOSE WHO FOUGHT AND DIED?

ARE WE RULED BY SAINTS AND HEROES WHO NEVER LIE?

WAS THE REVOLUTION WORTH EVEN A SINGLE LIFE?

*FIDEL enters the stage. He's confused that his
father is singing about a revolution. FIDEL watches
PETE, amused.*

IT'S ALL THE SAME! WE'RE STILL RULED BY THE SAME FAMILY NAMES.

IT'S JUST A GAME! THAT ENDS WITH A NEW OPPRESSOR PROCLAIMED.

THERE'S STILL A WAR IN MINDANAO, BUT WHERE'S YOUR REVOLUTION
NOW?

IT'S JUST ANOTHER BROKEN VOW. WHERE'S YOUR REVOLUTION NOW?

FIDEL

(laughs)

What revolution, dad?

PETE

(sighs)

Ask your mom. She's the one who brought it up.

Scene 2

*PETE and FIDEL walk to the dining area. FIDEL walks toward his mother and kisses MERCY on the cheek. He sits down next to her. Pete starts to read the newspaper. The mother and the son chat inaudibly. The music of **SONG 3. FIDEL** begins to play. PETE, FIDEL, AND MERCY freeze. NARRATOR enters the stage from the left.*

SONG 3. FIDEL

NARRATOR

FIDEL WALKS IN ON TALK OF REVOLUTION

HE'S THE SCIENTIFIC TYPE; HE BELIEVES IN EVOLUTION.

NEGOTIATION. THAT'S WHAT HE DOES. IT'S HIS PROFESSION

HE HELPS A BUNCH OF PEOPLE FIND CLIMATE CHANGE SOLUTIONS

FIDEL gets up from his seat and starts singing.

FIDEL

WHAT'S BEST FOR THE COUNTRY, WHAT'S BEST FOR THE NATION
IS TO WORK TO CONVINCING ALL THE CORPORATIONS
TO IMPROVE WORKING CONDITIONS AND REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS
THE REAL PROBLEM HERE IS THE PROBLEM OF POLLUTION
THE TEMPERATURE'S RISING, THERE'S GLOBAL WARMING
WE SHOULD TALK TO CONGRESS AND ISSUE A WARNING
THE WORLD IS ENDING. IT NEEDS DEFENDING.
WE GOTTA WORK TOGETHER 'CAUSE DISASTER'S IMPENDING.

FIDEL sits down and freezes.

NARRATOR

FIDEL WALKS IN ON TALK OF REVOLUTION
HE'S THE SCIENTIFIC TYPE; HE BELIEVES IN EVOLUTION.

HE KISSES HIS MOM. HE SITS ON A CHAIR.

HIS MOTHER'S LOOKING WORRIED AS SHE FIXES HIS HAIR.

At the end of the song, the narrator exits the stage.

MERCY tries to fix FIDEL'S hair, while PETE resumes reading the newspaper.

MERCY

FIDEL, you're looking a little under the weather. Are you eating well? Is work stressing you out?

FIDEL

Everything's fine, Ma. Don't worry about me. I've just been working on a project for a new client.

(to both MERCY and PETE)

Oh! By the way, I asked PEARL to come over. I hope that's okay.

PETE

Of course, son. You don't even have to ask. PEARL is always welcome.

MERCY

(with genuine concern)

You guys should have gone together, Son. You know it's dangerous in these parts. If you've been following the news, you'd know that just last night, seven people were killed around Manila!

FIDEL

There are bigger problems in the world, Ma. I was at a meeting with a client the other day. They wanted to hire us to help rally corporations into transitioning towards more sustainable business practices. Apparently, scientists have already declared that we're in the midst of irreversible climate change, and if our current level of consumption and waste continues, we're all going die.

MERCY

FIDEL, you haven't been here five minutes and you're already talking about rallying corporations to stop the end of the world.

(PETE shakes his head.)

PETE

(confused and irritated)

Rally, rally. I don't understand. Your job is to rally for the environment? Why? Will rallying on the streets make the world any colder?

FIDEL

(FIDEL laughs)

No, Dad! It's part of my job. An environmental organization wants to hire me to develop communication strategies that could encourage corporations to comply with global sustainability standards.

PETE

Son, I'm a common businessman. I don't understand all that mumbo-jumbo. I'm just glad you're not wasting your time rallying on the streets.

FIDEL

There's more than one way to participate in political struggle, Dad. My activism is simply integrated into my lifestyle. As an animal rights activist, I don't eat meat, I share information online about the ability how animals experience pain. As an environmentalist, I choose to work with people who have similar values.

PETE

Where I grew up, that's just called living a normal life and minding your own business.

(to Mercy)

See, MERCY? That's the kind of activism I like.

MERCY

So, you don't believe in protest rallies?

FIDEL

I read somewhere that protest rallies are meant to obstruct traffic, so people who are stuck in it feel the paralysis and helplessness experienced by the oppressed. To me, the method just seems outdated, and quite silly.

MERCY

(hurt)

You make it sound like the point of attending a protest rally is solely to create an inconvenience.

PETE

That's exactly what a rally is! It's just a bunch of jobless bums blocking the roads and bothering people with real jobs.

MERCY

(with a raised voice)

There are many reasons why rally protests continue to happen. When there's a rally, people ask why. It gets people to ask why these people are on the streets to begin with. It can educate, draw attention to an issue, and, at the very least, get people talking.

(defeated; embarrassed)

But what do I know? The last time I was out on the streets was thirty years ago.

FIDEL

Ma, it just seems to me that protests are fueled by some form of righteous moral outrage. I think the premise is faulty. Protesters assume that people in power are going to be pressured into doing what is right if they screamed loud enough. But these people in power, they already know the difference between right and wrong. They choose to do wrong because it gets them ahead, not because they don't know that it's wrong. My job is to do the research and convince these people that doing the right thing would benefit them more.

MERCY

That's why we're living in dangerous times, FIDEL. We've created a world where we have to essentially bribe people to do the right thing.

FIDEL

I'm not an idealist. It doesn't matter to me why they make the decisions that they do.

When I tell a business owner to improve employee working conditions, I don't know if he's going to do it out of some ethical obligation or simply because of an economic benefit. As long as he listens and makes positive changes, I've done my job.

MERCY

So, you trick selfish, immoral people to do the right thing by telling them doing the right thing will make them more money?

PETE

That's how it's always been! The only reason things happen in history is because someone, somewhere, is earning money from it. It's all business! Those environmentalists? They cry global warming, so they can sell you "organic" food, and "organic" clothes. FIDEL here basically tells people that they have to pay him to prevent a global disaster! All these advocacies are nothing more than clever marketing strategies.

FIDEL

(laughs)

Sounds about right. But self-interest doesn't have to be malicious, Dad. It's not a zero-sum game. The point of every negotiation is to find a middle-ground, where both parties gain an advantage from a transaction.

MERCY

(distraught)

I refuse to believe that this is what we've been reduced to! What about kindness? What about empathy? This is not the country the comrades envisioned when they chose to risk their lives and take on a tyrant!

PETE

Mercy, you're talking like a communist. Keep it down!

MERCY stands from her seat and walks away from the dining table, toward the living room, around center stage. She sits on the sofa. PETE and FIDEL follow her. The music of SONG 4. I DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE begins to play.

SONG 4. I DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE

MERCY

(shouts)

Comrade is not a dirty word, PETE! Comrade! Comrade! Comrade!

(starts to sing)

I DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE THAT EVIL TRIUMPHS OVER GOOD

I DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE THAT NO ONE EVER WANTS TO HELP THE
POOR

I DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE THAT THIS IS ALL THE REVOLUTION
BROUGHT

I BELIEVE, I BELIEVE, I BELIEVE THAT OUR NATION COULD BE SO MUCH
MORE

(MERCY starts rapping)

IF WE TRY I KNOW WE'LL FIND A GOOD EXCUSE TO BE THE KIND
OF PEOPLE THAT CAN PRESS REWIND AND GO BACK TO A PREVIOUS
TIME.

WHEN WE ALL HAD PEACE OF MIND, LOVED WITH LITTLE TO NO PRIDE
AND CARED FOR EVERY HUMAN LIFE, AND LEFT NO CITIZEN BEHIND

(MERCY still rapping)

I THINK WE'RE CAPABLE OF THIS. THERE'S JUST SO MUCH WE HAVEN'T
FIXED.

I HAVE ONE DREAM, I HAVE ONE WISH: THAT WE ALL CO-EXIST
WE DON'T HAVE TO RAISE OUR FIST; OR WRITE A MORBID MURDER LIST
IF HUMAN LOVE WE DON'T RESIST, I KNOW THAT EVIL WON'T PERSIST

PETE

(PETE sings along)

DEAR, IT'S ALWAYS BEEN THIS WAY

EVERY HOUR; EVERY DAY.

