

End Days Audition Side:

Nelson / Rachel

This may be supplemented with cold reads

~~SYLVIA (to NELSON) I just thought, I mean, you just had this life changing experience...~~

~~NELSON. I did. Absolutely.~~

~~SYLVIA. Oh yes.~~

~~(She takes the soup tureen from JESUS.)~~

~~Thank you, Jesus. So, will you be coming next Sunday? To Blessed Name?~~

~~NELSON. Definitely. I wouldn't miss it.~~

~~ARTHUR. Think I might take a little nap.~~

~~(He exits.)~~

~~(JESUS gives SYLVIA a little pat on the shoulder and she is strengthened by it.)~~

~~SYLVIA. All right then. We'll all go together again! Wonderful! Have a blessed afternoon everyone!~~

~~RACHEL. Ta.~~

~~(SYLVIA and JESUS leave.)~~

~~NELSON. So... How about that? What a morning, right?~~

~~(RACHEL wads up a brochure and throws it at him. It bears him in the head.)~~

~~NELSON. Oops!~~

~~RACHEL. Catch!~~

~~(She throws another wad, which he swats at with his left hand.)~~

~~NELSON. What are you doing, Rachel?~~

~~RACHEL. Catch, damn it!~~

~~(She throws. He tries to catch with his right arm but it hurts.)~~

~~NELSON. Owl!~~

~~RACHEL. "I'm healed! Thank you Jesus! I can see!"~~

~~NELSON. I didn't say that.~~

~~RACHEL. Freakin' phony. Let me see you hop on one leg.~~

~~(He does.)~~

~~The sprained leg, stupid.~~

(He tries but it is clearly painful.)

NELSON. Well, maybe I'm not completely healed. But I'm feeling considerably better.

RACHEL. Yeah. It's a miracle.

(She returns to her dry cereal.)

NELSON. Didn't you love it there, Rachel? The music was so stirring, and Reverend Peter had such a deep booming voice and everyone was so nice. I really felt part of something big, didn't you?

RACHEL. God whore.

NELSON. What?

RACHEL. You have to pick, don't you get that? You can't be Jewish on Saturday and Evangelical on Sunday, just to cover all your bases.

NELSON. But I like them both.

RACHEL. You're not supposed to "like" them. And they're completely contradictory.

NELSON. Everything's contradictory. It's like Quantum Field Theory.

RACHEL. No it's not.

NELSON. It is. If you ask, "Is light a particle or a wave?" Well, actually, it can be both. I mean, if you ask a particle-like question, you get a particle-like answer, and if you ask a wave-like question, you get a wave-like answer. You just can't ask both questions at the same time.

RACHEL. Is this what you do every time you move?

NELSON. What?

RACHEL. You follow some girl home. Feed her astrophysics. Join her mother's freak-show church.

NELSON. I just... I like you, Rachel.

RACHEL. You have no reason to like me.

NELSON. Maybe it's pheromones.

RACHEL. Huh?

NELSON. Maybe you're giving off an indiscernible smell that I can't consciously recognize but that my body chemically responds to.

RACHEL. Don't smell me then, okay!? Don't smell me. Don't like me. And don't come around here pumping up my mother any more. She's fucking lost her mind and I don't need you here feeding her sick fantasies.

NELSON. I think your mom just loves you. My mom was like that. She wants you to be safe.

RACHEL. My mother has been inculcated into a cult.

NELSON. Maybe. Or maybe she's asking a wave-like question and you're asking a particle-like question.

RACHEL. That is such bullshit! How do you shove all this science down my throat and then act like you're healed. You genuinely think you were healed by God today?

NELSON. Probably not.

RACHEL. Probably not.

NELSON. But the idea of it made me happy. I would have liked there to be a miracle.

RACHEL. See, I like REALITY! Well, I don't like it. But everything else pisses me off!

NELSON. I'm sorry, Rachel. I wish I could stop pissing you off. I wish I could say the right thing. I never can say the right thing, and I want so much to say the right thing to you.

(Long pause while RACHEL considers this.)

