

The Final Call

By: Greta Rolfzen

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Setting: 105th floor of the Southern Tower, twin towers World Trade Center

Plot: Workers in a finance company are waiting the last moments before the plane hits

Props:

- 6 Work desks
- A computer for each desk
- a loud clicking clipboard
- 6 wheely chairs
- A picture of a 4-year-old child in a picture frame
- Lamps for each desk
- Add a water cooler?
- A TV USC that will play the news
- Cigarettes
- Printer

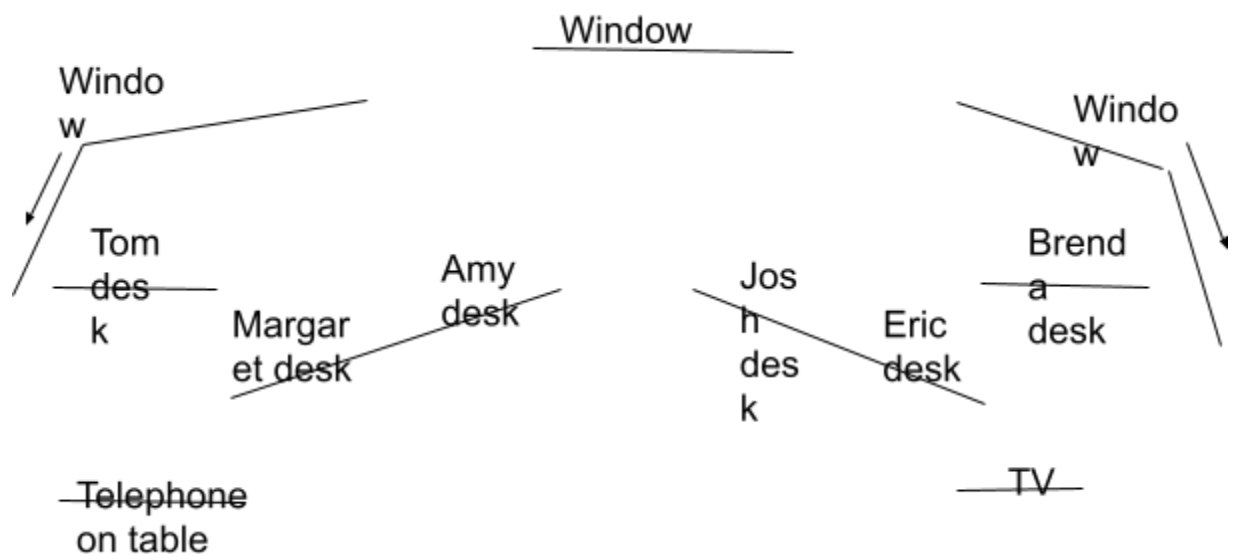
Characters:

- Amy (lead)
 - About 31 years old. She is a generally attractive woman, dark hair. She is a shorter woman. She is a sincere woman who wants everyone to not fight and be happy. She is a giving and helpful woman who often puts others' needs before her own. Has a 4-year-old little girl. She is often bouncing around the office talking to everyone. She is a people pleaser.
- Josh (lead)
 - He is about 37. He is taller than the average human, with a stronger build. He has brown hair and glasses. He is an average nice guy. He isn't favoring people in the office, he doesn't create drama with other people. He has worked here in the office the second longest (Brenda has worked here the longest). Many people see him as an authority figure even though everyone in this office has the same job title.
- Margaret (lead)
 - About 27, She is undoubtedly beautiful. She is a shorter, blonde woman. She speaks with a Southern Belle accent. She is normally a little bit nervous, often jumping to conclusions because she is remembering her very secretive "Past". She is almost a caricature of Dawn from Waitress and Marilyn Monroe mixed. Her "past" was that she grew up in a southern town and she has been banished from her family because she left her home, took her child with her, and is now a single mother living in New York.
- Tom (lead)
 - About 40. He is tall and lanky, often uncomfortable in his own clothes. Tom is often very anti-social, he is very good at reading the room and is used as a

human situation diffuser. Tom's mom is in critical condition at the Mayo Clinic battling stage 4 lung cancer.

- Eric (lead)
 - Eric is about 40. He is the epitome of a "dad figure". He is very sincere and warm-hearted to the people around him, almost as if a teddy bear hug was a person
- Brenda (lead)
 - Brenda is an older woman, about 60-70. She is very opinionated and is not afraid to put her input into any conversation. She has more conservative views on the world and believes that others should as well.