WHEN THEY'RE PLAYING GOD, WE SHOULD JUST PRAY.

N O ONE KNOWS WHEN THINGS WILL CHANGE.

MERCY

I DON'T KNOW WHEN, BUT OUR TIME WILL COME.

PETE

TELL ME HOW, OH HOW, OH...

MERCY

I DON'T KNOW HOW, BUT WE'LL HAVE TO TRY.

PETE

TELL ME WHY, OH WHY, OH...

MERCY

I DON'T KNOW WHY; I CAN'T CLARIFY.

PETE

THERE'S NO REASON TO TRY.

MERCY

WE ALL JUST NEED, ANOTHER REASON TO SMILE.

At the end of the song, the doorbell rings.

FIDEL

I'll get it. That's probably PEARL.

*FIDEL exits the stage to the left. PETE escorts
MERCY to the right side of the stage, at her place at
the dining table. PETE sits next to her. PETE and
MERCY freeze.*

Scene 3

The music of SONG 5. PEARL begins to play.

NARRATOR enters the stage

SONG 5. PEARL

NARRATOR

FIDEL RUSHES TO THE GATE; IT'S CLEAR HE COULDN'T WAIT

HE'S HAPPY TO SEE PEARL, HIS BEAUTIFUL DATE

*FIDEL and PEARL enter stage from left. FIDEL is
holding PEARL's hand. PEARL looks really
nervous.*

THEY LOOK A LITTLE ANXIOUS. I'M SURE YOU CAN TELL.

DO THEY HAVE A LITTLE SECRET THAT THEY'RE DYING TO TELL?

PEARL

(Sings to FIDEL)

HAVE YOU ALREADY TOLD YOUR PARENTS WHAT YOU ASKED ME TO
DO?

PLEASE TELL ME THAT YOU DID. I'M REALLY NERVOUS; IT'S TRUE.

I'M FALLING APART FROM MY HEAD TO MY SHOE.

JUST PUT ME BACK TOGETHER WITH SOME ELMER'S GLUE.

FIDEL

BABY, DON'T BE NERVOUS. BABY, WE'LL BE FINE.

WE'RE JUST GONNA GET SOME DINNER AND A LITTLE WINE.

WE CAN TELL THEM OF THE WEDDING WHEN WE FIND A GOOD TIME.

PEARL

MAYBE WE CAN TEXT THEM OR JUST TELL THEM ONLINE?

FIDEL and PEARL freeze.

NARRATOR

FIDEL RUSHES TO THE GATE; IT'S CLEAR HE COULDN'T WAIT

HE'S HAPPY TO SEE PEARL, HIS BEAUTIFUL DATE

THEY HAVE BIG NEWS TO SHARE. I'M SURE YOU KNOW BY NOW.

FIDEL PROPOSED TO PEARL AND THEY'RE ABOUT TO TAKE THEIR
VOWS.

*At the end of the song, the narrator exits the stage
to the left. PEARL and FIDEL resume walking.
PEARL suddenly stops and laughs.*

PEARL

FIDEL, wait! Oh my God, I'm so nervous. You should have told them before I got here!

That's why I asked you to go ahead!

FIDEL

Yeah. I was going to tell them, but they were talking about revolution... One thing led to another and... Well, here we are.

PEARL

(amused but concerned)

FIDEL, you promised to tell them tonight. I can't stay long. I'm meeting a client in a few hours.

FIDEL

I know, I know. We'll tell them together!

(FIDEL resumes walking to the dining area.)

PEARL

(anxious)

FIDEL! Wait! How are you going to tell them?

The music of SONG 6. MOTHER, CAN I

MARRY THIS GIRL? begins to play.

FIDEL

(playful)

I'll just walk in there and tell them!

SONG 6. MOTHER, CAN I MARRY THIS GIRL?

FIDEL

I'LL SAY, "MOTHER, CAN I MARRY THIS GIRL? HER NAME IS PEARL.

I ASKED IF I COULD BE WITH HER, I WANTED TO GROW OLD WITH HER

PEARL

BUT PEARL'S ALWAYS IN TROUBLE, SHE WEARS RED AND WORKS
FOREVER,

HELPS THE FARMERS GET TOGETHER, ORGANIZE, AND FIGHT THE
POWER.

FIDEL

SHE PLAYS A DANGEROUS GAME. I LOVE HER JUST THE SAME.

PEARL

WHAT DO WE DO? HOW DO WE TELL YOUR MOM?

WHAT IF SHE ASKS ME WHY I DESERVE TO MARRY HER SON?

FIDEL

I'LL SAY, "MOTHER, CAN I MARRY THIS GIRL? HER NAME IS PEARL.

PEARL

SHE WILL PROBABLY ASK WHAT MY RELIGION IS, OR IF I'M A
COMMUNIST.

FIDEL

I'LL SAY, "PEARL'S THE TYPE TO RALLY AGAINST DEATH."

I'LL SAY, "SHE'S AGAINST THE WAR ON CRYSTAL METH."

I'LL SAY, "SHE'S THE TYPE TO FIGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS."

PEARL

SHE PLAYS A DANGEROUS GAME.

PEARL

WHAT DO WE DO? HOW DE WE TELL YOUR MOM?

WHAT IF SHE ASKS ME WHY I DESERVE TO MARRY HER SON?

FIDEL

DON'T BE NERVOUS, WE'LL BE FINE

WE'LL JUST HAVE DINNER AND SOME WINE

LET'S JUST SAY THE STARS ALIGNED,

IT WAS PART OF A GRAND DESIGN.

DON'T BE NERVOUS, WE'LL BE FINE

THIS IS SOMETHING THEY'LL GET BEHIND

I HAVE A WEDDING ON MY MIND.

TONIGHT THEY'LL MEET MY FUTURE BRIDE.

*At the end of the song, PEARL and FIDEL enter
the dining area. MERCY stands up to greet her.*

MERCY

Hello, PEARL! How are you? You look amazing!

PEARL greets PETE and MERCY with a kiss.

PEARL

Thank you, *Tita*. I've been okay. FIDEL's been spoiling me. I've actually gained a lot of weight.

PEARL looks around.

PEARL

(to PETE)

Tito, where's BEN? Isn't he joining us?

PETE

He's at some rally, that fool!

PEARL

(embarrassed)

Oh! I saw it on the way here. People are protesting the sneaky Marcos' burial. I was asking PETE to go, but he's not really the rallying type.

(FIDEL laughs.)

FIDEL

(amused)

Baby, BEN's not there to protest the burial. He's there to protest the protest!

PEARL

(confused)

I don't understand. What do you mean, "protest the protest?"

FIDEL

(in a mocking tone)

Yeah. He's part of this organization called The Nation's Defenders. A handful of them went there to remind protesters that the President made a promise to allow a hero's burial for Marcos, and he's just keeping his word because...

(chuckles)

...he's a man of his word.

PEARL

(surprised)

He's part of that?

FIDEL

Yes.

(whispers audibly)

He's a fascist.

MERCY

FIDEL, I wish you'd stop making fun of your brother. You keep making fun of everything. These are dangerous times, you know?

PEARL

But, *Tita*... Aren't you..?

(PETE interrupts)

PETE

Yellow?

(PETE chuckles)

MERCY

Being against the burial doesn't automatically make people "yellow." Everyone should be against this burial! Most of all, you, PETE. You know what they did to our friends. You were there!

PETE

We were kids, MERCY. We didn't know what was at stake. It was all fun and games until our friends started disappearing one by one.

(PETE shakes his head. He starts talking to PEARL.)

You want to know how we survived? We survived by being smart.

(PETE taps a finger on his temple.)

When your friends are killed, one by one, the last thing a smart person would do is to do what got his friends killed. Now, our idiot son is at a rally to defend his supreme leader's decision to bury a murderer as a hero! I do not understand! His name is BENIGNO, for crying out loud!

PEARL

FIDEL, you should tell your brother to be careful. It's a pretty big crowd. People might not like him being there. They might hurt him.

FIDEL

(laughs with derision)

Don't worry. He's protesting against *yellow*s! They're a pretty mellow crowd, a bunch of bleeding-heart idealists who don't believe in violence. He'll be fine. He's probably one of the more dangerous people there.

MERCY

You can say what you want about the Liberal Party, FIDEL. But, honestly, as bad as you think they are, they're the last defenders of democracy in this country, right

PEARL?

(PEARL looks at FIDEL)

FIDEL

(amused)

Go ahead, PEARL. Tell her.

PEARL

(glares at FIDEL)

I would, honestly, rather not.

(PEARL laughs awkwardly.)

FIDEL

Ma, PEARL's an agricultural law attorney. She works with farmers, particularly those who were harmed during the Kidapawan massacre. She hates the Liberal Party!