RACHEL. I read your book.

NELSON. The Stephen Hawking? You read the Stephen Hawking? Oh my gosh. Why didn't you tell me?

RACHEL. You were too busy speaking in tongues.

NELSON. What did you think? Did you like it?

(Pause. Sigh.)

RACHEL. Yeah. I liked it.

NELSON. Oh my Gosh. You liked it. Wow. This is like the greatest day of my life.

RACHEL. But it's not about all that miracle crap. It's about figuring out...

NELSON. *(over this)* This is so great! You liked it. I knew... I just knew you would. Oh my gosh. There are so many

things I want you to read. Brian Green, Ta-Pei Cheng, Simon Singh.

(searching through his backpack)

I've got articles... Videos... Do you know about the LHC?

RACHEL. The what?

NELSON. The Large Hadron Collider. Oh my gosh, Rachel. You're going to love this. They're building this enormous machine at CERN, outside Geneva, Switzerland. It's this incredibly long tunnel where they'll smash together particles with such speed and energy... they might be able to create conditions that were present in the universe a billionth of a second after the Big Bang. Oh my gosh.

(back to searching through his backpack)

I've got this article. You're going to love this. Where did I...

RACHEL. Wait. They might be able to prove the Big Bang? NELSON. They might be able to replicate it.

RACHEL. And prove it wasn't God?

NELSON. Well, nobody knows that. But the science is so thrilling. I want to tell you so much! I've got so much... Soon... like in the next few years we're going to be able to observe so many things that were once only wild concepts.

RACHEL. Yeah?

NELSON. Wonderful things. Unimaginable things. Technology is catching up with theory. Fast. Really, really fast. I mean, this is the greatest time to be alive.

RACHEL. *(A beat. Amazed.)* You really believe that, don't you?

NELSON. I do. Absolutely. We're so lucky. Oh, Rachel. I'm so happy you read the book. I'm so happy.

(RACHEL considers him. She grabs his face, a bit violently. He recoils, afraid he's going to get his nose broken again. She pulls him back in and kisses him fast, awkwardly.)

* Kissing not required *
* at the audition *

NELSON. (*dazed*) What was that?

RACHEL. (*baffled herself*) I don't know. An experiment.

NELSON. You kissed me. Right?

RACHEL. Tell me more. The Large...

NELSON. Uhh...Hadron Collider. Yeah.

(*She kisses him again.*)

NELSON. Yeah.

Yeah. They might be able to collide protons at such high speeds? They'll be broken down so small, they might be able to pinpoint the smallest fragments of the universe. They might be able to prove that all of matter, each of us, is made up of strings. That we're all strings, vibrating like an infinitely small orchestra.

(*She kisses him again.*)

You kissed me three times. What does it mean?

RACHEL. I don't know.

NELSON. Does it mean you like me?

RACHEL. I don't know.

(*She kisses him again.*)

Maybe.

NELSON. Probably?

RACHEL. Maybe.

(*She kisses him again.*)

Tell me more.

(*Lights shift. A bit later. NELSON is sitting at the kitchen table, playing a tape of his Torah portion and staring off into space. RACHEL has left. He reaches the end of the tape and hits rewind.*)

(*ARTHUR enters in his pajamas.*)

ARTHUR. What time is it?

NELSON. Mr. S.! I'm so glad you're awake. Something unbelievable has happened.

ARTHUR. What was that singing? I thought I was dead.

If it should chance to be
We should see some faint days
Empty lanes days
Why ground
Always a chance with time
Somebody to find the oil
Then the dance and the house
Consider yourself our mate
We don't want to have no
For after some consideration we can state
Consider yourself
One of us

End Days Audition Side:

Rachel / Stephen

This may be supplemented with cold reads

(Light shift.)

(RACHEL and STEPHEN HAWKING are sitting behind Starbucks, RACHEL is stoned, smoking her funny cigarette and drinking a mochachino.)

STEPHEN. You kissed him?

RACHEL. Seven times. What does it mean?

STEPHEN. It's not really my area of expertise.