Set:



(The first plane hit the north tower at 8:46 am. 17 mins later at 9:03 am, the plane crashed through the north tower through floors 75-82)

on the 105th floor, moments before the plane hits the first tower. There are 4 work desks set up in the middle of the stage in a "V" formation. There are 2 more desks to the side facing out to the audience. Amy and Josh are at the heads of the V, Margaret next to Amy and Eric next to Josh. Brenda is on stage left and Tom is on stage right. There is an old printer upstage left. There is a bright red telephone downstage right on top of a table. This phone will be used for the characters to call their loved ones.

(lights up)

(Busy work is going around in the office. Joah and Eric stand looking out the window DSR while Drinking coffee.)

JOSH: Did you catch the game last night?

ERIC: No, Blake had a basketball game.

JOSH: Didn't miss much. The Broncos beat us again.

ERIC: That's cuz The Giants suck, the Chiefs beat them last week.

JOSH: Well, let's see how your precious Chiefs do against Washington on Sunday. *(Walking back to his desk)*. Amy, are you going to be at that budget meeting this afternoon?

AMY: I would, but I have to leave early this afternoon for Stephanie's birthday party.

JOSH: Dang, I was hoping we could tag team that third quarter presentation.

MARGARET: I could jump in on that-

AMY: Oh, I'm sure you don't need to trouble yourself. You've got so much on your plate already.

MARGARET: No really, I'd be happy to help.

JOSH: Nah, I can handle it.

MARGARET: Alright.

(Amy is attempting to staple far too many papers together. Her stapler breaks in her hands)

AMY: What the-?

(Amy nudges Josh's arm)

AMY (CONT): Do you have a stapler I could borrow? I was trying to staple these together and it just broke.

MARGARET: I have-

JOSH: *(looks at her desk)* Sure!

(AMY walks over to grab it)

AMY: Thanks.

(MARGARET Glances over at AMY)

MARGARET: Hey, I have a stapler here if you need it again.

AMY: *(confused)* I'm good, thanks.

MARGARET: Alright.

(AMY is stacking some papers, she slides her hand down the side to make sure they're aligned and gets a paper cut)

AMY: *ouch* *(MARGARET hears and sees that AMY cut her finger. MARGARET goes into her first aid kit and grabs a bandaid. She walks over to AMY'S desk. AMY notices the first aid kit on JOSH'S desk, not noticing that MARGARET is right behind her with a bandage in hand)* Josh, I'm sorry to bother you again, but could I have a bandaid?

(JOSH stands up, and goes over to look at AMY'S cut)

JOSH: Oh god, that's deep. Here.

(He hands her a bandaid)

AMY: Thanks.

JOSH: What would you do without the supplies from my desk?

AMY: Well, I think I would either get no work done or end up in the ER.

(They both laugh)

AMY: (CONT): Thanks again.

(AMY returns to her desk)

ERIC: Hey Josh, could I borrow a highlighter?

JOSH: Does anyone else need anything?

(Everyone goes back to work)

MARGARET: Hey Amy, how old is Stephanie turning?

AMY: She's already turning 4. I was going to go down to Gerald's Cake Shop right after work.

She loves their Rainbow Sprinkle mini cupcakes.

MARGARET: I prefer the chocolate one.

AMY: Well it's the only flavor she likes that doesn't contain nuts.

MARGARET: Oh yeah, I forgot about the whole nut thing.

AMY: I even bought clear balloons with rainbow confetti inside.

MARGARET: I can't wait to see it!

AMY: You have time to come?!

MARGARET: Yeah, Sophie Jean's gymnastics got canceled tonight, so I thought I could bring her with me to Stephanie's party.

AMY: I can't wait for our 2 girls to meet.

MARGARET: I know! I have a feeling they're going to be best friends.

AMY: Just a heads up, Stephanie is now in a biting phase.

MARGARET: Oh?

AMY Yeah, we're trying to find her a mouth guard, but the dentists said that it could move the alignment of her teeth.

MARGARET: I'll bring a couple of band aids just in case she gets me.

(They both laugh)

(Eric perks up)

ERIC: I miss those days when they were so cute that they could stab me in the leg and I would just laugh it off.

AMY: *(She laughs)* How old is Blake?

ERIC: She's 17 already.

MARGARET: Aww.

AMY: Does she know where she wants to go for college?

ERIC: Either Julliard-

(AMY interrupts him)

AMY: She must be extremely talented.

ERIC: Oh yeah she is. She hasn't heard back from them yet but she has very high hopes. Her essay was absolutely superb.

AMY: Where else is she applying?

ERIC: Either Julliard, Pratt, or something in California.

JOSH: Hey, I went to Pratt.

ERIC: Really?

JOSH: Yeah, I went for architectural building sciences.

AMY: How did you end up in accounting then?

JOSH: You know, I have zero clue.

