

The Home Is Where The *Heart* Lives

Characters:

Rosemary: Texan, lives in New York, early 30s, married to Andrew, miscarried (stillborn) her late baby year prior, brokenhearted, knows God but doesn't trust him, tends to shut out people in her life, she wants to be better but doesn't know how to get there.

Andrew: New Yorker, early 30s, married to Rosemary, lost his late baby in miscarriage, knows of God but doesn't really associate with him, heart full of love but grief, he wants to help Rosemary but feels lost himself.

Momma: Texan (think southern Mama), late 60s, mother to Rosemary, mother and law to Andrew (though she's the type to call him son), late stage cancer patient, lost her husband from a car wreck, wise, determined, loving, she knows the answers to their questions but doesn't push, she is their sign of God.

Setting:

Present day, Momma's house.

Writers Note:

Think of the house as a metaphor for the *heart*. Each room that is entered is another chamber of the *heart*.

Act 1 Scene 1

(There is a door onstage; It has a heart window. We hear a car door close then the sound of a car locking. A man (ANDREW) wearing nice business attire, with disheveled hair; carrying a briefcase walks on stage and knocks on the door. There is no answer so he knocks again.)

ROSEMARY

One moment.

(This is yelled from offstage)

(Andrew waits there for a moment then knocks once more; this time a woman (ROSEMARY) opens it. She looks like she's in a frenzy. Her hair's a mess and she has an apron on. Her knees are all dusted with soil and in her open hand she holds a shovel.)

ROSEMARY

Oh. Hi.

ANDREW

Hi.

(He stays standing there as they stare at each other.)

Are you going to let me in?

ROSEMARY

Oh yes. Sorry. I... why are you here?

ANDREW

Your mom called.

ROSEMARY

Why would she...

(She looks outside of the door where the car presumably is.)

Did you drive here?

ANDREW

Yeah. 26 hours. But when she called, I...

Rosy, we need to-

ROSEMARY

And your job?

ANDREW

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ROSEMARY

Oh. It's really important to you though.

(Beat)

Come in.

(ANDREW walks through the door after ROSEMARY opens it wider. He hesitates then kisses her cheek. She shuts the door.)

End Scene 1

Scene 2

(The stage is set like a garden. ROSEMARY walks on stage gripping her shovel. ANDREW slowly follows her on. She sinks down to her knees and starts shoveling. She pulls out a few stubborn weeds. ANDREW slowly sets his briefcase down and takes a few steps toward her.)

ROSEMARY

I can't believe she called you.

ANDREW

Why not?

ROSEMARY

I asked her not to.

ANDREW

You asked her not to?

ROSEMARY

Yes. I knew it would be a problem.

ANDREW

It's not a problem.

ROSEMARY

Yes it is.

ANDREW

Would I be here if it was a problem?

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ROSEMARY

Well, I know you love that job of yours.

ANDREW

Would you stop saying that?

(These next two lines are said simultaneously.)

ROSEMARY

/It's hard not to say whenever it's true, Andrew.

ANDREW

/You're more important to me.

(ROSEMARY stops shoveling and looks back at him.)

ROSEMARY

Really?

ANDREW

Yes.

(He walks over to her and embraces her from behind.)

ANDREW

I've missed you.

ROSEMARY

I know.

(She moves back to the weeds in front of her before ANDREW is able to kiss her.)

ANDREW

Can I help you?

ROSEMARY

I guess so. I'm just trynna pull these stubborn weeds out.

ANDREW

You know the best way to get them?

ROSEMARY

What?

(He takes the shovel.)

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ANDREW

You have to dig under them first. Then pull. Straight up. Trust me; it works.

(They begin to do as he described, together. When they pull the weed, his hand over hers, there is no struggle.)

ROSEMARY

Wow. That actually worked.

ANDREW

You don't have to act so surprised.

ROSEMARY

Thank you.

ANDREW

So, do you think we could talk now?

ROSEMARY

I actually have a lot to do.

ANDREW

Okay. Maybe tonight then?

ROSEMARY

Sure.

(She walks off stage.)

End Scene 2

Scene 3

(The stage is set like an attic. ROSEMARY is looking through some boxes but coming up empty of what she's trying to find. ANDREW walks on stage.)

ANDREW

What are you doing?

ROSEMARY

What does it look like I'm doin'? Sorry. I'm looking for a pill breaker momma said would be in the attic. She used it whenever she was taking pain meds but now that she's not it's just collecting dust. Like all the other clutter up here.

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ANDREW

I wouldn't call it clutter. I mean some of this is your dad's, right?