RACHEL. Yeah. Me either.

(Pause while they chew this over.)

I loved your book. So much. So much, Stephen. Can I call you Stephen?

STEPHEN. Call me Dr. Hawking.

RACHEL. You make sense of...everything. Of the universe. It all always seemed so incomprehensible and pointless to me. Where *did* we come from? Why are we here? I don't know. But it makes me feel that someday we might know.

STEPHEN. The cake is in the search. Finding out is the icing.

RACHEL. Wow. Did you write that?

STEPHEN. No. It's your funny cigarettes.

RACHEL. Nelson says it's a wonderful time to be alive. Isn't that amazing? That he really feels that way? I always thought that optimism and joy were a sign of low intellect. But he seems fairly bright. When I'm with him, I almost feel hopeful. But then I go home and my mother is waiting for the apocalypse like it's a Greyhound Bus.

STEPHEN. Well, we do need to work on an alternative.

RACHEL. To what?

STEPHEN. Earth.

RACHEL. Earth?

STEPHEN. The end is coming.

RACHEL. Oh my God! Even my hallucinations are raving. I am so fucked up!

STEPHEN. It's all about you, isn't it? Didn't you read any of the transcripts from my Symposium?

RACHEL. What did they say?

STEPHEN. We have maybe one hundred years.

RACHEL. And then what? The Rapture?

STEPHEN. An enormous rogue meteorite. A genetically engineered virus. Sudden global warming. Nuclear War.

RACHEL. But not the Rapture, right?

STEPHEN. The human race needs to spread out into space for the survival of the species. We can have a permanent base on the moon in 20 years. If we get cracking.

RACHEL. But Stephen, why not just let it all go? Human annihilation. Maybe something more intelligent will grow - less destructive.

STEPHEN. Survival of the species is one of our most basic human instincts. You should really think about why you kissed Nelson. And read my papers - buy them and read them. And give your mother a break. We're all looking for answers.

(He starts backing out.)

RACHEL. Don't leave. I have so much to ask you.

STEPHEN. You're bringing me down, man.

(He walks away.)

(Light shift. The church bell chimes three times. He sits in a living room, late at night. There is a thunder and lightning storm. The sound of rain. Offstage we hear SYLVIA calling out softly.)

SYLVIA. Jesus, where are you?

(A hall light comes on. SYLVIA comes out to the kitchen in her nightgown.)

Jesus? Are you there?

(He comes out of the shadows.)

Oh Jesus! Thank God. I was so scared. I just woke up and I didn't know where you were. I thought it was

End Days Audition Side:

Sylvia / Jesus

This may be supplemented with cold reads

STEPHEN. It's all about you, isn't it? Didn't you read any of the transcripts from my Symposium?

RACHEL. What did they say?

STEPHEN. We have maybe one hundred years.

RACHEL. And then what? The Rapture?

STEPHEN. An enormous rogue meteorite. A genetically engineered virus. Sudden global warming. Nuclear War.

RACHEL. But not the Rapture, right?

STEPHEN. The human race needs to spread out into space for the survival of the species. We can have a permanent base on the moon in 50 years. If we get cracking.

RACHEL. But Stephen, why not just let it all go? Human annihilation. Maybe something more intelligent will grow - less destructive.

STEPHEN. Survival of the species is one of our most basic human instincts. You should really think about why you kissed Nelson. And read my papers - buy them and read them. And give your mother a break. We're all looking for answers.

(He starts backing out.)

RACHEL. Don't leave. I have so much to ask you.

STEPHEN. You're bringing me down, man.

(He exits.)

(Light shift. The church bell chimes three times. The Stein living room, late at night. There is a thunder and lightning storm. The sound of rain. Offstage we hear SYLVIA calling out softly.)

SYLVIA. Jesus, where are you?

(A hall light comes on. SYLVIA comes out to the kitchen in her nightgown.)

Jesus? Are you there?

(He comes out of the shadows.)

Oh Jesus! Thank God. I was so scared. I just woke up and I didn't know where you were. I thought it was

happening. I thought I'd been left behind.

