

Adam's Legacy

By John Cospers

AdamsLetter.com
RighteousInsanity.com

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Adam Krieger – A teen who committed suicide

Jake Hall – A teen who has partied too much, too long

Denise Vanover – A worried mom

Jim Vanover – Husband, father, political candidate

Kimmy Vanover – A pregnant teen

Laura Gilbert – A Christian mom whose son goes to school with Kimmy

Bart – A trash TV host

Bob – Talk Show Guest

Don – A political advisor

TV Announcer

ABOUT THIS PLAY

This play is a follow-up to “Adam’s Letter” but not a sequel. Most of the story takes place alongside the events in “Adam’s Letter.” Scene Five is actually taken from the original play.

This story is dedicated to the parents and teachers striving to make a difference in the lives of kids. It happened because a parent who read “Adam’s Letter” pointed out that I had left parents out of the original story. My intent with the first play was to focus on students, encouraging them to reach out to one another. That said, there is definitely a message for parents in Adam’s story.

An ideal use of this play would be in conjunction with the first play. “Adam’s Letter” could be presented during the school day for students, then “Adam’s Legacy” that evening for families. The plays could run one after the other, or on consecutive nights. An ambitious director could even combine the two.

Regardless how it is used, I pray this play will touch many students AND adults as the first play has. I am glad the story of Adam has touched so many people. Clearly, there is more story to tell, and more to learn from this sad story... which, by the way, is still a work of fiction.

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PROLOGUE

The stage is dark.

ADAM: *(off)* To the man and woman who chose to conceive a child, the result of which was me, when it fit in with their five year plan; To the teachers who never really cared, no matter what they say; To my fellow students who made my life a living nightmare when they should have focused on their education; To those who never cared, never spoke, probably never knew my name; To the God, if he does exist, who chose to play a cruel, cruel joke on me when he placed me where he did and surrounded me with so many uncaring faces; To all of you, goodbye.

A spotlight comes up on Jake.

JAKE: I was a senior in high school when death touched my life for the first time. I didn't know the kid. Not well enough to care about him. But he knew who I was; I was one of the many he blamed for his death.

Lights fade.

ADAM: Jake never bothered to learn how good - or how bad - I was to give me the ribbings he did: the way he chided me in the locker room, advancing his own manhood while demeaning me. But really, who were you to judge me, Jake? How long has it been since you last went a day without a drink? Or maybe I shouldn't mock your infirmity. After all, the insults you dished were impressive, considering you were never less than half-drunk when making them.

Spotlight comes back up.

JAKE: Some kids leave a private note for some family member to find. Not Adam. He left his final words on the Internet, where all the world could see the wrongs done to him. As you can imagine, people freaked.

Lights fade.

ADAM: I am going to another place. Where, I do not know. But logic dictates that it can only be an improvement. Perhaps my passing will only prove a footnote in a school yearbook. Then again, perhaps the sacrifice of one might bring hope to others. If my death makes life for one person a little more bearable, or a little more enlightened, do I really die in vain?

Spotlight comes back up.

JAKE: No one person was to blame for Adam's death except Adam himself. But we were all guilty of failing to love another person. Some people ignored it, the same way they ignored Adam. For most, the tragedy was soon forgotten. But for a few of us, tragedy

gave way to a new beginning.

Blackout.

SCENE ONE

Jim and Denise are in the family kitchen. Jim is in a suit, seated, but restless. Denise is up, sipping coffee and pacing.

JIM: Denise, I have a meeting at four.

DENISE: I know, Jim, I know.

JIM: Is she usually this late?

DENISE: It depends. If she has stuff going on after school, she gets home a little later.

JIM: You sure this isn't one of those days because I cannot miss this meeting.

DENISE: She'll be here. Cheerleading is over, and she didn't tell me about any after school plans.

Denise sips her coffee while Jim drums his fingers.

DENISE: It could have been a typo. He might not have meant our little girl. It's not like her to laugh in someone's face. She's not that cruel a person.

JIM: He got all her friends' names, right?

DENISE: Yes.

JIM: And anyone who reads it will see the same thing we did. We have to know what happened, and nip this in the bud.

DENISE: Whatever she says, you be gentle with her.

JIM: Denise, you know what's at stake here.

DENISE: She's your daughter. Have a little compassion.

JIM: She knows what's expected of her. I'll be fair. But I have to be firm.

DENISE: Why can't they take that awful site down.