ROSEMARY

I... probably. Papa didn't have many flaws but he did used to hoard random things up here. So most of this is probably junk.

ANDREW

They must have had some importance to him right?

ROSEMARY

I guess so.

(beat)

I still miss him.

ANDREW

Me too.

(beat)

What do you need a pill breaker for?

ROSEMARY

To break pills.

ANDREW

I know what it does, Rosy. I mean what do *you* need it for?

ROSEMARY

A few months back I talked to my Psychiatrist and she put me on some pills. /The problem is they're kinda big so it's hard for me to swallow and-

ANDREW

/Wait. What? So you're on an antidepressant?

ROSEMARY

You could call it that.

ANDREW

Why didn't I know?

ROSEMARY

There's a lot you don't know about me, Andrew.

ANDREW

How would I know if you don't tell me anything, Rosemary?

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ROSEMARY

You could ask.

ANDREW

I'm asking now.

ROSEMARY

That's not the same.

ANDREW

I don't know what you want from me.

ROSEMARY

To try. At the very least.

ANDREW

Try? Why do you think I'm here?

Forget it.

(He looks around for a second and finds the pill breaker. He walks over to her.)

Found it.

(As soon as she takes the pill breaker out of his hands he walks off stage leaving her behind.)

End Scene 3

Scene 4

(The stage is set like a room with a hospital bed. A woman (MOMMA) lays in it wearing a head wrap. ROSEMARY walks on stage with a tray of food.)

ROSEMARY

Good mornin' Momma. Mom?

(She sets the tray down and shakes MOMMA who wakes up suddenly.)

MOMMA

Dear heavens, Rosy. I was having the most beautiful dream.

ROSEMARY

Oh really?

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MOMMA

Yeah. I think papa was in it. And little Evie too...

ROSEMARY

What?

MOMMA

Well, I think I saw her-

ROSEMARY

Nevermind. I don't want to know.

(ROSEMARY sets the tray on her MOMMA's lap.)

MOMMA

What's this?

ROSEMARY

Your breakfast.

MOMMA

Aww. You're so sweet, baby.

ROSEMARY

I get you breakfast everymornin', momma.

MOMMA

I know, but sometimes you just gotta be grateful for what you got. Speaking of which, how's that husband of yours?

ROSEMARY

He's fine. And no thanks to you. He's using up all his vacation days.

MOMMA

He's here?

ROSEMARY

Yes.

MOMMA

Well I'll be! It actually worked.

ROSEMARY

At least I'm not the only one who doubts us.

MOMMA

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I don't doubt y'all. I think you're meant for each other.
I do. And you should too. Why would God put y'all together in the first place?

ROSEMARY

I ask him the same question.

MOMMA

Oh Rosemary. Remember that scripture I used to say when your papa was sick?

Trust in the Lord with all your heart-

(In Unison)

/And lean not on your own understanding.

ROSEMARY

/And lean not on your own understanding.

I remember momma... and I know. I get it but...

MOMMA

But sometimes it's hard for you to trust?

(beat)

Rosemary, have you and Andrew talked about it yet?

ROSEMARY

About what?

MOMMA

You've got to, some time, baby. If not, It'll eat you up inside.

ROSEMARY

I don't think you understand. I can't-

MOMMA

You weren't the only one who lost somethin' that day.

ROSEMARY

Enjoy your breakfast, momma.

MOMMA

Rosy...

(Momma stares off at her in concern as she leaves.)

End Scene 4

Scene 5

(The stage is set like a living room. This living room should come off as homely and comforting. Picture frames and paintings on the "walls". Maybe a Thomas Kincaid painting up there. ANDREW is watching tv, lounging his feet on the coffee table. ROSEMARY comes in with a vacuum. She vacuums under his feet and around him. She pulls out a duster and starts dusting the furniture. She stops for a moment.)

ROSEMARY

Breakfast is ready.

(beat)

Hello?

(ANDREW takes the remote and pauses whatever he is watching.)

ANDREW

What?

ROSEMARY

I said breakfast is ready.

ANDREW

Oh, okay. Thank you.

(He continues what he was watching).

ROSEMARY

So are you gonna help me, or?

ANDREW

With what?

ROSEMARY

Cleaning the house.

ANDREW

It doesn't really need to be cleaned, Ros-

ROSEMARY

Yes it does. Have you seen this place; it's a mess.

ANDREW

I mean, there may be a few cobwebs in the corner.

ROSEMARY

Can you just...

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ANDREW
Yes. I can. Sorry.