(She goes to him and he takes her in his arms.)

JESUS. Did you have a bad dream?

SYLVIA. There was a storm, like tonight. Thunder and explosions. The sky was on fire. I heard screaming and I was trying to find Rachel and Arthur, but I couldn't. So I prayed that you would come and take me in your arms. And you did.

(realizing)

Just like now. You took me in your arms and you whispered, "It's time, Sylvia."

JESUS. (whispering) It's time Sylvia.

SYLVIA. Tonight? Now?

JESUS. Soon.

SYLVIA. This is so much like my dream. Is this my dream?

JESUS. Soon.

SYLVIA. When, Jesus? Please. I need to know.

JESUS. But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven...

JESUS & SYLVIA. Neither the Son, but the Father.

JESUS. Just keep preparing.

SYLVIA. All right.

(a moment)

But, you must have some idea when it will be.

JESUS. Sylvia.

SYLVIA. Could you just give me a general idea?

JESUS. Soon.

SYLVIA. A little less general? I know. I shall not knoweth. I know. But I feel this panic, Jesus. That it will all start happening. That I won't know where Rachel is. That she'll be off at school, or at the library, or wherever it is she goes now, I don't even know. And it will all start happening, and I won't be able to get to her. To take her with me. Or... Or... to say goodbye. Please Jesus. Just... Just blink. Okay?

JESUS. Blink?

SYLVIA. Once if I guess wrong, and twice if I guess right.

JESUS. Sylvia. This is not a game.

SYLVIA. Please. Just a blink. What could a blink hurt?

JESUS. You need more faith, Sylvia.

SYLVIA. I know, but I'm so anxious. I don't think I'll sleep again unless I know something for sure. Now, I'm just going to say some days. One for "No," two for "Yes."

JESUS. This isn't right.

SYLVIA. Is it going to happen tonight?

(There is a long pause. And then JESUS blinks once.)

Was that a blink? Jesus, was it?

(JESUS remains stony faced.)

It was! It was a single blink! It's not tonight. Thank you Jesus. Thank you so much! Okay. Tomorrow. Monday.

(JESUS blinks once.)

SYLVIA. One blink. Tuesday?

(JESUS blinks once.)

Was that one blink or two? For Tuesday? I'm sorry, I couldn't tell.

(JESUS again blinks once.)

Not Tuesday! Wednesday?

(JESUS pauses, then blinks twice - or was it something in his eye?)

(stunned)

Jesus. You just blinked twice, didn't you— you blinked twice for Wednesday. Or was that something in your eye? Could you do it again?

JESUS. I don't like this, Sylvia.

SYLVIA. All right. It's Wednesday. The apocalypse is coming Wednesday. End days. The Rapture. Armageddon. My dream was right. Wasn't it?

JESUS. Just keep doing your good works. Spread the good

news. Save as many people as you possibly can.

SYLVIA. What about Rachel, Jesus? Will she be coming too? Jesus. I can't say.

SYLVIA. Oh, please. She asked for your forgiveness. You heard her today in church.

JESUS. It was under some duress.

SYLVIA. But she did say it. Shouldn't that count?

JESUS. I don't think she really meant it, Sylvia. Not in her heart.

SYLVIA. Oh, Jesus. She's a teenager. You know how they are. Please forgive Rachel and Arthur. Please don't leave them behind.

JESUS. We'll see. Goodbye, Sylvia.

SYLVIA. Goodbye? Where are you going? Don't go.

JESUS. I have to go to come back. Right?

SYLVIA. Can't you go Tuesday and come back Wednesday?

JESUS. You don't need me with you every minute now.

Sylvia. You're past that. You can carry me in your heart, now. You can do the good works in my name.

SYLVIA. You're mad at me, aren't you, Jesus? I shouldn't have pushed you so hard. I always do that. I'm very pushy.

JESUS. You're a good person, Sylvia.

SYLVIA. I am?

JESUS. You're a good person, and you're doing good in the world.