(FIDEL laughs.)

MERCY

I have no idea why you find this situation humorous, FIDEL. How can you laugh while talking about people who got hurt?

(FIDEL shrugs.)

PEARL

(tries to win PEARL's favor)

In my defense, *Tita*, I grew up in Davao. I think I'm the only one in my entire family who didn't vote for the former Mayor.

MERCY

Oh! You're from Davao? I didn't know that!

PEARL

Yes, *Tita*. And I understand why the South hates the LP, being from Davao myself. Throughout the last administration, it felt, to us, like Manila was the center of the universe. I mean, similar killings have been happening in the south and other regions, but it only made the news now because, this time, it's people from Manila who are dying. It's a little unfair. People from Manila are treated like they are *more* Filipino than the rest of the country.

MERCY

There's some truth to that. I agree. Which party do you support though?

PEARL

I don't support any party, *Tita*. I believe the real struggle isn't fought along red or yellow lines. To me, it was never Marcos versus Aquino. To me, the war has always been between those who held power and those who didn't. And, I've chosen to fight alongside the oppressed.

PETE

PEARL, you know, I admire your courage, standing up to landowners and all, but these are very powerful people. When giants fight, the best thing one can do is stay out of their way.

MERCY

(shakes her head)

PETE, how do you stay out of the way of a war waged in your own backyard? Have you not seen the news? Just last night seven people were shot in these parts! Seven! Doesn't that remind you of Martial Law?

PETE

That's even more reason to stay quiet!

The table falls quiet. The topic has left both parents in a sour mood.

FIDEL

Anyway, Ma, Dad, PEARL and I are getting married!

PETE

(shocked)

What?

*PEARL, too, is shocked by FIDEL's sudden
confession and covers her face with her hands.*

MERCY

Oh my God! Congratulations!

(MERCY jolts from her chair and gives PEARL a hug.)

Come here dear. Give me a hug!

FIDEL

(playfully)

Mother, can I marry this girl? Her name is PEARL.

MERCY

Of course, dear! Of course!

FIDEL

(to PETE)

Dad?

PETE

Of course, FIDEL! Besides, it's about time I became a grandfather! Come here, PEARL.

(PETE stands and hugs PEARL.)

Welcome to the family!

FIDEL

Actually, that's the only reason we dropped by. She has another meeting in...

(FIDEL looks at his watch.)

...around an hour, and we have to leave soon.

PEARL

No, you should stay, love. Spend time with your family. I can go by myself.

FIDEL

Are you sure?

PEARL

Of course!

(playfully)

I'm an independent woman!

(smiles and winks at FIDEL)

MERCY

Oh! And she's a feminist too!

PETE

Ah, MERCY! I'm really glad I sent the boys to La Salle instead. I don't want them learning to many of those "isms!"

FIDEL

They teach all the "isms" in La Salle too, dad. Mostly, capitalism.

(laughs)

Anyway, I'll just drop off PEARL at the station. It's much easier to grab a ride from there.

MERCY

PEARL, you have to visit soon. You have to tell me how this clumsy boy managed to deliver a proposal!

PEARL

Of course, *Tita*. I promise to visit soon.

FIDEL

I'll be back soon, Ma! I'll see you both in a bit.

PEARL and FIDEL exit the stage to the left. PETE sits next to MERCY and smiles at her.

PETE

Our son is getting married. Soon we'll be grandparents!

MERCY

(sentimental)

I know, dear. They grow up so fast, don't they? Soon they'll both move out, and we'll be alone.

PETE

FIDEL's going to be fine. He's a smart boy, that FIDEL.

MERCY

BEN's smart too. We're not supposed to have a favorite.

PETE

Don't be ridiculous, MERCY. I know we both like FIDEL more.

MERCY

Oh, stop it!

MERCY playfully hits PETE's arm and laughs.

The lights dim.

Scene 4

*The music of **SONG 7. BEN** begins to play.*

NARRATOR enters the stage from the left, with

BEN. A spotlight shines on them. BEN is wearing

military fatigues and has a red armband.

SONG 7. BEN

NARRATOR

SPEAK OF THE DEVIL! HERE'S THE SECOND SON.

HE WAS NAMED AFTER A HERO WHO WAS KILLED WITH A GUN.

HE'S ENVIOUS OF HIS BROTHER, 'CAUSE HE'S ALWAYS OUTDONE.

SO MANY ISSUES HERE, WE'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN.

BEN

I'M AN ONLINE TACTICIAN. I'M PART OF A MISSION.

WE'RE SERVING THE NATION BY DESTROYING ADDICTION.

WE'RE THE NATION'S DEFENDERS; IT'S AN ORGANIZATION.

MY PARENTS DON'T APPROVE, BUT I DON'T NEED THEIR PERMISSION.

I WORK ONLINE, I'M A SOCIAL MEDIA GENIUS.

WATCH OUT, RAPPLER! I'M THE PROPAGANDA JESUS!

CHANGE IS COMING! RIDE THE BUS, RIDE WITH US.

THERE IS NO IN BETWEEN, YOU'RE EITHER WITH US OR AGAINST US!

NARRATOR

SPEAK OF THE DEVIL! HERE'S THE SECOND SON.

HE WAS NAMED AFTER A HERO WHO WAS KILLED WITH A GUN.

HE WRITES ALTERNATIVE FACTS, LIKE HE'S GRINDING AN AXE.

HE CAN DESTROY YOUR REPUTATION AND COVER HIS TRACKS.

*At the end of the song, the narrator exits the stage
to the left and BEN approaches the dining area
where MERCY and PETE are.*

MERCY

(disappointed, but concerned)

Jesus, Ben! Where have you been? It's so late!

(MERCY looks at BEN's clothes.)

And what is this costume you're wearing?

BEN

Don't mind it, Ma. I'm sorry I'm late. I had a meeting with The National Defenders.

We're preparing to deflect another rally. But, you know, there's a lot of work needed for logistics. We're a little short of support right now, so we're prioritizing which rallies to target.

PETE

(disappointed, resentful)

Son, I don't know what you're doing with your life. Your brother is trying to single-handedly solve global warming, while he's planning a wedding, while making money. And, you, what are you doing? You're out there running around with Marcos apologists!

BEN

(to MERCY)

FIDEL's getting married?

(MERCY nods and smiles at BEN.)

BEN

That's great news. I'm happy for them.

MERCY

BEN, I know you mean well, but your father and I are worried about you.

PETE

(furious)

Worried? I'm more than worried! I'm angry. Look at what he's wearing, MERCY. Look at your son! He looks like a damn Nazi!

BEN

(neutral)

I don't expect you to understand, dad. You never fought for anything your entire life.

PETE

(furious)

Fool! I survived, while others died. I thrived in every single administration. You know why? Because I didn't walk around in a damn Nazi uniform. It doesn't matter who is president. You just have to learn to adapt. Pick a side when there's a clear winner. Not like this! Do you really think wearing that is going to expand your network? You think that's going to help you thrive? You're going to alienate people with that hideous outfit!

BEN

You'd understand if you were a patriot.

PETE

Patriot?

(laughs with derision)

MERCY, our son thinks this is what patriotism looks like.

MERCY

He means well, PETE. He just needs some guidance.

BEN

Dad, the survival you're so proud of was not a result of your character, but your privilege. You felt no need to fight during Martial Law, because you gained from it. Grandpa was practically a crony! You, the oligarchy, are part of the country's problems!

(PETE rises from his seat.)

PETE

The oligarchy paid for your education! The oligarchy is paying for the house that you live in!

(to MERCY)

MERCY, I don't understand this boy! Do you hear what he's saying?

MERCY

He doesn't mean it, PETE.

PETE

(to BEN; furious)

You resent your privilege? Do you want to be poor? Feel free to be poor, BEN! You're better off poor! You'll finally have an excuse for being so useless!

BEN

(angry)

I'm only useless to you, Dad. I've met representatives of the President and they have thanked me for my service to the nation.

PETE

And how do you serve the nation, BEN?

BEN

I tell people the truth. We all know that the yellow army owns the media. So, I distribute unbiased news; facts sourced from reliable alternative sources.

PETE

Let's not play silly word games here, BEN. You write and spread lies.

BEN

We're in the midst of an information war, and I work for the government. I defend the integrity of the office of the President.

PETE

No, BEN. You write black propaganda against critics of the government.

BEN

(stammering)

I'm... I'm also a security consultant. I advice government authorities on suspicious online activity.

PETE

No, BEN. You're a snitch! You give out the contact information of the president's critics to make it easier for your troll army to threaten and intimidate them!

The music of SONG 8. THE WAR ON CRIME begins to play. BEN walks away from the dining area, toward the living room, around the center of

*the stage. PETE follows him. MERCY tries to hold
back PETE.*

SONG 8. THE WAR ON CRIME

PETE

YOU'RE A FANATIC!