JIM: It wouldn't matter. That letter's been copies and pasted all over the 'Net. I've already had calls at my office for comment.

A sound of a car door shutting is heard off stage. Denise looks out the window.

DENISE: She's here.

JIM: About time.

DENISE: Jim, please, be gentle.

JIM: Denise, don't tell me what to do. I—

The door opens. Kimmy walks in.

KIMMY: Dad?

JIM: Hi, Kim.

DENISE: How was school, honey?

KIMMY: Fine.

JIM: Denise, would you mind having a seat, please?

KIMMY: Okay.

Kimmy sits at the table, head down, guilt all over her.

KIMMY: You take off early today, Dad?

JIM: I have to go back in an hour. I wanted to talk to you.

KIMMY: About what?

DENISE: Kim, we want you to know we're not mad. We're just... concerned.

KIMMY: Oh boy.

JIM: You know what this is about, don't you.

Kimmy nods.

KIMMY: Yes, sir.

JIM: I don't have to tell you, I have a lot at stake. So I need you to be as honest with me as you can.

KIMMY: Believe me, Dad. I have as much to lose as you.

JIM: I'm serious, Kim. I'm in the middle of an election, and I can't have a family scandal threaten all I've worked for.

KIMMY: Too late now.

JIM: What do you mean, too late?

DENISE: Jim, please.

Jim pauses, then starts over, a little more calm.

JIM: Look, there's no reason this has to hurt any of us. You tell us the truth, we'll deal with it, and it will all go away.

KIMMY: You think it's that simple? I tell the truth and it all goes away?

JIM: Kim, this sort of thing happens all the time. It doesn't matter how bad it is; what matters is how you respond.

KIMMY: Just what kind of response do you want, Dad?

Jim pulls up his phone and gets in the Internet. He slides it over.

JIM: Like I said, all I want is the truth.

KIMMY: This... this is that kid's website. The one who killed himself.

DENISE: Did you know him?

KIMMY: Not well. We had some classes together. He asked me out once.

JIM: And?

KIMMY: And, I said no.

JIM: That's all? You didn't laugh in his face?

KIMMY: It wasn't as bad as he says.

JIM: I hope not. Because it makes you look pretty bad.

DENISE: It's not who we raised you to be.

KIMMY: I was joking with him! Okay? I was playing around, and this kid just didn't get

it.

JIM: You weren't thinking either. Now this mess is all over the media. People want to know what kind of leader I'll be, and they're looking at this as a slight against me as a parent.

KIMMY: Why does anyone care about you as a parent?

DENISE: A public figure is judged on everything. Including parenting.

KIMMY: Wow. Guess you're in for a world of trouble.

JIM: Not if you help me make this go away. Don's writing a statement for you. You'll apologize to the family, to the community, and it will all go away.

KIMMY: Are you serious?

JIM: Yes, I am serious!

DENISE: The people need to know your father is in charge. If he can't manage his own family, how can they trust him as an elected official?

JIM: This is an opportunity to show the community what kind of a family we are.

KIMMY: By showing them how quickly and efficiently you can correct your delinquent daughter?

JIM: Don't take it that way, Kim.

KIMMY: How am I supposed to take it? Am I misguided? Rebellious?

DENISE: You're a good girl, Kim.

JIM: A good girl who needs a nudge in the right direction from time to time.

KIMMY: Just a nudge, huh?

Kim pulls two pregnancy tests out of her purse and throws them on the table.

KIMMY: Well go ahead. Nudge me, Dad.

DENISE: Is this real? Are these yours?

KIMMY: One from this morning, one from last week.

DENISE: You're pregnant?

JIM: You selfish, little—Do you realize what you've done to me?

KIMMY: That's right, Daddy. I did this to you.

Kimmy exits.

JIM: I can't believe this. I'm ruined. She's ruined me.

DENISE: Jim, shut up. Can't you think about something besides yourself for once?

JIM: Like what?

DENISE: Our daughter.

Blackout.

SCENE TWO

Night time. Denise is on the phone as the lights come up.

DENISE: Jim it's Denise. It's almost eight, just wondering where you are. Call me.

Denise hangs up. There's a knock at the door. Denise answers. Laura is at the door.

LAURA: Mrs. Vanover?

DENISE: Yes?

LAURA: I'm Laura Gilbert, Sean's mom. My son goes to school with Kimmy.

DENISE: Oh yes. Come on in.