SYLVIA. Thank you, Jesus.

JESUS. All right then.

SYLVIA. Can you just come back at night and help me get to sleep? Can you sit with me while I pray?

JESUS. You pray, and I'll listen. You dream, and I'll be in your dreams. I'll come back for you when I come back for all the saved.

SYLVIA. I'm scared.

JESUS. Have faith, Sylvia.

SYLVIA. I love you, Jesus.

JESUS. I love you too.

(JESUS leaves.)

SYLVIA. Come back for me.

End Days Audition Side:

Nelson / Arthur / Sylvia / Rachel

This may be supplemented with cold reads

Michigan State - The Great Lakes

Michigan State University



NELSON. Cool. Count me in Mrs. S.

RACHEL. We have school.

NELSON. But we have school every day. This seems like a once in a lifetime event. What time does it all start?

SYLVIA. We'll begin our vigil at midnight on Tuesday.

NELSON. Should I bring anything?

RACHEL. That's it? You're in? She says the world is ending and you start packing your bags?

NELSON. Do we need to pack?

RACHEL. What are you going to tell your stepparents? Won't they think it's weird if you leave the house at midnight?

NELSON. They're still kind of in that honeymoon phase. So...they don't keep all that good track. Should I bring something? I make a really nice dip with onion soup mix and water chestnuts.

ARTHUR. I'll pick up some chips. Maybe a veggie platter.

SYLVIA. We're going to be praying. And repenting.

NELSON. Definitely.

ARTHUR. And I'll make everybody waffles for breakfast.

SYLVIA. We're going to be reading the Bible.

ARTHUR. Nelson, I'll finally get to teach you gin. Or, wait! There are four of us! We could play Hearts.

SYLVIA. No cards, Arthur. What is wrong with you today?

ARTHUR. *(over this)* Your mother used to be a killer Hearts player. Remember, Hon.? Our third year at N.Y.U.? We called her the shark.

RACHEL. Really?

ARTHUR. We used to wager copying fees at the student center, and your mother and I...

SYLVIA. We're not going to have time to play games, Arthur.

ARTHUR. But it's the whole day, right? We'll all be here a long time together.

NELSON. Unless Jesus comes like, right after Midnight.

ARTHUR. It'll be great. Nelson, bring your guitar.

SYLVIA. This isn't a party! This is your last chance to repent. To be saved. And when he comes, you won't need to play games. You'll be free. You'll feel joyful and loved.

ARTHUR. I do feel loved.

(He goes to put his arm around her. She shrinks away from him, involuntarily, repulsed.)

(There is a quiet moment when everyone takes this in.)

SYLVIA. Rachel? Will you stay?

RACHEL. Why?

SYLVIA. Haven't I explained this??

RACHEL. No. Why do you want me? Why do you want Dad? It doesn't seem like you can stand the sight of us here. Why do you want us there?

SYLVIA. Of course I want you here.

RACHEL. You want our souls. The rest of us you could do without.

SYLVIA. That's not true.

RACHEL. What happens when Jesus doesn't come?

SYLVIA. He's going to come.

RACHEL. But what if he doesn't?

SYLVIA. I have complete faith in him.

NELSON. Stay, Rachel.

RACHEL. You think Jesus is going to come for us?

NELSON. I don't know. But we already know what happens if we go to school. Now we'll find out what happens if we don't.

RACHEL. We'll be marked absent. That's what happens.

ARTHUR. I'll make Reuben sandwiches for lunch.

RACHEL. This is wrong, Dad. You know it's all crazy.

ARTHUR. We'll all be together. All four of us. For twenty-four hours. We'll be a family.

RACHEL. And then what?

NELSON. Stay, Rachel.

RACHEL. Mom. If he doesn't come - will you give it all up?

ARTHUR. Rachel. Don't do that to your mother.

RACHEL. But if she's so sure...once there's proof that she's wrong...

NELSON. Rabbi Baumbach says faith doesn't need proof. If there's proof it isn't faith.

ARTHUR. That's very smart. He sounds very smart.