(Collective chuckle)

ERIC: Well, Josh, I didn't see you as the artistic kind of guy.

JOSH: *(relaxing)* Are you kidding? Back in high school I'd always help the drama department build their sets.

AMY: I used to do theater.

JOSH: Really?

AMY: Yeah! Well, I only did one show. *(she starts to laugh)* It's actually a very funny story. We were doing The Sound of Music and I was playing Sister Sophia. When I was walking off stage with a suitcase, it managed to get stuck in the front door and wouldn't budge. I was just standing there like a deer in headlights and had no clue what to do. I finally got the thing unstuck, and then my habit got caught instead. It popped right off as I tried to leave- I was mortified. That was the end of my theater career. *(As AMY is telling this story the office is laughing)*

(JOSH notices that his stomach is rumbling)

JOSH: Do you guys mind if I eat my breakfast? I didn't have time earlier.

ALL: 'Sure.' 'No, I don't mind.' 'If you want.' 'I don't care.'

(Josh takes out some of his breakfast, he then proceeds to eat very loudly, smacking his lips)

(BRENDA looks over, she scoffs)

BRENDA: Would you stop eating so loud, I'm trying to work.

JOSH: I'm so sorry.

(JOSH proceeds to eat a little bit quieter)

(MARGARET turns towards AMY)

MARGARET: Jeez, what is her problem?

BRENDA: Yes Margaret? You had something to say to me?

(There is a pause and panic from MARGARET)

MARGARET: Oh! Uh-

AMY: Margaret and I just noticed that you seem to be a little irritated, that's all.

BRENDA: Thank you for worrying but I'm afraid that's none of your business.

AMY: We just made an observation.

BRENDA: Well congratulations, you can read vocal tone.

TOM: They were just being nice.

BRENDA: Well look who's finally talking today, normally we can't get you to stop.

AMY: Brenda, why are you being so rude?

BRENDA: Maybe I'm just not having a good day.

TOM: That's all you needed to say.

BRENDA: Why are all of you coming after me?

ALL: (making confused remarks/faces)

AMY: We're not trying to be rude to you, we just wanted to know if you were feeling okay.

BRENDA: I'm fine! I hope that answered your question. *(To herself in kind of a muffled tone, but still loud enough for other people to hear)*

(BRENDA stands up and opens the SL window right next to her desk)

(AMY stands up and walks towards BRENDA)

AMY: Brenda, we've been over this, you can't smoke in here.

TOM: Please don't smoke in here.

BRENDA: Fine *(Brenda puts out the cig in TOMS mug)*, but now I'm in an even worse mood than I was before, so don't talk to me and leave me alone.

ERIC: No problem.

JOSH: At least that's better than the whole office smelling like smoke.

(TOM is visibly annoyed by someone smoking in his presence. He clears his throat to break the tension in the room)

TOM: Josh, have you forwarded me the spreadsheet yet?

JOSH: Uh, not yet. I will get on that in a second.

(JOSH walks over to AMY)

JOSH: Hey, would you mind giving this to Stephenie?

(JOSH hands AMY a little gift bag)

AMY: Oh you didn't need to-

JOSH: No, I insist.

AMY: That's so sweet of you.

JOSH: I know that she probably won't remember me-

AMY: Are you kidding! She never stops talking about you. After that work party she always wants to know what you did today or what you're doing later. She adores you.

JOSH: Well then that means our friendship was meant to be.

(back to work for a bit)

MARGARET: What the hell?

(MARGARET turns towards AMY)

MARGARET (CONT): My computer just crashed, I have no idea what happened.

AMY: I'm not the right person to ask, I'm very bad with all of this computer stuff. Tom?

(TOM looks up)

AMY (CONT): Do you think you could help Margaret with her computer?

MARGARET: It just stopped working. I swear, this happens every other day.

TOM: No problem. I'll take a look.

(TOM starts to walk over to MARGARET'S desk)

MARGARET: Thank you so much. I think I'm just bad at technology. I'm just glad that all of my work files were transferred when I moved.

(TOM fixes her computer)

TOM: There you go, all fixed.

MARGARET: Oh my god thank you so much!

(AMY leans towards MARGARET)

AMY: I'm going to head to the copy room to print the work calendar for next week, I'll be right back. Does anyone need anything else?

TOM: I'll take a coffee.

ALL: No, I'm ok. No, thank you. Etc.

(AMY stands up to print some paper, she stops in her tracks, she looks out DSC)

AMY: Guys?

(The plane is getting closer)

AMY: Guys. Guys!

(The lights shift to black. A spot illuminates Amy, center stage)

AMY: *(Breaking the 4th wall)* At 8:46 am, September 11th, a plane flew into the north tower of the World Trade Center in New York.