(He turns off the tv.)

So, what do you want me to do?

ROSEMARY
I don't know, Andrew. Maybe look around and see for yourself. If there's a mess, you clean it.

ANDREW
I don't see a mess.

ROSEMARY
Are you kid... this is just like in New York.

ANDREW
Woah wait. Are you saying I don't clean at our place?

ROSEMARY
Yes, that's exactly what I'm saying. I was constantly cleaning up after you.

ANDREW
I vividly remember your dirty dishes being stacked in the sink early in the morning. *I* was the one who cleaned them!

ROSEMARY
Stacked!
You know what, you are so right. I'm sorry. I guess I didn't take in count the one or two dishes you *vividly* remember cleanin'.

ANDREW
Why are you being like this?
(beat)

ROSEMARY
Just forget I even asked you.

(She goes back to cleaning and he stays sitting on the couch watching her.)

I would like you to take the lead for once. You see it; you clean it.

ANDREW
You don't think I'm a leader.

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ROSEMARY

That's not what I said.

ANDREW

You think I sit on my ass all day and do nothing.

ROSEMARY

I never said that.

ANDREW

So my whole job is a scam then. That's what you're saying.
I'm the CEO of a big time corporation-

ROSEMARY

I'm not talkin' about your job, Andrew .
For once in our lives I need *you* to be the strong one and not leave me to clean up all the messes
on my own.

ANDREW

When have I ever...
This isn't about cleaning is it?

(beat)

I was there. I was with you every waking moment. I wanted to help. You know I wanted to help
but I... I didn't know how.

(He walks over to ROSEMARY trying to get her attention with his touch. She turns away.)

I miss her too, Rosy, *everyday*.

(ROSMEMARY goes back to dusting)

ROSEMARY

Could you switch the laundry, please? Oh and make sure you separate by color. Last time you
put my white shirt in with my blue dress and that-

*(ANDREW draws closer to her then holds her trying for love but it brings off the distance in their
relationship.)*

ANDREW

Rosemary, I want us to talk about this. This is what I came here for.

ROSEMARY

I don't need to talk about it. I'm fine.

(He lets go of her.)

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ANDREW

But I'm... I don't think it's the *house* that needs cleaning.

(He walks off stage leaving her to be confronted with the truth.)

End Scene 5

Scene 6

(The stage is set like a study. A desk and chair. Maybe some pictures or papers. ROSEMARY walks in with a duster and begins to dust around until something catches her eye. It's a picture of her dad, her mom, and her. She picks it up.)

ROSEMARY

Hey papa. It's been awhile. How are you or... I don't know... you're probably living it up, up there huh? I wish you were here to tell me what to do. You always had the best advice. I miss you.

(She wipes a tear and sets the picture down, continuing to dust. Soon she stops, heavy from the weight and sits down.)

ROSEMARY

God, what happened? We used to be so in love. And then...
I used to be *happy*. Why me God? Why did you take her away from me?

(She turns around and sees a bible on the desk. She grabs and runs her hands over it like it's a new book. She opens it up and reads a scripture aloud.)

ROSEMARY

Come to me all who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest... My yolk is easy... my burden is light.

(Unsatisfied she flips through the pages. She begins to read a scripture thinking nothing of it at first.)

I cry out to God; yes, I shout. Oh, that God would listen to me... When I was in deep trouble, I searched for the Lord.

(close to tears)

All night long I prayed, with hands lifted toward heaven, but my soul was not comforted. I think of God, and I moan, overwhelmed with longing for his help... You don't let me sleep. I am too distressed even to pray. I think of the good old days, long since ended, when my nights were filled with joyful songs. I search my soul and ponder the difference now.

(She actually asks herself these next questions)

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Has the Lord rejected me? Will he never again be kind to me? Is his unfailing love gone forever?

(Filled with emotion she slams the bible shut. Slowly she opens it again, her intrigue winning out once more.)

Oh God, your ways are holy. Is there any god as mighty as you? You are the God of great wonders! You demonstrate your awesome power among the nations. By your strong arm, you redeemed your people.

(She sets the bible on the desk and whispers a prayer to herself. Just then we hear ANDREW yell her name from off stage. He then walks on stage, shocking her.)

Andrew

Ros... there you are. I've been calling your name. Did you not hear me?

ROSEMARY

I...

ANDREW

Is that a bible?

ROSEMARY

It was papa's.

ANDREW

Were you...

ROSEMARY

I'm gonna go down to the basement.

ANDREW

Oh. What are you going down to the basement for?