RACHEL. What are you talking about? You're an atheist.

ARTHUR. I was observant at one point in my life.

RACHEL. You were? What happened?

ARTHUR. I got busy. Working. Making money. Starting a family.

RACHEL. You gave it up for her.

ARTHUR. No.

RACHEL. You did. She wanted you to stop, and you caved.

ARTHUR. Other things became important. I made choices.

RACHEL. It always has to be her way.

SYLVIA. Rachel. If you'll stay Wednesday, if you'll really repent...

RACHEL. Yeah?

SYLVIA. In your heart...

RACHEL. Yeah?

SYLVIA. If Jesus doesn't come by midnight, I'll stop. All of it.

ARTHUR. You don't have to do that Sylvia.

SYLVIA. I know he'll come. Please wait with me, Rachel. Having you off at school when it all happens - I just won't be able to stand it. It'll be that day all over again. All the chaos and panic and I won't know if you're all right. Please.

(pause)

RACHEL. *(a breath)* Swiss Cheese? On the Reuben?

ARTHUR. Of course. And pastrami. And sour kraut.

RACHEL. I'll stay.

(Light down)

(Tuesday night. Lights up on SYLVIA, RACHEL and ARTHUR sitting at the kitchen table. They each have a Bible opened in front of them.)

End Days Audition Side:

Arthur / Sylvia

This may be supplemented with cold reads

~~Handwritten notes and scribbles, possibly including names like 'Arthur' and 'Sylvia', and some illegible text.~~

~~ARTHUR. (To RACHEL and NELSON.) Get out the bread and the fixings and help me make a sandwich. We should heat up the soup. Eat separately.~~

~~(They go home. ARTHUR goes to SYLVIA.)~~

Sylvia?

SYLVIA. Good for you, Arthur.

ARTHUR. What?

SYLVIA. You think I don't see it?

ARTHUR. What, honey?

SYLVIA. That superior smirk.

ARTHUR. I didn't...

SYLVIA. Well, just wait. See how superior you are when we're gone. When you're left here alone.

ARTHUR. I don't want to be left alone, Sylvia. I want to be with you.

SYLVIA. It's fine to do that in front of me. Make fun of it. But don't ruin it for Rachel.

ARTHUR. Honey. It was an electrical storm. I'm sorry, I'm sorry I didn't... But I knew. That it was a storm. That it would pass over.

SYLVIA. You'll see.

ARTHUR. I love you, Sylvia. Can I ask for your forgiveness?

Can I repent for you?

SYLVIA. (brokenhearted) It won't get you saved.

ARTHUR. I feel like I am saved.

SYLVIA. You're not.

ARTHUR. I feel like I'm waking up. All these years. I know I kind of checked out. You needed me and... I wasn't there. For a long time. I know. It's crazy, but I forgot why I was here. Even before the attacks, even before that. I'd forgotten. What I really cared about. But I remember now.

(RACHEL and NELSON have stopped their Reuben preparations to listen. ARTHUR searches for the right words.)

I don't have faith like you have, Sylvia. I'm concrete.

You know that. I like proof. I like facts. Even when I used to go to temple, it was never about faith or God. It was about my father, my grandfather. There was only one time in my life I had real faith. It was when I fell in love with you. When we got married - we didn't even know each other that well - but I knew. I knew that whatever happened I could take it. We could take it. If we were together. That I wanted to face whatever happened with you.

I know I let you down, Sylvia. Please forgive me. Please take me back.

SYLVIA. I'm going to lose you again.

ARTHUR. But could we be together now? Whatever time I have left with you? Even if it's only a few more hours. Could we just give up on me for eternity - I'm a lost cause for eternity. But could I be with you now?

(She looks at him. A rush of memories comes back. She goes to him. He wraps his arms around her.)

ARTHUR. Thank you. This could last me. I love you, Honey.

(Pause. ARTHUR looks up and sees RACHEL and NELSON waiting quietly.)

ARTHUR. Should we get moving on those Reubens?

SYLVIA. (gives him a kiss) I want mine first so I can have my brownie.