(AMY resumes into the story as the lights return to normal)

(All the characters stand and rush DSC)

(All characters react in confusion, horror, sadness, scared)

(They all go surround the SL window)

JOSH: Oh my god!

TOM: What was it?

BRENDA: It just exploded.

AMY: No, something hit it.

ERIC: What?

AMY: *(in shock)* A-a plane. A plane hit it.

ERIC: A plane?!

AMY: *(still in shock)* Yeah. Look at all of that smoke. Why is there so much smoke?

ERIC: It's everywhere!

JOSH: Well, it had to be an accident. Surely a plane got off course or lost control.

BRENDA: How do you get off course in the middle of Manhattan? It had to be a terrorist attack.

JOSH: Brenda?!

BRENDA: Well, don't you think? You remember what happened in '93!

ERIC: We don't know anything. Let's not jump to conclusions.

MARGARET: What do we do?

AMY: Call the police?

JOSH: The smell.

BRENDA: That's the fuel.

(ERIC starts to pace)

ERIC: Should we leave? *(Frantically)* We've gotta leave.

TOM: I don't know, I don't know, I don't know... how do we leave? Where would we go?

BRENDA: Jesus Christ. Find the fire escape... use the stairs.

AMY: We're on the 105th floor.

BRENDA: The elevator, then. It's not our building that was hit.

JOSH: Brenda, just be calm.

MARGARET: *(Anxiety building up)* Oh my god, oh my god.

(Margaret goes over to her desk's phone)

MARGARET (CONT): The line is busy!

(There is chatter around the office before AMY breaks apart the noise)

AMY: Everyone, keep calm. We have to check if we're safe or if we need to evacuate. Someone needs to get a hold of the front desk.

JOSH: I'll call.

(JOSH goes to his desk, dials, and starts to talk)

ERIC: I'll dial 911.

BRENDA: Me too.

(ERIC dials on his phone, his phone isn't working. Brenda begins trying hers several times as well)

ERIC: No dial tone.

JOSH: Try someone else's phone.

(ERIC goes to TOM'S desk to call 911 on the desk's phone. Brenda's call finally goes through)

(This sequence of ERIC and BRENDA are inter-spliced with both of them talking to 911 at the same time)

BRENDA: Hello 911?

ERIC: There was a plane that crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Center.

BRENDA: My name is Brenda.

ERIC: Eric.

BRENDA: B-R-E-N-D-A. ERIC: E-R-I-C.

BRENDA: Of course we need the fire department, there's smoke everywhere.

ERIC: We need medical to go to the North Tower.

BRENDA: They already know?

ERIC: We're in the southern tower.

BRENDA: What should we do? ERIC: What should we do?

BRENDA: Stay sheltered? What does that mean?

ERIC: Stay indoors?

BRENDA: Please they need to be here faster!

ERIC: They're on their way?

BRENDA: Thank you. ERIC: Thank you.

(They both hang up)

BRENDA: *(mocking)* They said that they already knew about the crash but 'appreciated that we called.' No one actually knows anything. We should leave.

ERIC: No, the person I talked to said to stay indoors, stay sheltered.

TOM: Do you think that the news would have covered it yet?

AMY: I mean, it can't hurt to look. Maybe we'll be able to find out what's going on.

(TOM goes to turn on the news on the TV, he searches for news)

(A news broadcast frantically tries to explain what's going on)

BRENDA: Turn that off, we can watch it all out the window.

ERIC: We're watching it to get more information.

BRENDA: I don't need to watch it more than I'm already seeing it.

(The office doesn't turn off the TV)

BRENDA (CONT): I said turn it off!

(BRENDA goes over to the TV and turns it off)

EVERYONE: Why would you do that? We need to watch it! Turn it back on! Etc.

BRENDA: Oh just look out the window!

MARGARET: *(With more ensuing anxiety)* What do we do now? Should we leave?

TOM: We don't know what's happening. We could get more information if Brenda would let us turn on the TV.

AMY: We are probably safe-

TOM: But how could you know that? We have no idea if we're safe or not, I don't know what to do! I...*(Beat)* I need to make a call.

AMY: That seems like a bit of a jump.

TOM: I at least need to call my mom, she needs to know. I tell her everything.

AMY: I can grab my cell phone if you want.

TOM: No thank you, I'd rather use the personal line.