BEN

I'M NOT. I'M JUST ANOTHER PATRIOT.

I'M A SOLDIER OF CHANGE, LIVING IN A NATION IN PAIN.

PETE

YOU'RE BARBARIC!

BEN

I'M PRAGMATIC! THERE'S A CRISIS AT HAND.

PETE

IT'S A LIE!

BEN

IT'S NARCO-POLITICS! THE DEALERS MUST DIE.

PETE

IT'S BRUTALITY!

BEN

IT'S JUSTICE! THEY'VE ALL COMMITTED CRIME.

PETE

KILLED LIKE ANIMALS?

BEN

DESERVED FOR ALL THE DAMAGE THEY HAVE DONE!

MERCY

WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN AND THE INNOCENTS WHO DIE; THE
MOURNING MOTHERS WHO ARE HELPLESS; CAN'T DO ANYTHING BUT
CRY?

BEN

IF WE END THE WAR ON CRIME, EVEN MORE OF THEM WOULD DIE

THERE'S A WAR WE HAVE TO FIGHT, TO MAKE OUR NATION DO WHAT'S
RIGHT.

DON'T LET THE VILLAINS GET AWAY! WITH THEIR LIVES THEY ALL
MUST PAY.

IF YOU CAN FIND A BETTER WAY, GO RUN FOR PRESIDENT IN MAY.

PETE

YOU'RE A FASCIST!

BEN

I'M NOT! I'M JUST A CRUSHED IDEALIST.

I'VE SEEN TOO MANY PEOPLE DIE AND SUFFER FROM CRIME.

MERCY

WHAT YOU CONVENIENTLY FORGET IS THAT A MURDER IS A FELONY.

THIS CRUEL WAR ON POVERTY IS THE REAL ENEMY.

PETE

VIGILANTES ROAM AT NIGHT, SHOOTING PEOPLE, STARTING FIGHTS,

AND YOU THINK THAT WHAT THEY'RE DOING BRINGS US CLOSER TO
WHAT'S RIGHT?

THERE'S NO MAGIC TO A MURDER. WHERE'S THE LOGIC? IT'S JUST
TRAGIC!

WE GAIN NOTHING AS A NATION FROM THE MURDER OF AN ADDICT!

BEN

IF WE END THE WAR ON CRIME, EVEN MORE OF THEM WOULD DIE

THERE'S A WAR WE HAVE TO FIGHT, TO GET OUR NATION DO WHAT'S
RIGHT.

DON'T LET THE VILLAINS GET AWAY! WITH THEIR LIVES THEY ALL
MUST PAY.

IF YOU CAN FIND A BETTER WAY, GO RUN FOR PRESIDENT IN MAY.

*At the end of the song, the argument among the
characters are interrupted by the sound of a ringing
phone. BEN, MERCY, and PETE return to the
table to see whose phone it is.*

PETE

Is that yours, MERCY?

MERCY

No, I have my phone with me.

PETE

It must be FIDEL's then. He must have left his phone earlier.

*MERCY picks up the phone from the table, but
doesn't answer it yet.*

PETE

Are you going to answer it?

MERCY

I don't know. Should I?

PETE

Who is it?

(MERCY looks at the phone.)

MERCY

It says MRS. EMERALD RIVERA.

BEN

That's *Tita* EMY. PEARL's mom.

PETE

Well... Answer the phone MERCY, it might be important.

MERCY walks to the living room and answers the call away from the table. PETE and BEN sit quietly at the table without talking to each other.

MERCY

Hello? FIDEL isn't here right now. He left his phone. This is MERCY PILAR. I'm his mom.

(MERCY nods her head.)

MERCY

Oh yes, I've heard the news. Your daughter was here earlier! Lovely girl.

(MERCY sits up. She's agitated.)

What?

(MERCY shakes her head.)

No! No! It can't be her. She was just here a moment ago. My son took her to the station...

(MERCY cries.)

MERCY

Yes, yes. I'll tell him when he gets here.

(screams)

PETE! PETE!

PETE and BEN run to the living room, to MERCY.

PETE

(confused; in a panic)

What? What?

MERCY

(sobbing)

It's PEARL. She's been shot.

PETE is shocked. He sits next to MERCY and holds her.

PETE

(with regret)

No! It can't be. She was just here!

MERCY

(cries)

What do we do, PETE? They just got engaged. They were going to get married.

The music of SONG 9. MOTHER, CAN I

MARRY THIS GIRL? (PEARL'S REPRISE)

begins to play.

SONG 9. MOTHER, CAN I MARRY THIS GIRL? (PEARL'S REPRISE)

MERCY

HE SAID, "MOTHER, CAN I MARRY THIS GIRL? HER NAME IS PEARL.

I IMMEDIATELY ASKED IF SHE'S A COMMUNIST, A REBEL, OR A FEMINIST

PETE

I KNEW THAT GIRL WAS TROUBLE, SHE WORE RED AND WORKED
FOREVER

HELPED THE FARMERS GET TOGETHER, ORGANIZE AND FIGHT THE
POWER

SHE PLAYED A DANGEROUS GAME.

MERCY

HE LOVED HER JUST THE SAME.

WHAT DO I DO? HE SAID SHE WAS THE ONE.

HOW DO I TELL MY SON THE GIRL HE'LL MARRY IS GONE?

HE SAID, "MOTHER, CAN I MARRY THIS GIRL? HER NAME IS PEARL.

I IMMEDIATELY ABOUT HER POLITICS, WHAT KIND OF GIRL SHE IS.

PEARL'S THE TYPE TO RALLY AGAINST DEATH.

SHE'S AGAINST THE WAR ON CRYSTAL METH.

SHE'S THE TYPE TO FIGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.

PETE

SHE'S A DANGEROUS GIRL.

MERCY

WHAT DO I DO? HE SAID SHE WAS THE ONE.

HOW DO I TELL MY SON THE GIRL HE'LL MARRY IS GONE?

OH, WHAT CRUEL GOD DESIGNED

THE FATE THAT FELL ON THIS SON OF MINE.

THERE WAS NO WARNING AND NO SIGN.

SHE WAS FOUND NEAR EDSA SHRINE.

HE THINKS THAT EVERYTHING IS FINE.

WE JUST HAD DINNER AND SOME WINE.

HE HAD A WEDDING ON HIS MIND,

BUT HIS BRIDE WAS KILLED TONIGHT.

*As the song ends, FIDEL walks in. BEN, MERCY,
and PETE look at him.*

FIDEL

Oh! Why the long faces?

MERCY

It's PEARL.

The stage lights dim slowly to darkness.

-- END OF ACT 1 --

ACT 2

Scene 1

SETTING: *At the PILAR FAMILY home.*

AT RISE: *A soft drum beat is heard.*

PETE is sitting at the head of the table. Sitting on the opposite end are MERCY, EMY, and RUBY.

The women are looking through a dress catalog.

The music of SONG 10. THE GAME HAS CHANGED begins to play. PETE, MERCY, EMY, and RUBY freeze. NARRATOR enters stage from the left.

SONG 10. THE GAME HAS CHANGED

NARRATOR

THE DRAMA RESUMES. WE'RE AT THE MIDPOINT OF THE NARRATIVE

THE WOMEN ARE DECIDING ON A DRESS THAT IS DECORATIVE.

THE INVESTIGATION'S DONE. PEARL'S BODY'S RELEASED.

THEY'RE PREPARING FOR HER WAKE. SHE WILL BE MISSED.

FIDEL enters the stage from the right. He takes a quick glance at the women and nods. He walks past the dining table without speaking to anyone.

NARRATOR

FIDEL WALKS IN. HE'S MAD AND AGITATED.

PEARL JUST DIED, HIS ANGER IS INFLATED.

JUSTICE IS BELATED AND HE'S OBVIOUSLY FRUSTRATED.

HE'S OUT FOR BLOOD, "REVENGE" IS ACTIVATED

WHEN A MURDER OCCURS; IT'S A DIFFERENT CONVERSATION.

TALKS ABOUT THE COUNTRY AND THE NATION, IN SUSPENSION.

THE WOMEN ARE CONCERNED ABOUT FIDEL'S LOUD

INDIGNATION

EMY / RUBY

WE THINK HE'LL GET IN TROUBLE FOR YELLING CONDEMNATIONS.

BEN enters the stage from the right. He sees there are guests. He looks dejected. He contemplates talking to them and offering condolences.

NARRATOR

EVER SINCE THE MUDER, BEN'S CONSTANTLY REVILED.

EVERYONE HATES HIM. EVERYONE'S HOSTILE.

HE FIRED NO GUN, BUT HE'S BLAMED ALL THE TIME.

