

THOMAS SIDES #1
Reader reads DIANA

Andre: I don't have anyone's number.

Marjorie: I can get the phone book.

Andre: I only moved here like just less than a year ago, so...

Marjorie: Oh. *(checking the coast is clear)* Well I could go by and get some of your things, if you want.

Andre: Are you allowed?

Marjorie: I've only been here a month. I could plead ignorance.

Andre: You'd do that? Because I need more clothes. And some books. And my Walkman.

Marjorie: Sure. I'll even hide the dirty magazines.

Andre: What? No.

Marjorie: Make a list and give me your keys.

Andre: You don't want to go there. It's a room in a house and it's a total shit hole and the landlord's super creepy-

Marjorie: Andre. Let me take care of you. I've been doing this a long time.

Andre: You've been here a month.

Marjorie: Oh honey. I've been doing this since before you were born.

Andre: You really don't have to-

Marjorie: I won't pass judgment about your shit hole, I swear.

Andre: Okay.

Marjorie: Perfect. Now can we do this goddamn intake form or what?

Andre: I'll think about it.

(Marjorie exits with Andre)

START **SCENE 6 - Tiny Simple Things**
(Diana is sitting by Thomas' bed as before)

Thomas: I thought no way, seven days no way! A couple more days, max. Maybe if I'm lucky I can get close enough that they can tie me to Vera and sort-of *Weekend at Bernie's* me through the whole thing.

Diana: Well that's a morbid image.

Thomas: God knows I'm more than halfway there.

Diana: You look wonderful.

Thomas: Please. I look like a member of the road company of Cocoon. Sorry. Golden Girls reference. My stupid, awful sister would have gotten that but no one else.

Diana: Stupid and awful sister? I don't like the sound of that.

Thomas: Well she wasn't always stupid and awful. She was my everything for most of my life. Took me to my first ever gay bar, actually. Talked every day, part of all my friend groups. Pauline. Then I got sick and told her and she was gone. The old predictable.

Diana: People are scared of the illness, not the person.

Thomas: Still makes them assholes. Anyways, so they told me you were coming, and I was lying there trying not to disintegrate into a pile of mixed emotions, and then I started thinking about that dress of yours...

Diana: You're going to need to be a little more specific.

Thomas: The one you wore to your engagement party. Black, strapless taffeta by... um-

Diana: The Emmanuels. I love that dress. I thought it was beautiful and perfect. That sentiment wasn't completely shared, of course. But it's just a silly dress, we have much more important things to talk about.

Thomas: Are you KIDDING??! This is like the homosexual version of the Make A Wish Foundation.

Diana: Well listen. The moment I was seen by...*(raises eyebrows)*... it was *you're not wearing that are you?* Hours I spent, deciding, only to be met with *you're not wearing that are you?* Well do you know what I did?

Thomas: You wore it.

Diana: I wore it. And I looked positively stunning, I don't mind saying. I paired it with a huge smile all night long. It felt torturous while I was doing it, hearing people talk about how black is for mourning and how inappropriate it was and what a terrible message I was sending about my taste. But I wore it well.

Thomas: Perfectly. And this is what I was thinking about. Overnight, something as simple as getting dressed...

Diana: You have no idea. Before, I never spent more than an hour getting ready. I hardly thought of it, beyond what looks halfway pretty. Then suddenly, it was what I wore, my hair, how I sat, what I ate, every little thing became consuming.

Thomas: So then what did you do?

Diana: Well I guess I thought that if all the tiny simple things like picking out clothes is going to become so incredibly hard, then I simply need to become incredibly good at it.

Thomas: Exactly. All the tiny simple things you never thought of before. I was thinking about you and all the huge changes and challenges and how you got through. All the tiny little things. *(beat)* After Vera left, I saw you across the room in my mind's eye. You were there sitting in the chair. I saw you and at first I thought... seven days. No way. And then I thought...okay, how about one minute? All the tiny simple things. Heart beating, none of my business; breathing, yep, that'll happen on it's own. Swallow, blink, stretch my neck a little, alright that was easy, I got that down, and then about twenty seconds of toe wiggling. Woosh one minute down, feeling good. And there you were.

Diana: Shall I..?

Thomas: That would be lovely.

(Diana crosses to the chair)

Thomas: So I'm picturing you there and I thought... okay how about one minute more? Blink, stretch the neck, and then move the hands a little. Flatten the palms then bend the elbows, and push? No, need to flex the abs a bit, and that one's not so fun but do it quickly and then push and nudgey wiggle your way up and up and up and then... *(sighs)* I'm sitting up. Woosh one more minute down and I'm already sitting up. And I imagined you saying something like *you can make it*.

Diana: You can make it.

Thomas: I'm frankly a little exhausted and my back is screaming, but you're repeating that.

Diana: You can make it.

Thomas: Exactly. And I think okay, one more minute, tiny simple things blink, neck, hands, abs... and legs? Legs. *(he slowly, painfully swings his legs over the edge of the bed)* Legs... legs... legs... legs... Legs. And... *(he puts his feet on the ground)* feet. Ahhh. You can't imagine the feeling of putting your bare feet on the ground after being in bed for two weeks. It's a kind of cool that ripples into your whole body. It makes your breath catch. And then... woosh one more minute I'm standing and you're smiling and I'm thinking there must be more gas in the tank than I thought. Maybe I could... maybe I could... *(very slowly at first, building momentum)* Maybe I could hip. Thigh. Knee. Fall forward. Heel ankle foot. Shift. Hip. Thigh. Knee... every step a little fall heel ankle foot. Shift. Fall, heel, foot, fall, heel, foot. The mechanics of the ankle. The angle of the heel coming in contact with the ground, and then the spreading of the foot. All the tiny things. One more minute, two minutes, closer. I could see myself getting closer and closer. Closer and closer! Closer and closer to you..! **END**

(Lights shift. Diana remains - Thomas walks around the room, then crosses to the doorway)

Thomas: *(yelling out the door)* Attention! Attention everyone! May I have your attention please?! Rafael, Vince, Ken! Listen up Andre! I have an announcement! I have decided that WE ARE GOING TO MAKE IT! We are going to sit up in bed, and eat, and do our hair... if applicable. Get dressed - oh my God what to wear?! Jerome? Leonard? Some sign of life please? Seven days of life, then go when you want. But seven days-!

(Vera enters the room and tries to escort Thomas to bed)

Vera: What are you doing?

Thomas: *(resisting at first)* Promise me. Blood brother promise! Come on!

Vera: Let's go, back to bed.

(Thomas lets her lead him away)

Thomas: Okay, okay. Day after day! Put on your Sunday best! Practice your cursties! *(He breaks away, back to the door)* WE'RE GOING TO MEET A PRINCESS!