(blackout)

(Spot on & follow TOM as he walks over to the phone)

(TOM Dials a phone number)

TOM: Mom? Hi. Actually, no. I called you because I don't think I'll be able to fly into Rochester tonight. *(Beat)* The neighboring building has been hit. *beat* ...a plane. We are presumably safe, but the office is having its suspicions. I'm sorry. Please stay strong for Dad, he needs you. If I'm gone, oh, I probably shouldn't jump to conclusions like that, well, I mean we are still getting information on the situation, you're the only other person he has. I think we're safe, but we just don't know. I know that chemo has been rough on you but it's working and you are getting better. Please, just— just take in deep breaths, please, I don't want to put stress on your lungs. There you go, deep breaths. You're stronger than you realize. I don't say it enough, but I love you. I'll see you later, goodbye—

(JOSH interrupts TOM'S monologue)

(Lights up)

JOSH: Guys! We have a plan. I got a hold of the front desk. Rick says that we should stay indoors, it's too dangerous to be outside right now with all the debris and fire trucks. I think we should stay here, but be prepared to leave if we get the call over the PA to evacuate.

ERIC: So they think we're really safe?

JOSH: For the time being, yes. They're sending people back up from the lobby.

TOM: *(turns back to the phone)* Thank god. Did you hear that? We're safe. I'm sorry for scaring you. I don't know if I can fly in tonight but I'll be there as soon as I can. *(TOM hangs up the phone)*

MARGARET: So we just stay here? And wait?

JOSH: From what I heard from Rick, yes.

ERIC: Rick?

AMY: You know, Rick Rescorla. The guy who makes us do the safety trainings every three months.

BRENDA: Ugh, I hate those.

AMY: Well, if Rick says we're safe, I trust him.

BRENDA: I don't, he's just some guy with a plastic badge. What gives him the right to make the decision for us?

AMY: Brenda, please.

ERIC: Tom, I'm sorry, we had no idea about your mom.

TOM: No, it's ok. You didn't know.

(There is a pause of silence)

ERIC: What should we do now?

BRENDA: I still think we should leave.

(still more pause of silence)

JOSH: No, they told us to stay put so we aren't at risk from the falling rubble. We stay here.

ERIC: And do what?

JOSH: I guess we go back to work.

(general uneasy agreement as people try to go back to work. People continue to glance out the window.)

TOM: Guys, this feels weird. I can't focus.

MARGARET: I agree. Can we talk about something? Anything?

ERIC: Amy! Um, tell us more about Stephanie.

AMY: Uh, this may not be the right time-

ERIC: We could all use something else to focus on right now.

JOSH: Yeah, I agree.

TOM: Please.

ERIC: Amy, I hear there's something special happening today...

(All of the characters surround V. AMY is sitting on her desk with her legs crossed and facing the audience. MARGARET has pulled up a chair and is sitting next to AMY. JOSH is sitting at his desk. ERIC is in front of JOSH'S desk leaning on it. BRENDA is standing next to ERIC'S desk with her arms crossed. TOM has pulled up a chair and is sitting next to MARGARET's desk)

(There is an awkward moment of silence, nobody knows what to say)

(AMY looks over at MARGARET who is visibly uncomfortable)

AMY: Uh... sure. Some of you might already know, but it's her 4th birthday today.

(There is a small collective excitement amongst the crowd)

TOM: We could have been birthday twins, mine is tomorrow.

(AMY lets out a work laugh)

TOM: I know, the big 4-1.

(There is a collective almost forced chuckle let out by everyone in the group except for MARGARET)

ERIC: Blake just had her birthday. Didn't know there were so many September birthdays.

AMY: One more year until adulthood.

ERIC: Yeah, I'm terrified. She's my only one, I don't think I could survive while she's at college, I'm gonna miss her too much, and I know she's going to miss Piggles.

JOSH: Piggles?

ERIC: Yeah Piggles, our pig. We moved here from Kansas so that Blake could go to one of her dream schools after Dorothea passed. We couldn't just leave Piggles there, so we took him with us.

AMY: Will she ever come home and see, Piggles?

ERIC: She has to, she loves that pig.

TOM: What are you going to do with all of that free time? You won't have Blake around to worry about.

ERIC: Well, I am working on getting my teaching degree. I've always loved geography, and Blake has made my love for kids grow exponentially. I'm not sure I'm cut out for this corporate life. I want to teach in the countryside, possibly move back to Kansas.

AMY: Would you not visit Blake at college?

ERIC: Of course I would, and the good thing is that Julliard is very close to where Dorothea's parents live, so they'll be able to keep an eye on her. *(He chuckles)*. Blake's grandparents have been so helpful with her school. They've almost completely funded her tuition. I wish Dorothea was here to see how much they have continued to love our family.

JOSH: When I have kids, I hope my dad will want to be involved.

BRENDA: Kids are a waste of space.

