

Lights up. ALAN, MOTHER & FATHER, each address the audience directly. The MOTHER sits fidgeting with an unlit cigarette.

ALAN

I don't really remember the first time. Why I don't know. I must have just blocked it out

MOTHER

I don't really know what I can tell you.

FATHER

My wife tells me to talk to ALAN, and not to be so angry. I told her I do talk to ALAN. ALAN just doesn't want to listen. Maybe I don't want to listen either, I don't know.

ALAN

I don't know what to say to any of my family and friends. They don't know what to say to me either.

FATHER

I just feel so angry

MOTHER

ALAN had always been troubled and took things too seriously.

FATHER

You want your child to grow up and embrace life. Achieve everything they want for themselves.

MOTHER

It was everything we could do to get ALAN to smile.

ALAN

Everyone kept about ten feet away...

MOTHER

We hardly ever saw ALAN.

ALAN

..and they all talked in this monotone voice as if the vibrations from the sound would make me crumble.

MOTHER

Always up in the bed room hours at a time.

FATHER

With ALAN, there's always been this shut off and you can't get passed it no matter how hard you try.

MOTHER

ALAN has always been very lonely.

ALAN

That's how it made me feel. I would never say anything of course. I would just smile and nod a lot. I wouldn't even try to express what I was feeling.

MOTHER

ALAN would do things though, to let you know you were loved. ALAN gave me this ring one time...

ALAN

That seemed to be a waste of time.

MOTHER

Like the ones you get out of those quarter machines.

ALAN

Everyone's minds had already been made up about me.

FATHER

I set up boundaries for my kids you know? Be home at a certain time, you have to do your home work first...whatever.

MOTHER

Well, I had to wear it where ever I went. I couldn't leave the house without it. ALAN told me that it held magical powers and that as long as I wore it, I would be okay. Well, one day I lost it. ALAN was so hurt by it. I felt terrible for a week.

FATHER

But as time goes on you hope the boundaries fade away, so that they're no longer boundaries but part of their being, part of what makes them who they are.

MOTHER

A few years later I became very ill. I was in the hospital and very scared. ALAN would come to see me, but wouldn't come up and touch me.

FATHER

I tried to give all my children an understanding of where they stand in life and..

MOTHER

ALAN would stand just inside the door, but wouldn't approach the bed.

ALAN

And everyone's approach was the same. I remember my mother standing at the foot of my bed with tears in her eyes and a look of betrayal on her face. My father didn't say a word, his face etched in stone, his eyes were cold and sharp. The first time I came home from the hospital and went up to my room, everything I owned had been gone through. Letters I had never mailed, notes I had jotted to myself...my whole life had been gone through. I suppose they were looking for answers that would somehow put everything into place. But that was the problem. Nothing was in place for me anymore. I couldn't pull a thought together. I couldn't get excited or happy about anything. I didn't care about the past and the future didn't seem to hold anything for me. I felt like all my senses were dead. I couldn't taste or smell anything. It was like I had put myself into this mental straight jacket that I couldn't get out of.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Then, after a while, I didn't want to get out of it. I was comfortable with it. This went on for months.

MOTHER

Then one night after they had turned the lights out, I rolled over to go to sleep and I felt something under my pillow. Sure enough, it was that ring.

FATHER

How powerful the human spirit is.

ALAN

I just went inside myself. I put myself through a barrage of questions for which I had no answers, every question just raised another question, and I had no answers for any of them. As day's passed I grew desperate trying to answer this sea of questions.

FATHER

I tried to give ALAN everything I could about what I knew about life and my experiences.

ALAN

I felt like I was drowning with everyone watching.

FATHER

I'm angry at ALAN. I guess I feel betrayed by ALAN, for not listening to what I had to give...

ALAN

The next thing I could feel were my veins opening up.

MOTHER

I don't know if ALAN had bought a new one or found the old one. It didn't matter, because I knew I was loved. I swear to this day it was that ring that made me better.

FATHER

And not letting me in.

ALAN

Letting all the questions run out.
Even with all the pain...I felt
relieved.

The lights Fade.