HIS POLITICAL BELIEFS ARE NOW CONSIDERED A CRIME.

When the song ends, NARRATOR exits stage left.

BEN exits stage right.

RUBY

(points at catalog)

I think *Ate* would have liked this one.

MERCY

Yes, it's lovely. PEARL would have definitely worn that one. Do you think we should get that for her wake?

RUBY

If it's alright with *Kuya* FIDEL, yes.

EMY

MERCY, where is FIDEL going? Shouldn't he have a say on what PEARL wears at the funeral too?

MERCY

(shakes her head)

I don't even know if he has slept since that night. He's been at it 24/7. "Campaigning for justice," he says. He's been going at the police station every day. He says he's following up on the investigation.

EMY

(smiles; tactless and offhand)

We deal with grief in different ways. He runs around causing trouble, Ruby and I, we look at pretty clothes she could wear at her funeral.

MERCY

(irritated)

Wait, what do you mean he's causing trouble?

EMY and RUBY look at each other

EMY

(apologetic)

Oh, MERCY. All I meant was...

MERCY

(irritated)

What? What's wrong with what he's doing?

EMY and RUBY look at each other again.

PETE puts down the paper he was reading. He calmly explains the concerns of RUBY and EMY.

PETE

MERCY, you know what they mean. FIDEL's suing the entire PNP! He's been doing interviews too, and in all of them, he's been making controversial comments about the current administration.

MERCY

(raises her voice)

They should be sued, PETE! They *are* responsible! This culture of impunity is perpetuated by their complicity and incompetence! Either way, they are responsible!

PETE

(sincere)

We don't know that, MERCY. There are no suspects. It could have been anyone! It could have been the landowners of Kidapawan that her farmers were feuding with. It could have been leaders of the previous administration. Many of them still have political ambitions and they want the whole issue to die down. It could have been anyone!

MERCY

(angry)

And it could have been the police! You know as well as I do that the rise in vigilante killings has risen since the beginning of this administration! It's this drug war!

PETE

In any case, we don't have any evidence. We have no witnesses! We don't know who's responsible.

MERCY

(in a proud tone)

PEARL would be proud of what he's doing.

EMY

PEARL would be worried too, MERCY. PEARL would be so worried of FIDEL right now.

MERCY

(stubborn)

Yes, but PEARL would be proud!

(to PETE; snide)

Tell me PETE, what would you have done if I had disappeared, like our friends did back then? What would you have done? Would you have done what our son is doing for PEARL? I am proud of that boy!

PETE

(apologetic)

I'm proud of him too, MERCY. All I'm saying is...

MERCY

(interrupts PETE)

You will say nothing about my son! He is a good man.

MERCY crosses her arms. The room falls silent.

RUBY

(to EMY)

Should we tell them, Mom?

(EMY shakes her head and holds RUBY's hand.)

MERCY

(impatient)

Tell us what?

RUBY

We've been receiving threats, *Tita*.

MERCY

Threats? Threats from who?

EMY

We don't know.

RUBY

We do know, Mom. We're receiving threats everywhere from people we don't know; supporters of the administration. I mean, we know their names. We've seen some of their faces, but these are people we've never met, and they're so angry at us.

EMY

They're accusing us of destabilizing the country. They keep insisting that we're being funded by the vice president. I've never even met the Vice President.

RUBY

They're everywhere. They're posting on all my social media accounts. They're saying they will find our house and rape us both. They're telling us not to worry about PEARL, because we'll be joining her soon.

MERCY

Why? Who are these people?

RUBY

It's like an Internet army. "They're just trolls," I told Mom, but then they posted our address online. Our gate has been vandalized. Someone spray-painted "*Dilawan*" on our gate.

MERCY

But why would they do that?

EMY

They're pressuring us to drop the lawsuit, MERCY.

MERCY

What lawsuit? Who are you suing?

EMY

(in a resigned tone)

No one, MERCY. We didn't press any charges. We didn't file any complaints.

RUBY

They're complaining about the one *Kuya* FIDEL filed. I'm sure he's being threatened too. Maybe he just... Maybe he hasn't seen the threats yet.

PETE

MERCY, we should talk to FIDEL. He's going to get all of us killed. What if those people come after us? What if they give out our address?

MERCY

(disappointed)

EMY, you can't just give up. They killed your daughter!

EMY

(in an outburst of anger)

I know what they did, MERCY! You don't have to remind me. The monsters killed my daughter and left a sign that accused her of being a drug pusher! My daughter was a lawyer who helped farmers. Now, everyone's going to remember her as just another pusher!

The music of SONG 11. AN ELEGY AND A LULLABYE begins to play. Both EMY and RUBY stand up, they head to the living room. PETE and MERCY follow.

SONG 11. AN ELEGY AND A LULLABYE

EMY

I know you think it's cowardly, MERCY. I know. If it were only me, I'd be fighting too. I'll die for her too! The easiest thing for a parent to do is to die for her child! But I'm still a mother. I still have another child to be responsible for. MERCY, the only thing worse than having one dead daughter is having two dead daughters!

EMY

(EMY starts singing)

PLEASE TELL YOUR SON TO STOP. HE'S RISKING ALL OUR LIVES.

THE ONLY PEOPLE HE IS HURTING ARE THOSE PEARL LEFT BEHIND.

YOU MAY THINK THAT I'M A COWARD. 'CAUSE I'M THE ONE WHO LOST
A CHILD.

I JUST LOST MY ELDEST DAUGHTER. I'LL KEEP THE LIVING ONE ALIVE.

ASHES TO ASHES, DUST TO DUST, SHH...

TELL HIM TO BE QUIET. MY DAUGHTER'S SLEEPING NOW.

RUBY

IT'S A NIGHTMARE FOR MY MOTHER TO SEE MY SISTER DIE.

BUT THERE ARE THREATS OF RAPE ONLINE; STRANGERS WISHING WE
WOULD DIE.

NONE OF THIS HATE IS JUSTIFIED! WE ARE VICTIMS OF A CRIME!

WHY ARE WE BEING TREATED LIKE WE'RE CREATURES MADE OF GRIME?

ASHES TO ASHES, DUST TO DUST, SHH...

TELL HIM TO BE QUIET. MY SISTER'S SLEEPING NOW.

RUBY/EMY

ASHES TO ASHES, DUST TO DUST, SHH...

TELL HIM TO BE QUIET. PEARL IS SLEEPING NOW.

*As the music fades, RUBY and EMY exit to the left
of the stage. MERCY and PETE return to the
dining table.*

MERCY

How could they do it, PETE? How could they give up like that?

PETE

EMY's a widow. She lost a husband years ago, and now, she's lost a daughter. To her, their safety as a family, and the welfare of her living daughter is more important to her than justice for the dead. It won't bring PEARL back.

*BEN enters the stage from the right and sits with
PETE and MERCY.*

BEN

Ma, I was thinking. Maybe I could go to the wake and tell them...

MERCY

(interrupts BEN)

No, BEN. It's better if you don't go.

BEN

But her family, they're supporters of the administration too. I'm not the only...

MERCY

(interrupts BEN; loses her temper; shouts)

I said, "No!" You are not welcome there!

FIDEL enters the stage from the left side. He walks past the living room and hovers near the dining area entrance. He overhears the conversation.

BEN

(defensive; agitated)

It's not my fault! I didn't shoot her! I was here with you guys when it all happened. Don't you think it's more likely that PEARL was assassinated by people hired by those involved with Kidapawan? We have no proof that the current administration that I support had anything to do with the crime!

PETE

(angry)

Punyeta, BEN! You *still* support the current administration? After all this?

(points at BEN)

There will be no more talk of that administration in this house!

BEN

(defensive)

It's those vigilantes! They're not part of the administration!

PETE

BEN, you don't get it! It's this culture of impunity that encourages this! 7,000 people have been murdered.

The music of SONG 12. WHEN THE BLIND

LEAD THE BLIND begins to play.

SONG 12. WHEN THE BLIND LEAD THE BLIND

PETE

How many people have gone to jail over these murders? It means that...

FIDEL speaks up from the entrance of the dining area and interrupts PETE.

FIDEL

It means that if you want justice, you have to find it yourself.

(FIDEL starts singing to BEN)

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE TO DIE BEFORE YOU OPEN YOUR EYES?

WE'RE ALL SWIMMING IN LIES; RULED BY MAGGOTS AND FLIES.

THEY'VE TAKEN LIVES, WITH THE MIND OF A HIVE.

THIS WAR ON VICE HAS MURDERED MY BRIDE!

WHEN THE BLIND LEAD THE BLIND, A NATION WILL DIVIDE

I'LL PICK THE OTHER SIDE, BECAUSE THEY MURDERED MY BRIDE.

I'LL SEEK TO FIND THE JUSTICE I'M DUE.