ERIC: I don't see it that way. Blake is my whole life and I would give up everything just to support her.

BRENDA: Phil never wanted kids, so I never wanted kids.

JOSH: Is that why you only have cats?

BRENDA: How did you know that? I've never told any of you I own cats.

JOSH: You're wearing a cat pin and covered in cat hair.

(BRENDA notices all of the cat hair on her and attempts to brush it off)

(There is a moment of silence that goes by before MARGARET starts to sniffle)

AMY: Margaret, are you okay?

MARGARET: No, I'm fine. *(She obviously is not)*

AMY: I'm sorry I knew we shouldn't have talked about kids right now, I-

MARGARET: Everyone else obviously wanted to talk about it, so I thought I could just hold it in.

(There is some confusion around the office)

JOSH: Margaret, I hope you don't mind if I ask you what happened.

MARGARET: I mean *(Beat)* I can't really hide it anymore. *(MARGARET waits a couple of seconds, trying to compose herself)* I- I don't think I can-

(AMY goes over to comfort MARGARET)

AMY: That's ok, take your time.

(MARGARET starts to stable her breathing)

MARGARET: *(Beat)* I decided to leave my family and take Sophie Jean with me. So what if I don't know who Sophie Jean's father is? *(Beat)* After they found out that I didn't know, they said that I was an unfit mother and no child would ever be happy knowing their mother is a Tart; so I packed all of my things up, bought 2 plane tickets for New York and just left. They haven't seen their grandbaby in months. I just feel so terrible. I have regretted my decision ever since I left Georgia, and I can't go back because as I walked out I yelled things at them that not even criminals should have said.

AMY: Do you want to go back?

MARGARET: Yes, but. Oh, I don't know. After today I don't even know if I am going to survive. *(realization)* Oh god. What do I do about Sophie Jean? *(Panic)* What if I don't come home today, who's going to take care of her- what if-

AMY: What if you call them?

MARGARET: What?

BRENDA: Call them? You should leave. If you have any doubt about your safety, don't stay here. Why would you make a call to your parents when you could just go home and be with her? We should all be packing up right now.

MARGARET: Oh god, you're right. *(she frantically stands up)* I need to go.

AMY: Brenda, stop that. You're scaring her.

JOSH: Margaret, it's going to be okay. We already talked to the police and the front desk, we're in the safest place we could be. If anything, anything were likely to happen, we would leave immediately.

(MARGARET stops)

AMY: *(AMY takes MARGARET'S hand)* What if you call your parents and ask them if they would take care of Sophie Jean, just in case, and maybe you could use that time to apologize to them?

MARGARET: Well no, I can't-

TOM: It's obviously on your mind. It is a better option than not asking at all and still having to worry about your daughter.

(MARGARET takes a moment of hesitation)

AMY(CONT): Do you want me to dial?

(MARGARET nods, AMY takes her hand as they go to the DSR phone)

AMY: Okay, what's their number?

MARGARET: *(Her voice is shaky)* 912

AMY: 912

MARGARET: 895

AMY: 895

MARGARET: 2212

AMY: 2212

(AMY hands MARGARET the phone)

(MARGARET looks to AMY for approval. AMY nods her head)

(Lights go down, spot on MARGARET)

(MARGARET picks up the phone. Busy signal)

MARGARET: I can't get through. Why can't I get through?!

AMY: The phones are probably busy. Keep trying.

(MARGARET dials again, busy signal)

MARGARET (CONT): Please!

(MARGARET dials more frantically)

MARGARET (CONT): *(quietly with more panic)* Please, please, please.

(The call finally goes through)

MARGARET: Hello? I know you don't want to talk to me— just please, listen. I know that I haven't lived up to the “southern belle” expectations that you wanted me to be, but right now I really need you to just stop talking and hear what I have to say. (Beat) I'm sorry that I took your grandbaby from you, I have regretted it ever since I walked out of the house. [pause] I know this seems pretty out of the blue, but I got a job! I work at the Southern World Trade Center. I finally put some use to my degree! *(Tone shifts)* I don't know if you have seen it but, the Northern tower was struck by a plane. As of right now, we are presumably safe but I'm not sure. *(Starts to break)* If anything happens *(Growing more desperate)* please look after my daughter, she needs someone. Please, forgive me. Please, don't let me go on knowing that I have failed you. [pause] Thank you, thank you so much. I know I have said some foul things to y'all in the past, but you are the best of parents I could have asked for. Thank you. *(sobs and a couple of seconds pass)* Do y'all

still have your old tape recorder? Can you record this and play it for Sophie Jean later? Just in case? *(a few seconds go by)* Sophie? Hi honey, this is your mama. If you're listening to this, it means I- I'm not able to care for you anymore, so you'll be living with your nana and papa from now on. I just want you to know that I love you so very much, you are the best thing to ever happen to me. I'm so sorry, but I have to let you go. I love you so so very much, goodbye. *(pause)* Thank you. I'll call y'all later. *(she hangs up)*
(MARGARET goes back to the V, she sits down next to AMY and lays her head on AMY'S shoulder)

AMY: Feel better?