NELSON. Yes!

(Light shift. RACHEL, NELSON, ARTHUR and SYLVIA are all playing Hearts. NELSON throws a card.)

SYLVIA. Okay. Now see why that wasn't a good choice, Nelson? If you're going to keep me queen, you should have kept the other high spades. You see? So that if someone throws low spades, you won't get stuck with the queen.

RACHEL. Unless you're planning on taking them all.

NELSON. I love this game.

RACHEL. You've lost every time! You're terrible.

End Days Audition Side:

Nelson / Sylvia

This may be supplemented with cold reads

Oh. Hey. Mrs. S. I must have dozed off. Did I miss anything?

(SYLVIA shakes her head, no.)

Wow. Four-thirty-six. Sorry. How was the movie?

(SYLVIA just nods.)

Really wish I'd seen it. Maybe I can borrow it some time. Or...oh. Right. Well, maybe we could watch it again later.

(SYLVIA just stares off.)

Are you okay, Mrs. S.?

The waiting is hard. I know. I hate waiting.

Do you want to take a little nap? I'll stay up. I'll wake you the second something happens. You want to be nice and rested when he comes, right?

Mrs. S.?

SYLVIA. Nelson. Do you think Rachel really repented in church Sunday?

NELSON. Well, she asked for forgiveness. You heard her.

SYLVIA. But did she mean it in her heart?

NELSON. I kind of think she said it so you'd let her go back to school.

SYLVIA. Do you think she'll be saved?

NELSON. Jesus has to know for someone like Rachel, just saying it counts for more.

SYLVIA. I think she's going to be left behind, Nelson. I don't think she and Arthur will be saved.

NELSON. Really?

SYLVIA. Don't tell her that.

NELSON. No. Of course not.

SYLVIA. I'm so afraid. If they're left behind, I don't know. I don't know what I'll do.

NELSON. That's tough. I know for sure I'm not going if Rachel's not going.

SYLVIA. You know that?

NELSON. It just wouldn't be Heaven for me without her.

SYLVIA. You've only known Rachel a couple of weeks. Right?

NELSON. Yeah. How long have you known Jesus?

SYLVIA. Three months. And seventeen days.

NELSON. I guess sometimes you just know, huh?

SYLVIA. He's completely changed my life. If you'd known me before, Nelson. I was such a different person.

NELSON. Yeah?

SYLVIA. I questioned everything. I was really angry and competitive and judgmental and controlling. I never want to be like that again.

NELSON. Yeah.

SYLVIA. And then after what happened - you know?

NELSON. Yeah.

SYLVIA. That whole day I thought Arthur was dead. I couldn't find him. All the people he worked with gone. People I'd just seen a week before. Gone. I thought he was gone too.

NELSON. Yeah.

SYLVIA. I just don't trust the world any more, Nelson. I don't want to be here any more.

NELSON. You mean...Earth?

SYLVIA. I want to be somewhere safe.

NELSON. I don't know. I really like it here.

SYLVIA. You're not afraid of death?

NELSON. Rabbi Baumbach says that knowing death is inevitable gives every moment of life meaning.

SYLVIA. He said that?

NELSON. Well, I don't think he was the first to say it. But I like it. Life isn't too bad. And even the bad stuff is interesting.

SYLVIA. But if you weren't saved, you'd be eternally damned on Earth. Satan will take away all your joy anyway.

NELSON. I think if I'm with Rachel, I'll still be happy. And with Mr. S. And you too. It seems like an awful sacrifice to lose any of you. And Rabbi Baumbach. He's, you

know, he's a really good guy. I could never imagine that guy doing anything mean to anybody. So, it really seems wrong that he wouldn't get to go.

SYLVIA. Maybe he'll repent. At the final hour. Maybe they'll all repent when they see it's true.

NELSON. But if they didn't, I'd have to tell Jesus that I was sorry, but I wasn't sorry. That I needed to stay here. Wouldn't you?

SYLVIA. I love him so much.

NELSON. I hope it doesn't come to that. I hope you don't have to make that choice.