I'LL NEVER STOP UNTIL THEY MURDER ME TOO.

THEY SHOOT PEOPLE AT NIGHT, WITH OR WITHOUT A FIGHT

THEY IGNORE HUMAN RIGHTS. STILL YOU COVER YOUR EYES!

YOUR WAR HAS TAKEN ITS TOLL. ONE BY ONE PEOPLE FALL.

IS THIS THE PRICE WE PAY FOR LOOK ING AWAY?

WHEN THE BLIND LEAD THE BLIND, A NATION WILL DIVIDE

I'LL PICK THE OTHER SIDE, BECAUSE THEY MURDERED MY BRIDE.

I'LL SEEK TO FIND THE JUSTICE I'M DUE.

I'LL NEVER STOP UNTIL THEY MURDER ME TOO.

*As the music fades, FIDEL sits with the family. He
doesn't speak. MERCY reaches out and pats
FIDEL's hand.*

MERCY

FIDEL, EMY and RUBY were here earlier. They said they were receiving threats.

FIDEL

Oh. I thought it was just me.

PETE

(afraid)

They've threatened you too?

FIDEL

A couple hundred, yes.

FIDEL nonchalantly surveys the food available on the table. He takes a piece of bread.

MERCY

(frustrated; concerned)

Who are these people?

FIDEL

(chuckles)

Ask BEN, Ma.

(FIDEL takes a bite of the bread. He points at BEN.)

He would know. They're probably his troll friends. Isn't that right, BEN?

BEN

(defensive)

I had nothing to do with those threats!

MERCY

(impatient; frustrated)

Trolls! Trolls! What are these trolls that everyone's talking about?

FIDEL

(spiteful)

Trolls are scum who make money spreading lies, harassing people, and intimidating them, for political purposes. They're a bunch of high-tech thugs; a new breed of filth.

FIDEL throws a piece of half-eaten bread in the direction of BEN. BEN rises from his seat.

MERCY

(angry; shouts)

FIDEL, Stop it!

(glares at BEN; shouts)

Sit down, BEN!

FIDEL

(spiteful)

Ma, let's say there's a person out there who can find out, through your social media posts and other means, where you live, where you work, and who your relatives are. Then, let's say that this person starts sending you threatening messages constantly, giving you detailed accounts of where you've been. Imagine him telling you, "The next time you park at Trinoma, I will be there waiting to rape you."

MERCY

(outraged)

That's horrible!

FIDEL

(spiteful)

Ma, imagine there were hundreds of these people threatening you on a daily basis. It doesn't affect me, no. I don't care. But these tactics work on a lot of people, and this is what they're doing to control us.

MERCY

(concerned)

No wonder EMY and RUBY were so scared.

FIDEL

(to BEN)

That's your job, right, BEN? Tell me, BEN, what happens next? Are you going to "dox" me? Are you going to post my personal information on supporter forums, so thousands of fanatics can try to kill me? Are you going to give out our address?

BEN

(defensive)

That's an unfair oversimplification of the work I do for the country. We try to protect the government from potential threats. It's a common practice to monitor social media activity, to find terrorists before they attack. When we find a suspicious character who fits the psychometrics of a dissenter, we tag him as "a person of interest."

FIDEL

You find him and harass him.

BEN

(defensive)

No, it's so much more than that. We use psychometrics, we use...

FIDEL

(interrupts; shouts)

This!

(points at BEN)

You! People like you are the reason why chronic impunity persists in this god-forsaken country!

(FIDEL stands)

Do you actually believe that this war is meant to make the country better? These people you work for, they've done this before. They create chaos. They invent a war. Then, they declare that more powers are needed to deal with the war they invented. PEARL was right! There are no sides here. Red? Yellow? It's a mock battle! They are on the same side! It's those in power and us! We're just livestock to them. We're butchered like pigs, so they could have their pork!

PETE stands from his chair.

PETE

(raises his voice)

FIDEL, enough! What you're doing is dangerous. Getting yourself killed won't bring PEARL back. These are dangerous people! They will come after you too.

FIDEL

(playful)

I want them to come after me!

(laughs)

When they come, I'll be ready. I'll be waiting. They messed with the wrong person, Dad. They messed with the wrong person!

FIDEL collects himself and sits down. He's unusually calm.

FIDEL

(playful; smiles)

Besides, what's the point of having a hideous amount of money if you're not planning on doing anything hideous?

MERCY

(scared)

FIDEL, EMY and RUBY came here to tell us to convince you to stop. It's not just your life you're putting in danger.

FIDEL

(playful; smiles)

Don't worry, Ma. Those people... They're not the only ones with resources. They know where I live, sure. They know my name, okay.

(foreboding; brooding)

But I know their names too. I know where they live too. They messed with the wrong person, Ma.

PETE

(exasperated)

So? So what if you do? What are you going to do? What? You'll start killing? You're going to throw your life away too? FIDEL, you're angry at the world because you don't know who shot her! You don't know who's guilty! It won't change anything. You can run-amok all night, she'll still be dead tomorrow!

FIDEL

(smiles)

I don't know, Dad. Those people threatening to hurt me, they're definitely guilty, right BEN? They may not be the ones pulling the trigger, but they surely enable the people who do. I'm sure I'll get away with it too. I mean, 7,000 other shooters did.

FIDEL gets up to leave. He walks away from the dining area. PEARL chases after him. She grabs his arm. They end up in the living room. PETE follows behind.

PEARL

(angry)

Stop this nonsense, FIDEL! Let it go. PEARL's family is asking you to let it go.

*The music of **SONG 13. WAR ON CRIME***

*(**FIDEL'S REPRISE**) begins to play.*

SONG 13. WAR ON CRIME (FIDEL'S REPRISE)

FIDEL

No, Ma.

PETE

IT'S JUST PRIDE!

FIDEL

IT'S NOT! I'M A MAN WHO LOST A BRIDE.

INJUSTICE WAS COMMITTED. SHE WAS SHOT; THAT'S HOW SHE DIED.

PETE

YOU'LL GET KILLED!

FIDEL

MAYBE! IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE TO ME!

THEY KILLED THE GIRL I'M LIVING FOR AND TRIED TO HURT HER
FAMILY!

PETE

(To MERCY)

HE'S GONE MAD!

FIDEL

YES, I'M MAD! WHOEVER SHOT HER WILL BE DAMNED!

I'LL KILL HIM ONCE AND GO TO HELL, AND ONCE I'M THERE, KILL HIM
AGAIN!

PETE

YOU'RE TALKING "MURDER!"

FIDEL

DESERVED! FOR THE CRIME THAT WAS COMMITTED.

THEY DIDN'T HAVE TO DO THIS! I JUST WANTED TO GET MARRIED!

IF WE LET THEM GET AWAY, EVEN MORE OF THEM WILL SLAY!

THIS IS A WAR WE'RE ALL NOW PART, DON'T LET THE NATION FALL
APART.

DON'T LET THE VILLAINS GET AWAY! WITH THEIR LIVES THEY ALL
MUST PAY.

IF YOU KNOW A BETTER WAY, YOU CAN TELL ME ON MY GRAVE.

MERCY

WHAT IF YOU'RE MISTAKEN AND AN INOCENT HAS DIED?

YOU KNOW IT'S ALWAYS WRONG TO TAKE ANOTHER PERSON'S LIFE.

WHAT PEARL WOULD HAVE REALLY WANTED IS FOR YOU TO STAY
ALIVE.

DON'T END UP LIKE A KILLER; LIKE THE MAN WHO TOOK HER LIFE.

PETE

VIGILANTES ROAM AT NIGHT, SHOOTING PEOPLE STARTING FIGHTS!

IF YOU DO WHAT THEY ARE DOING YOU'LL BE FURTHER FROM WHAT'S
RIGHT.

THERE'S NO MAGIC TO A MURDER. WHERE'S THE LOGIC? IT'S JUST TRAGIC.

YOU'LL GAIN NOTHING AS A PERSON IF YOU KILL THEM, YOU FANATIC!

FIDEL

IF WE LET THEM GET AWAY, EVEN MORE OF THEM WILL SLAY!

THIS IS A WAR WE'RE ALL NOW PART, DON'T LET THE NATION FALL
APART.

DON'T LET THE VILLAINS GET AWAY! WITH THEIR LIVES THEY ALL
MUST PAY.

IF YOU KNOW A BETTER WAY, YOU CAN TELL ME ON MY GRAVE.

As the music fades, FIDEL exits the stage to the left, to indicate that he has left the house. The stage lights dim slowly to darkness.

Scene 2

*The music of **SONG 14. A KILLER IS BORN** begins to play. NARRATOR enters the stage from the left. A spotlight shines on NARRATOR.*

A second spotlight shines on FIDEL. He's wearing an air-pollution mask covering half of his face. He walks across the stage, firing a gun at different directions.