ROSEMARY

Momma wanted me to sort through some boxes. She said they're mostly mine.

ANDREW

Can I help you?

ROSEMARY

I don't think I'll-

ANDREW

Let me help you. We both know It'll go faster with two people.

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ROSEMARY

Did you need me for somethin'? Before when you were calling my name-

ANDREW

Oh. I... wanted to *talk*.

ROSEMARY

About?

ANDREW

Nothing.

(beat)

Basement?

(He holds his hand out to her.)

ROSEMARY

Andrew.

ANDREW

Rosemary.

ROSEMARY

I don't know if I want you to... It's old stuff. I'll probably just throw it all out anyway. There's no need in bringing it up.

ANDREW

What are you afraid of?

ROSEMARY

I'm...

(ANDREW takes her hand and they walk off stage.)

End of Scene 6

Scene 7

(The stage is dimly lit and set in what looks like a basement. It's a bit more dingy and grim feeling than the attic. Cardboard boxes, trash bags, dirty rolled up rugs, and trash scatters the stage. Maybe even some dead bugs or rodents. ROSEMARY and ANDREW walk on stage immediately holding their noses letting go of each other's hand.)

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ANDREW

What the hell is that?

(ROSEMARY starts laughing which makes him laugh. She picks up a dead rat from the tail.)

ROSEMARY

I think it may be-

ANDREW

Rosy! Get that away from me!

(She throws it.)

ROSEMARY

You still want to do this?

ANDREW

Give me the broom.

(She passes him the broom that was off in the corner. They get to work. Opening boxes. Blowing dust off of books. Shaking out fabrics. Wiping surfaces. ROSEMARY opens a box and goes still.)

ANDREW

What is it, Rosy? Is it another rat?

(ANDREW walks towards her and stops in his tracks once he gets a glimpse of the contents in the box. ROSEMARY begins to cry as she pulls a baby onesie from the box.)

Rosy?

ROSEMARY

Momma kept them.

(She falls to her knees. ANDREW tries to embrace her but she turns away. He backs up, rejection shown on his face.)

ANDREW

I thought it would be different...but it's not.
You're still the same.

(ROSEMARY briefly looks up at him, stunned, still gripping the onesie)

You still shut me out! What will it take for you to-

(She sobs even louder)

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Rosy, I'm sorry.

(Overwhelmed with embarrassment and guilt he hugs her from behind. He pulls the onesie from her and sets it aside. They embrace each other and it is in that embrace that their passion and love for one other blossoms once again. They loosen to look at each other.)

ROSEMARY

Andy... I'm-

(ANDREW lets out a breath. This name is important to him. It means she's finally let go of the baby and held on to him instead.)

ANDREW

I know.

(beat)

I love you.

ROSEMARY

I love you.

(They embrace once more, this time adding a passionate kiss. The lights turn down.)

End Scene 7

Scene 8

(We slowly alight on a hospital set. About 5 or 6 years have passed. "Birthing" sounds are being made even before we see the scene. We see ROSEMARY leaning over the side of a hospital bed. One hand on her protruding belly. She's making those breathing sounds you make when you're in labor. ANDREW runs in with a cup of ice cubes in one hand and a bag in the other.)

ROSEMARY

There you are?

ANDREW

Rosy, what are you doing up!

(He sets down the things)

ROSEMARY

The doctor said to stand... or walk... I don't remembe- owwww.

(She wails as another contraction comes. ANDREW holds her hand.)

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ANDREW

Okay, let's do the breathing exercises like Dr.Naroni said. Ready-

ROSEMARY

I don't think I can do this.

ANDREW

It's really easy, you just breath in and-

ROSEMARY

No, I mean this.

(She gestures at her belly)

I'm scared, Andy.

ANDREW

I know. I can't even imagine how painful... Look at me. You *can* do this. If there is anyone in the world who is fit to be a mother, it's you. And I'm right here beside you. I'm not going anywhere.

(He helps her onto the bed. ROSEMARY closes her eyes and starts whispering to herself.)

Rosy, are you okay?

ROSEMARY

I'm praying.

ANDREW

Oh. Okay.

ROSEMARY

Momma, I know you miss being here. We miss you everyday. But I know you're smiling down at us now. Give me strength.

(ANDREW holds her hands tight and bows his head.)

Oh Lord, give me strength. Give me joy in my lowest places. Bring your light for me to see your goodness.

(beat)

Oh Lord, please let her live.

(The lights go down on the two. We hear a baby's cry at the blackout.)`

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End Scene 8

THE END