(Lights shift. Morning. Sylvia is still sleeping off.)

RACHEL and NELSON are asleep.)

ARTHUR. Morning hon. My arm - Ow ow ow.

(He tries to move it without waking RACHEL.)

Guess we kind of petered out on you last night, huh.

Whoa. It almost lunctime. You feel like waffles?

(ARTHUR extricates himself from the sleeping RACHEL and sees that there is white makeup on his shirt where RACHEL lay.)

It's nice to know that white stuff comes off.

(Shaking his arm out.)

Oh, hey. Did anything happen last night?

SYLVIA. Are you kidding me?

ARTHUR. I'm sorry. I don't mean to do that.

SYLVIA. But you don't believe in any odd, do you?

ARTHUR. I believe in you.

(She's silent.)

So, I make them will you eat some? Or should I wait for the kids?

SYLVIA. What?

ARTHUR. Waffles.

SYLVIA. I'm not hungry.

End Days Audition Side:

Nelson / Arthur

This may be supplemented with cold reads

(She jumps up and tries the combination. The locker opens. She turns around. STEPHEN HAWKING is gone.)

(Light shift. NELSON and ARTHUR standing in the cereal aisle at Shoprite.)

NELSON. Crunchy? Flaky?

ARTHUR. I don't know.

NELSON. Does she like frosted or plain?

ARTHUR. I don't know.

NELSON. Chex? Raisin Bran? Total?

ARTHUR. I don't know, Nelson.

(They move a few inches.)

NELSON. Wow. There sure are a lot of cereals. Okay. Try to picture her sitting down to breakfast.

ARTHUR. I can't. I can't picture her at all.

NELSON. She has an empty bowl in front of her.

ARTHUR. No.

NELSON. A spoon. A napkin.

ARTHUR. I can't do this, Nelson. This is too hard.

NELSON. She reaches out. She picks up a box. She opens it and pours it into her bowl... What color is the box?

(Pause. ARTHUR crumbles.)

ARTHUR. I don't know. I never noticed what color box her cereal was in. I never noticed that she ate cereal. I was out of the house before she got up. I came home at 9. I don't know what she ate for dinner. I don't know what she packed for lunch.

NELSON. She buys actually.

ARTHUR. I don't know. I don't know her. Let's go. Please. Let's go home.

NELSON. You could get to know her now. It'll be fun. We could both get to know her.

ARTHUR. She doesn't want me to know her.

NELSON. That's okay. She doesn't want me to know her either. You just have to be persistent.

ARTHUR. She hates me.

NELSON. No.

ARTHUR. I don't blame her.

NELSON. She doesn't hate you.

ARTHUR. I used to be a Senior Vice President. I used to wear a suit and tie. Now I can't even get dressed.

NELSON. You are dressed.

ARTHUR. I used to tell sixty-five people what to do. All those people. All gone.

NELSON. How about Rice Crispiers?

ARTHUR. If I hadn't run into that guy in the stairwell. Some guy with a flashlight. I don't know who that guy was. I'll never know.

NELSON. Or maybe Corn Flakes.

ARTHUR. I'd be gone too. I should be gone too.

NELSON. I bet she likes Cheerios. Everyone likes Cheerios.

ARTHUR. Sixty-five people. Now I can't even get dressed.

NELSON. You are dressed, Mr. S.

(pause)

Hey, we'll get one of everything! It'll be great. We'll get one of every cereal. And we'll all eat breakfast together. Every day.

ARTHUR. I don't eat.

NELSON. Now you'll eat. We'll eat cereal.

(Light shift. We hear a rendition of "Amazing Grace" as the church bell chimes ten times.)

(Lights up on the Stein kitchen. We hear the churchgoers SYLVIA, JESUS, ARTHUR, RACHEL and NELSON returning. As they enter.)

SYLVIA. Never. I mean I've only been worshipping for three months but I've never seen a single miracle, praise God! And on your first time.

NELSON. *(modestly)* I just felt... I mean, the music was so beautiful.