SONG 14. A KILLER IS BORN

NARRATOR

PEOPLE THOUGHT THAT HE WAS BLUFFING WHEN HE SAID HE'S OUT
FOR BLOOD,

BUT HE GOT A GUN, WENT ON A HUNT, KILLED THE FIRST TROLL THAT
HE FOUND.

THEY SAID THAT CHANGE WAS COMING, BUT THIS IS UNEXPECTED!
WOAH!

HE'S SHOOTING EVERYBODY LIKE THEY'RE RANDOMLY SELECTED

NOW EVERY TROLL WHO MADE A THREAT IS ON HIS BUCKET LIST

SOMEONE CALL THE POLICE! LIVES ARE AT RISK!

HE PRINTED NAMES, AND FACES, AND THEIR HANGOUT PLACES.

HE CALLED THEM FASCISTS, THEN HE SHOT THEIR FACES.

KNOCK, KNOCK! WHO'S THERE? BOOM! POW! YOU'RE DEAD!

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO HAVE A HOLE THROUGH YOUR HEAD?

HE'S PAINTING THE TOWN, AND ALL THE PAINT IS BLOOD RED!

HE KEPT KILLING AND KILLING; EXACTLY LIKE HE SAID.

IT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU'D EXPECT FROM A MAN WHO'S EDUCATED.

BUT THE TRAUMA OF A LOSS CANNOT BE OVERSTATED.

HE DETONATED LIKE A BOMB THAT'S CONSTIPATED.

THE FILIPINO WORDS HE'S FEELING CANNOT EVEN BE TRANSLATED.

As the music fades, NARRATOR exits the stage to the left. FIDEL is left on stage with blood spatters on his clothes.

*The lights slowly brighten. FIDEL removes his mask. The music of **SONG 15. CHANGE IS COMING** begins to play.*

SONG 15. CHANGE IS COMING

FIDEL

THERE'LL BE BODIES, BLOOD, AND GORE! IT'S GONNA BE A PARTY!

I'VE NOW BECOME THE VIGILANTE-VIGILANTE.

TRUTH BE TOLD, MY BLOOD IS COLD. LET'S RAISE THE ANTE!

TELL THE DEATH SQUAD THAT I'M ARMED, AND THAT I AM READY.

ENSEMBLE enters the stage. 1 enter through the right side, 1 enter through the left.

ENSEMBLE

CHANGE IS COMING! CHANGE IS COMING!

FIDEL shoots down ENSEMBLE. The first ENSEMBLE fall to the ground.

FIDEL

I'M THE SON WITH A GUN! WE'RE GONNA HAVE SOME FUN.

A second ENSEMBLE enters the stage. 1 enters through the right side, 1 enters through the left.

ENSEMBLE

CHANGE IS COMING! CHANGE IS COMING!

FIDEL

IF IT'S A WAR YOU WANT, LET'S PLAY...

*FIDEL shoots down the second ENSEMBLE. The
second ENSEMBLE falls to the ground.*

FIDEL

LET'S KILL EACH OTHER EVERY DAY!

YOU'LL BE EATING BULLETS, LIKE IT'S BREAKFAST CEREAL.

I'M A KILLER; I HAVE CHANGED. NOW, I AM SERIAL!

YOU DON'T KNOW ME; YOU WILL NEVER SEE ME COMING.

I AM DEATH AND ON YOUR DOOR, I WILL BE KNOCKING!

*All four ENSEMBLE members sit up to sing the
chorus.*

ENSEMBLE

CHANGE IS COMING! CHANGE IS COMING!

FIDEL

I'M THE SON WITH A GUN! WE'RE GONNA HAVE SOME FUN.

FIDEL shoots down two ENSEMBLE members.

ENSEMBLE

CHANGE IS COMING! CHANGE IS COMING!

FIDEL grabs one ENSEMBLE member.

FIDEL

ARE YOU A SINNER OR A SAINT? I DON'T CARE.

LET'S KILL EACH OTHER ANYWAY!

FIDEL shoots the last remaining ENSEMBLE members. The stage abruptly goes dark at the same time as the sound of the second gun shot.

Scene 3

A spotlight shines on BEN. He's sitting on a couch, in their living room, in front of a TV screen. He's facing the audience. In the background is the sound of a news report about a mass murder.

*The music of SONG 16. EYE FOR AN EYE begins
to play.*

SONG 16. EYE FOR AN EYE

BEN

MASS MURDER ON THE NEWS. 'CAUSE THERE'S A KILLER ON THE
LOOSE.

MORE THAN A DOZEN MEN ARE DEAD, WITH BULLET HOLES IN THEIR
HEADS.

*FIDEL enters stage from the left, holding a gun in
his hand. A spotlight shines on him.*

THEN, FIDEL WALKS IN WITH A GUN IN HIS HAND.

HIS SHIRT IS BLOODY, HE COULD BARELY STAND.

WHAT HE DID, I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND.

BUT I'M HIS BROTHER SO I GAVE HIM A HAND.

HE SAID:

*BEN helps FIDEL to the couch. FIDEL collapses on
the couch and laughs. He points at BEN.*

FIDEL

EYE FOR AN EYE! UNTIL THE WORLD GOES BLIND!

I KNOW THAT MURDER IS WRONG, BUT IT FEELS SO RIGHT.

EYE FOR AN EYE! THEY DESERVED TO DIE.

AND I KNOW I AM YOUR ENEMY.

BEN

I KNOW I AM YOUR ENEMY.

FIDEL

ARE YOU GONNA ASK WHAT HAPPENED TO ME?

BEN

NO.

FIDEL

THE KILLER ON THE NEWS. YOU KNOW THAT IT'S ME

BEN

I KNOW WHAT YOU DID. YOU SHOT THEM ALL DOWN.

BUT YOU'RE MY ONLY BROTHER, SO I GOTCHA, FAM.

FIDEL

I SHOT A NUMBER OF YOUR COLLEAGUES WHO WERE WORKING AS
TROLLS.

IF YOU DON'T REPORT ME, YOU'RE A TRAITOR TO YOUR CAUSE.

TRUTH BE TOLD, I SHOULD HAVE SHOT YOU, FAM.

BUT YOU'RE MY LITTLE BROTHER, I STILL LOVE YOU, MAN.

*FIDEL passes out on the couch. BEN tends to
FIDEL. He finds a folded piece of paper with names,
printed photos, and notes. Some of the faces have
already been crossed out.*

*MERCY and PETE enter the stage from the right
side. They look like they just got out of bed. They
walk slowly through the dining area, on the way to
the living room.*

BEN

EYE FOR AN EYE! AND THE WORLD GOES BLIND!

I KNEW THAT MURDER WAS WRONG, BUT IT FELT SO RIGHT.

EYE FOR AN EYE. MY BROTHER AND I.

I KNOW I AM HIS ENEMY.

I KNOW I AM HIS ENEMY.

*As the music ends, MERCY and PETE enter the
living room.*

MERCY

(in a panic; screaming)

What happened, BEN? What happened to FIDEL?

BEN

(BEN tries to hush MERCY forcefully)

Shush! Shush! Be quiet, Ma!

MERCY

(in a panic)

PETE, call the police! Quick!

*PETE reaches for his phone. BEN jumps up and
knocks it away.*

BEN

No! Don't call anyone!

MERCY

(in a panic)

But there's so much blood! There's so much...

BEN

(angry)

Most of it is not his, Ma!

(sad; ominous)

It's not his...

*In the background, the sound of a news report about
a mass murder. BEN points to the television.*

PETE and MERCY stare at the TV. They slowly realize that it was FIDEL who was responsible.

BEN

There's more.

BEN gives MERCY the notes he found on FIDEL. MERCY begins to sob uncontrollably. PETE holds her, in an attempt to comfort her.

PETE brings MERCY to the dining area and sits her down. He brings her a glass of water. He glances over at BEN.

BEN is still tending to his brother.

MERCY is still crying. She's looking at the list FIDEL made and looking through the people he already crossed out.

The music of SONG 17. HE'LL ALWAYS BE MY

SON begins to play.

SONG 17. HE'LL ALWAYS BE MY SON

PETE

(PETE sings to MERCY)

MERCY, I KNOW THAT HE'S OUR SON.

BUT DEAR, YOU KNOW HE HAS COME UNDONE.

HE'S GOING THROUGH TOWN. HE'S SHOOTING THEM DOWN.

HE'LL BE LOOKING FOR MORE! HE'LL KILL THEM ALL ONE, BY ONE, BY
ONE

MERCY

HE'S OUT FOR BLOOD, I KNOW. HE'S NOT EVEN CLOSE TO DONE.

HE'S A KILLER AND A CRIMINAL, BUT HE'LL ALWAYS BE MY SON.

