

NILS *sits cross-legged on his bed, towards GIL. Starts staring at GIL with a little smile on his face.*

GIL. Stop staring... Mona Lisa. (NILS *chuckles*) You look like her with that dumb smile on your face.

NILS. What? I haven't seen you in...what?

GIL. 6 Years?

NILS (*gently ironic*). 6 years?

GIL. A lifetime, I know.

NILS. Exactly. You haven't changed a bit, by the way. Apart from... (*rubbing the space in between his eyebrows*).

GIL. Huh?

NILS (*reaches out for GIL's eyebrows and touches it with his fingertips*). This. (*grabs the rag doll with his other hand and sits back on his bed*).

GIL. Hmm... (*rubbs the space in between his eyebrows*) concentrating stupid hours on the page, that's what earned me this.

NILS. So, how's life in London?

GIL. Plain... Boring.

NILS. Come on man, we're talking about London!

GIL. What do you want me to say?

NILS. I don't know. What are your days like? What do you do? How many girlfriends you have/

GIL. I write.

NILS. And?

GIL. That's it. I wake up and put myself to work.

NILS. Everyday?

GIL. Every bloody day.

NILS. Discipline, huh? I know a bit about that.

GIL. Early morning, best possible time for writing... you're awake, you're functioning but your mind is still toying with those precious marbles. (*flicking an invisible marble*) The ones your subconscious shaped for you during the night.

NILS. Those little gems of grace.

GIL. Yep! But then after a couple of hours it becomes all about battling low self-esteem again... and doubt, and stultifying distractions...

NILS. Fresh!

GIL. If you say so.

NILS. Well, at least you have those two hours a day. That's enormous, man. (*beat*) Hey, will I get to read something? (*GIL is flicking through the pages of the book*) Will I get to read something, Gil?

GIL (*handing his book to him*). Here, read this!

NILS (*reading*) The Incredible Shrinking Man. (*throwing the book back at GIL*) Screw that!

GIL. Too bad! Matheson's been a huge inspiration of mine.

NILS. Well, I'm sure your stuff's much more exciting.

NILS *lies down and starts playing with the rag doll.*

NILS. Hey, how come we have little Miss crippled here?

GIL. Jeez you haven't changed, have you?

NILS. So?

GIL (*chuckles*). Found her... in garbage years ago.

NILS. And you abducted her.

Nils's phone rings. He answers.

NILS. Hey! *(to GIL)* Dad. *(to his dad)*. He's here, yes! *(briskly stands up)* In one piece. Wearing my jumper actually *(giggles)*... Well he forgot it's really cold in New York in November.... Ah very poor! A proper bum, a London tramp/

GIL. Fuck you Nils.

NILS *(To GIL)*. Dad wants to know when we're going.

GIL. Just got here.

NILS *(To GIL)*. Thanksgiving, he says.

GIL. Thanksgiving?

NILS. This Thursday.

GIL *silently but emphatically expresses opposition*.

NILS. Your prodigal son don't wanna see you, Dad... I know my grammar sucks. Eh, Gil's completely britannized by the way. He says bloody hell, oopsy daisy/

GIL. You're such a prick.

NILS. Dad won't take no for an answer. *(hands the phone to GIL who rejects it)* *(to his Dad)* Right, I'll try my best but... Love you too Dad. *(hangs up)*.

GIL. French doing Thanksgiving in Jersey, how bloody exotic!

NILS. Westhampton, Long Island.

GIL. Whatever.

NILS *(with a robotic voice)*. And me born and raised in New York, dude. Me no French, dude.

GIL. Tell that to our French father, dude.

NILS. After all these years French father U.S. citizen. *(normal voice)* And by the way, we used to do Thanksgiving when Mum was alive.

GIL. I don't remember.

NILS. I vividly remember. *(falls on a chair)*

Silence during which NILS seems to have lost his cheerfulness.

GIL. So... Dad's rocking the country now, eh? Eating carrots from his garden?

NILS. From his terrace, actually.

GIL. Active member of the book club?

NILS (*chuckles*). The only guy in his yoga class.

GIL. Not bad for a workaholic. (*chuckles*) When I was a kid I remember picturing him as this... King Kong figure, pulling buildings out of his ass, dismantling them with bare hands. But then he took me to his office one day.

NILS. And?

GIL. That was it. Real estate broker, nothing to fantasize about anymore.

NILS. He loved that job.

GIL. Yes! Crazy hours, no week-ends...

NILS. He's changed a lot, you know? He's been very present in the past years. Still is.

GIL. Don't you appreciate the space now that he's retired and gone? (*goes to his rucksack and starts unpacking*)

NILS. Space is your thing, Gil.

GIL. I'm one for space, yes.

NILS (*withdrawn*). Space and distance.

GIL *puts different jars of supplements on the chest of drawers*. NILS *joins him there*.

NILS (*grabbing the jars one by one*). Mm drugs! DLPA... NAC... Magnesium/

GIL. Hundred per cent natural supplements, sorry to disappoint.

NILS. Like weed you mean?

GIL. Yeah, but those won't make you high nor sick, your brain recognizes them and they bring your body back to its natural homeostasis state.

NILS. Meaning?

GIL. Meaning your body natural capability of curing itself.

NILS. How did you become such an expert, bro?

GIL. Countless hours on specialized websites, I suppose. The perk of having writer's blocks.

NILS. Those stultifying distractions you were on about?

GIL. The useful ones, yes.

NILS. I'm impressed.

GIL. Right... let's crack on with serious matters, now.