MARGARET: Relieved, in a way.

AMY: We're going to be fine.

(JOSH goes to the SR window)

JOSH: The smoke is starting to get thicker.

ERIC: Yeah, I can almost taste it in here.

TOM: It reminds me of my mom.

JOSH: What do you mean by that?

TOM: She was a smoker ever since I can remember. I would always find her cigarettes in her coat pocket, she thought we wouldn't see them.

BRENDA: You probably stressed her out so much it was all she could do.

(TOM lets out a little chuckle)

TOM: Maybe...

AMY: I'm sorry, you said *we*? I thought you were an only child?

TOM: Oh, I am. I say 'we' because my cousin, Stu, and I would spend all our time together. His mother was always working so my mom would often take care of the both of us. He was almost like my brother. And like a brother... he can be quite the pain sometimes.

AMY: How so?

TOM: He still makes fun of me for how I would always run around and try to take my mom's shoes, almost like a dog, just so that she wasn't able to go into work.

AMY: Stephanie does the same. I always find my heels under her bed.

TOM: Stu and I would turn on the radio at night and sing Michael Jackson at the top of our lungs. Sometimes my mom would join in. It made me so happy. Made me feel good.

ERIC: When Blake was younger, she would turn on the hose in the backyard, run it down our playset slide and make a slip-n-slide. She'd even drag out the kiddie pool and invite all the neighborhood kids over to play. And in the winter she would build these huge elaborate mazes out of snow in the backyard. She would spend hours and hours out there, scraping every last inch of snow up from the yard and packing it into the walls of her maze. Now I know where her love for architecture comes from.

AMY: Did I tell you guys that I was a competitive swimmer?

ERIC: You don't say.

AMY: Oh absolutely. I was ranked #1 in Nebraska for a while. I was good enough to get into college for it. After I found out that you can't really do much with your career in swimming, I gave it up to chase after my dream of being an accountant. *(This is meant to be a joke)*

JOSH: I ran track in high school. I did everything that track had to offer. High jump, long jump, discus, javelin, any type of running. I wasn't good though. Coach kicked me out. He found out that I had been stealing snacks from the vending machines and selling them at double the price before practice.

BRENDA: My husband filed for divorce yesterday. *(chuckles a little)* 46 years right down the drain. On our 50th we were going to tour Spain and 're-proclaim our love for each other'. I knew that was such a stupid idea.

AMY: How do you feel about the divorce?

BRENDA: *(sarcasm)* Oh I'm thrilled. It's ridiculous. We were high school sweethearts and now he thinks he knows what love is without me.

ERIC: Do you still love him?

BRENDA: Well yeah. I'm putting off signing the papers. Maybe that'll give him enough time to change his mind. *(BRENDA opens a matchbox and tries to light a cigarette. BRENDA walks over to the SL window. The whole room stops what they're doing to look at BRENDA)*

BRENDA: What? I'm stressed.

(everyone gives her a look of disdain)

TOM: There's already enough smoke outside Brenda, we don't need any in here.

BRENDA (CONT): Fine.

(She smashes the cigarette out in an ashtray)

BRENDA (CONT): Why aren't we leaving?

JOSH: We're safe, that's what they told us.

BRENDA: But how could they possibly know?

JOSH: We just have to put our faith in them, they know the most about the current situation. The firemen and police officers are on the street, if anything else happens they would tell us.

BRENDA: *(growing into a little bit of more rage)* But I want to leave! This has been one of the most stressful days of my life and they're saying that we have to just sit here and hope for the best?

AMY: *(confused)* Just go then!

BRENDA: *(mocking)* But the front desk says that we're safe.

MARGARET: If it is making you this stressed then leave, none of us want you here anyway.

BRENDA: Just because your parents hate you doesn't mean you can be snappy with me.

MARGARET: Why would you say that?!

EVERYONE: That's not true. Brenda, that was too far. Why would you say that? That's enough Brenda. That was so unnecessary.

BRENDA: What? I call it how I see it.

TOM: But you can't use something like that against another person to hurt them.

BRENDA: But it's true!

ERIC: No it's not! And anyways, that's not the point!

BRENDA: Well I just said what I-

AMY: Brenda, you need to apologize.

