

LAUREL. Uh. OK, that's great.

JULIANA. But I thought I was going to call *you* back.

LAUREL. Well I had a minute ...

JULIANA. Yes but it would be on my dime if I called you back.

LAUREL. Well that's not really how phone calls work any more, right?

JULIANA. (*Digging through her purse.*) Look, let me just find my phone book and I'll call you right back.

LAUREL. Mom, it's no big deal, we're ... we're talking already.

JULIANA. Yes, well it would be on my dime!

LAUREL. (*Giving up.*) OK. Look, you know on second thought, it's just too late, I shouldn't have called, I just really wanted to get a glass of wine first.

JULIANA. Oh! You're a wine drinker now.

LAUREL. Um. ... Yes, we both are, guzzlers at the moment I hate to say.

JULIANA. Well look I'll send you case of something.

LAUREL. Oh, that's ... really not necessary.

JULIANA. Something nice. Well for the twins. I mean — not for them to drink, obviously. — To celebrate.

LAUREL. Well the celebrating part of it's long over.

JULIANA. But if a case of something really great showed up you wouldn't refuse it?

LAUREL. (*Sharp.*) Look, there's nothing we need from you, Mom. (*Suddenly softening.*) Sorry, I'm sorry. I don't mean to be harsh, this is all just ... very ... awkward. For me. (*Juliana still digs through her purse.*) Uh, are you, are you there?

JULIANA. — Well all I've got in here is blue ballpoint, I can't stand ballpoint, how did I get ballpoint in here.

LAUREL. What, uh, what are you doing.

JULIANA. I can't find my book, can I, and I've got to write down your number but I can't find paper, what's the matter with this hotel, I'll just write it on my *hand* I guess ...

LAUREL. OK, it's ... it's been utterly surreal, Mom, OK? I'll see you later.

JULIANA. Wait wait wait!

LAUREL. No really, you still don't seem to be able to ... focus — that's the wrong word — on me. So I think it's better that I go.

JULIANA. Look I ... I called because I wanted you to know that I've ... had an episode.

LAUREL. An episode. Of what, television?

JULIANA. My God, you went and got yourself a sense of humor. No, some sort of ... how should I know ... medical episode. So.

LAUREL. Uh. OK, are ... you all right?

JULIANA. Yes I'm perfectly fine, I think it's brain cancer.

LAUREL. What? Brain ... *What?*

JULIANA. Relax, relax, I'm not sure yet, I wouldn't let them check me into a hospital here on St. Thomas.

LAUREL. *Where* are you?

JULIANA. It's called St. Thomas, sweetheart — it's one of the *Virgin Islands*.

LAUREL. Gee, really? I thought I'd caught you on top of an actual Catholic saint.

JULIANA. Really, when did you get so funny? Were you this funny before and I just didn't know it?

LAUREL. You're never going to stop being condescending, are you.

JULIANA. No no, I ... I wasn't condescending, I meant it that time.

LAUREL. I'm twenty five now, Mom.

JULIANA. Yes, I ... I know you are.

LAUREL. Brain cancer? (*Beat.*)

JULIANA. I'd like ... to see you. (*On the words see you, two small children begin screaming.*)

LAUREL. (*Over her shoulder.*) Richard! Can you get them back in bed! (*Back to phone.*) Sorry Mom, they're up again, what?

JULIANA. I said I'd like to ... (*More sudden screaming.*) I'd like to see you, sweetheart!

LAUREL. (*Over her shoulder.*) Richard!

RICHARD. (*Offstage.*) Got it! I got it ...

LAUREL. Well I'm on the phone!

JULIANA. You should go.

LAUREL. — No, I ... I ...

JULIANA. Look, let me send you some money.

LAUREL. Why would you think I need money.

JULIANA. Well, well, *everybody* needs money.

LAUREL. There's no way in hell Richard would take anything from you, you know that, right? (*More screaming.*)

JULIANA. Go, you should go, will you call back.

LAUREL. I ... look. I'll ... (*More screaming.*)