HE'S OUT FOR BLOOD, I KNOW. HE'S NOT EVEN CLOSE TO DONE.

HE'S A KILLER AND A CRIMINAL, BUT HE'LL ALWAYS BE MY SON.

PETE

BUT HE'S BECOME EXACTLY LIKE

THE THUGS WHO KILLED HIS FUTURE WIFE

HIS HATE AND HIS ANGER HAS LED HIM TO MURDER

HE'S NOW WORSE THAN HIS BROTHER, WHO WORKED FOR A MONSTER

MERCY

(MERCY shakes her head)

HE'S OUT FOR BLOOD, I KNOW. HE'S NOT EVEN CLOSE TO DONE.

HE'S A KILLER AND A CRIMINAL, BUT HE'LL ALWAYS BE MY SON.

HE'S OUT FOR BLOOD, I KNOW. HE'S NOT EVEN CLOSE TO DONE.

HE'S A KILLER AND A CRIMINAL, BUT HE'LL ALWAYS BE MY SON.

As the song ends, PETE gets up from his seat.

PETE

(resigned)

We have to call the police.

MERCY

(shakes her head; angry)

No!

PETE

(pleading; whispers)

MERCY, he's dangerous! He has lost his mind! He's murdered people!

MERCY

He killed terrible people!

PETE

(exasperated; whispers)

He killed people like BEN!

MERCY

(shakes her head; angry; shouts)

BEN! BEN!

BEN leaves FIDEL on the couch. He makes his way to the dining area. When he reaches the entrance, he speaks.

BEN

What is it, Ma?

MERCY

(determined; crazed)

You can fix this, BEN! Write something. Make your alternative news! Publish an article saying that the yellows are at fault! Tell everyone that this was an attempt by the opposition to cripple our national security.

BEN

That's not how my job works, Ma.

MERCY

(determined; crazed; shouts)

Fix it!

BEN

(attempts to appease his mother)

Ma, even if I did write something... There is no official document that could link the people who died to any national security program. The administration will simply deny my claim.

BEN sits next to MERCY. He holds her hand. He's trying to comfort her.

PETE

(frustrated)

MERCY, if we do not call anyone, our son will bleed out and die on our own couch!

BEN and MERCY ignore PETE. BEN sits up.

BEN

I have an idea! We can say that these murders are the work of the opposition; an attempt to discredit the war on crime, and to destabilize the government. We can say that they're trying to frame FIDEL...

PETE

(angry)

What are you both talking about? FIDEL just indiscriminately murdered people!

BEN

It wasn't exactly "indiscriminate," Dad. He picked people who threatened him.

(to MERCY)

It's, kind-of, self-defense, right, Ma?

MERCY

Yes, it's self-defense.

PETE

(angry)

No, it's not! He went to their homes and shot them at their doors!

MERCY

No, PETE. We will not give up my son.

PETE

We have to! He can plead to temporary insanity. He can...

MERCY

(interrupts; hysterical)

No! PETE, they will kill him! When they find out what he did, they will kill him! They will not kill my son!

PETE

My goodness!

PETE walks away from the dining area. He walks toward FIDEL, as he was lying in the living room

couch. BEN and MERCY are seen discussing and planning how they're absolve BEN.

PETE leans over to a sleeping FIDEL. He presses his hand on FIDEL's forehead.

PETE

I'm sorry.

Scene 4

PETE, BEN, and MERCY freeze. The narrator enters the stage from the left.

The music of SONG 18. IS HE THE HERO OR THE ENEMY begins to play.

A spotlight shines on PETE as he walks away from the section of the stage where the living room is located.

SONG 18. IS HE THE HERO OR THE ENEMY

NARRATOR

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, THE FATHER SNEAKED OUT

HE TOLD THE POLICE. HE SOLD HIS SON OUT.

*PETE pulls out a cellular phone and he's seen
making a call.*

THEY HAVEN'T HATCHED A PLAN AND THE POLICE ARE ENROUTE

I HAVE A DIRTY FEELING THINGS ARE GONNA GO SOUTH.

*Four ENSEMBLE members in police outfits enter
the stage from the left. FIDEL points to the living
room. NARRATOR hovers over PETE's shoulder
and sings the next lines like he's insulting PETE.*

HE'S THE JUDAS OF THE DRAMA; A TRAITOR TO HIS FAMILY.

NARRATOR addresses the audience.

YOU TELL ME; IS HE THE HERO OR THE ENEMY?

EYE FOR AN EYE, HE THINKS HIS FAMILY'S BLIND.

HE'LL EXPLAIN HIS BEHAVIOR IN THE NEXT 8 LINES.

MERCY and BEN leave the dining area and try to stop the police. The police hold down the injured FIDEL and handcuff him. They force him on his feet and drag him out to the left stage exit.

PETE

HE'S A THREAT TO THE COMMUNITY, CORRUPTED BY IMPUNITY.

I WILL NOT BE RUINED, BY ALL THIS IMPURITY.

I DID WHAT I HAD TO PREVENT FURTHER CATASTROPHE.

I SAVED COUNTLESS LIVES. I STOPPED A HUNDRED TRAGEDIES.

YOU CAN CALL ME JUDAS. I DON'T CARE. IT'S JUST A NAME.

I'LL THRIVE, I WILL SURVIVE; LIFE'S A DIFFICULT GAME.

IF YOU WANT TO STAY ALIVE, YOU HAVE TO STAY OUT OF THE WAY.

I DID WHAT HAD TO BE DONE. THERE WAS NO OTHER WAY.

As the song ends, PETE waits outside for a moment. MERCY and BEN are sitting on the couch where FIDEL was recently dragged away from.

When PETE enters the living room, both MERCY and BEN glare at him. MERCY runs to him and starts hitting him until she breaks down crying near his feet.

BEN picks her up and helps her to the sofa.

*The music of **SONG 19. WE DO WHAT WE NEED** begins to play.*

SONG 19. WE DO WHAT WE NEED

PETE

WHAT COULD I HAVE DONE TO CHANGE THE ENDING OF THIS STORY?

IF I DID WRONG YOU HAVE TO KNOW THAT I AM SORRY.

ANY OTHER CHOICE WOULD HAVE BEEN RISKY FOR THE FAMILY.

YOU DON'T WANT TO BE A VICTIM OF THE LEADER'S FURY.

FROM MY PERSPECTIVE THIS WAS THE RIGHT DECISION.

FIDEL'S CRIMES WERE ALL OVER TELEVISION.

MERCY, MY DEAR, YOU KNOW MY ONLY MISSION

IS TO SURVIVE THIS DAMN ADMINISTRATION!

WE MUST DO WHAT WE NEED, WE'LL SURVIVE. I WILL NOT CONCEDE.

CALL ME WHAT YOU WANT. I'M A RESILIENT WEED.

OUR SON I KNOW, HE WAS DETAINED. HE WAS DETAINED FOR HIS
DEEDS.

AS FOR THE REST OF US... LIFE CAN GO ON AND PROCEED.

MERCY

I'M LEAVING YOU TODAY.

I DON'T THINK I CAN STAY FOR ANOTHER DAY.

KNOWING THAT YOU GAVE YOU GAVE OUR SON AWAY.

KNOWING THAT YOU GAVE YOU GAVE OUR SON AWAY.

THE ONLY HOPE I HAVE FOR YOU, I WANNA SEE THE DAY

WHEN YOU TAKE A STAND, AND DRAW A LINE, AND FINALLY SAY

THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH ALL THE MURDER GOING ON
TODAY

FOR ALL THE BLOOSHED THAT'S COMMITTED, SOMEONE MUST PAY

PETE

I DO WHAT I NEED!

MERCY

YOU'LL SURVIVE. ENJOY YOUR SPINELESS LIFE.

AS FOR ME, I HAVE TO FIGHT, OR TAKE MY OWN LIFE.

OUR SON WAS TORN INSIDE. HE HAS LOST HIS MIND.

DON'T YOU SEE THE REST OF US, WE'RE DYING INSIDE.

ENSEMBLE enters the stage from both sides.

They're dressed like EJK victims with placards

hanging over their chests, but instead of "addict,"

the placards say "son," "father," "mother,"

"daughter," husband," etc.

ALL

HOW MANY HAVE TO DIE

BEFORE YOU OPEN YOUR EYES

IF YOU THINK THIS IS RIGHT

YOU'RE LIVING A LIE

'CAUSE EVERYDAY WE CONDOLE

ANOTHER LOST SOUL

THIS WAR ON VICE

HAS TAKEN OVER OUR LIVES

IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME, BEFORE THIS WAR TAKES OUR LIVES

IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME, IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME

IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME, BEFORE THIS WAR OUR LIVES

IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME, IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME

As the song ends, the stage lights go dark

-- CURTAIN --