BRENDA: I didn't say anything that wasn't true.

AMY: Again, not the point, you knew it was going to hurt.

BRENDA: That's why I said it.

MARGARET: Yeah, well just because your *husband* hates you doesn't mean you can come after me!

BRENDA: You come here missy!

(BRENDA starts to march over to MARGARET. MARGARET cowers behind AMY who steps in front to protect margaret. TOM grabs BRENDA'S to make her stop while JOSH steps in front of BRENDA. ERIC goes over to consol MARGARET)

(BRENDA shakes off TOM and walks away)

BRENDA(CONT): You all are idiots! We should be leaving right now!

AMY: Then leave! The police, who you talked to, gave us a strong *suggestion* that we should stay. Nobody is forcing you to be here. Just go home.

BRENDA: I can't. *(Breaking)*

AMY: Why not? You just said-

BRENDA: I can't go home. Phil is home.

(pause)

ERIC: Stay with us. We're safe here. Really.

(Bit of time goes by)

JOSH: Should we check the news now?

(all look at Brenda)

BRENDA: Oh, fine.

AMY: They will probably have something reported now.

(JOSH goes to the TV, TOM switches through channels before he lands on the news station)

ERIC: They're interviewing people.

MARGARET: Keep skipping around.

ERIC: What exactly are we looking for?

JOSH: Updates? Further directions?

TOM: Wait! Oh my god... That's- that's Stu! ...He looks awful.

AMY: Is he... okay? What's he saying?

TOM: He's right outside his apartment building... I've never seen him so terrified.

JOSH: There's so much dust, it looks horrible down there.

(Dialogue between STU and REPORTER)

ERIC: Everyone's running, they look so scared...

MARGARET: Please turn it off, I can't handle this right now...

(The group watch in silence)

AMY: Oh my god... There's so much rubble. Half of the building looks like it's on the street.

MARGARET: Tom... PLEASE turn it off-!

ERIC: Maybe... Maybe we should.

JOSH: Tom? This is scaring Margaret.

(Tom turns off the TV)

TOM: I think we should leave.

BRENDA: That's what I've been saying!

JOSH: You can't be serious. Did you see that footage? It's chaos down there. We're safe up here.

ERIC: I agree. We have to keep a level head about this.

MARGARET: How could we possibly be safe? The building next to us is on fire, we saw it get hit and explode!

BRENDA: It's time to go.

(Everyone starts to argue with each other)

AMY: Stop it! Stop it!

(She looks out at the tower)

AMY: I need to call my daughter.

JOSH: Amy, please. We're safe. The police and firefighters are helping the other tower.

AMY: But that footage- so many people-

JOSH: The police know best, they want us to be safe-

Josh is interrupted by the Loudspeaker.

(offstage) RICK: Attention occupants. This is Rick Rescorla, your head of security. It is time to evacuate the building. Please proceed to the stairs in an orderly fashion. I repeat, it is time to evacuate the building. Please proceed to the stairs immediately.

(All pause for a moment.)

MARGARET: We really have to go.

AMY: Just please let me call my daughter.

JOSH: Margaret, what's one more minute? Just let her make the call. The stairs are probably packed anyways.

(JOSH looks towards AMY. He gestures to go to the phone)

(Lights out. Spot follows AMY towards the phone)

(AMY picks up the phone DSR)

AMY: *(she is the last to talk on the phone) (2 rings go by)* Brian? Hi. *(she starts to break)* I know you've probably seen the news. A plane flew into the North Tower. I'm okay, they just

told us to evacuate, we're about to leave. But I just wanted to say I love you, and I'm sorry. I'm sorry for fighting with you over everything. I'm sorry that I yell at you when you don't hang up your shirts right when you're doing laundry. I'm sorry that I leave out all of my socks when I take them off after I get home from work. I'm sorry I didn't change the oil before I came to work. I'm sorry I take all of the covers in the bed. I'm sorry that I say good morning right in your face when I know I wake up with bad breath and I'm sorry I don't clean my hair out of the drain. *(weak)* I'm sorry. *(Beat)* Can you please put Stephanie on the phone? *(there is a little moment of pause)* *(She takes in a breath of relief when she hears her daughter's voice)* Hello sweetie! I have to tell you something. *(Amy is trying to sound like she hasn't been crying)* I'm coming home early. That's right. I'll be home soon and we can spend the whole day together. We can do anything you want, okay? Yes, we can go to the park. And then we'll get ready for your party. That's right, 4 is very old. Okay sweetie, I'm coming home now. I'll see you-*(The phone line cuts out with the lights)*

(cut to blackout as the TV turns on, playing a news report about the second crash)

(END)