LAURA: Sorry to drop in unexpectedly. I was up the street visiting someone, and I saw your lights were on.

DENISE: No problem. We're usually up pretty late here. It's election season.

LAURA: Yeah, I saw the sign. I didn't know that was Kimmy's dad.

DENISE: That's him.

LAURA: Is he home?

DENISE: Not yet, no.

LAURA: That's okay. I was hoping to catch you both, but I can tell you why I dropped by. It's about Adam Krieger.

DENISE: Oh.

LAURA: I take it you've read his little website?

DENISE: Yes, I did.

LAURA: It's caused quite a stir in our community.

DENISE: And in this household. My daughter got mentioned in the note.

LAURA: You know what bothered me about that website, Mrs. Vanover?

DENISE: Denise.

LAURA: Denise. When I read that letter, I couldn't help feeling that boy's pain. He had so much hurt inside, and I can't help think... well, if someone had reached out to love him, maybe things might have been different.

DENISE: I see.

LAURA: I don't want to seem like a meddler, and I don't want to force my way in where I'm not welcome. But I wanted to let you and your husband know... if there's anything I can do, I am glad to help.

DENISE: That's very kind of you, Laura. But we're doing just great here.

LAURA: I'm glad to know that. You know, as tragic as this situation is, I've seen a lot of good come out of it already.

DENISE: Really?

LAURA: Sean tells me that kids are starting to open up a little at school. And the name calling and stuff that was there just a week ago has tapered off.

DENISE: That is good news.

LAURA: We still have a long way to go, and it'll be interesting to see what lasting change happens. It doesn't take much. Sometimes, just being willing to listen is all.

DENISE: It doesn't work if both parties won't take turns.

LAURA: No. It takes two. But, by the grace of God, maybe some families will open up as well as the kids.

DENISE: You think God is behind this?

LAURA: I don't believe God caused that boy to commit suicide. But I can already see him taking a tragedy and making beautiful things come from it.

DENISE: We can always hope, right?

LAURA: Absolutely. Well, I won't take up too much of your time. I just wanted to drop

by and say a friendly hello.

DENISE: I'm glad you did. It was nice meeting you.

LAURA: Same here, Denise. I hope we can do it again.

DENISE: Under better circumstances, right?

LAURA: Definitely. I'll see you soon.

DENISE: Goodbye.

Laura exits through the door. Denise looks off the other way, hesitant.

DENISE: Kim? *(pause)* Kimberly?

KIMMY: What?

DENISE: You wanna have some dessert?

KIMMY: No thanks.

DENISE: Not even if I make Jell-O?

KIMMY: I hate Jell-O.

DENISE: What do you like?

KIMMY: *(sighs)* Mom, if you want to talk to me, just say 'Come here.'

DENISE: Would you please?

KIMMY: In a minute.

Denise walks over to the table. The phone rings. She grabs it.

DENISE: Hello?

JIM: *(on phone)* Denise?

DENISE: Jim? Where are you? It's after eight!

JIM: I know, Denise, I'm sorry. Meetings ran long, then I had a press conference and a strategy meeting.

DENISE: Well, are we going to see you tonight?

JIM: *(long pause)* Denise, I need some time.

DENISE: Time for what?

JIM: This situation with Kimmy... I can't face it and run this campaign.

DENISE: And you think I can?

JIM: Denise, I... I'm going to be staying away for a while.

DENISE: How long?

JIM: Through the election. Maybe longer.

DENISE: I can't believe you would do this to me.

JIM: I'm sorry. I love you and I love Kim, but you both need something I can't give you.

DENISE: What we need is her father and my husband here with us!

JIM: I'm sorry, Denise. I love you.

Click.

DENISE: Jim? Jim!!!!

Denise hangs up the phone and collapses at the table crying. Kimmy walks in.

KIMMY: What's wrong, Mom?
DENISE: I don't want to talk about it.
KIMMY: I thought you called me in here to—
DENISE: I said I don't want to talk about it!!

Kimmy runs off. Denise stands.

DENISE: Kim wait!

Denise waits – but Kimmy does not return. Blackout.

SCENE THREE

Denise is clearing breakfast dishes. The TV is on, and a commercial is playing. Commercial ends.

BART: Welcome to the Bart Truman Show. Today on Bart, families in crisis.

Denise looks at the TV.

BART: We see it on TV. We hear about it on the news. All across America, average families like yours are falling apart. One minute, a married couple is living high on the hog, fulfilling their every dream. Then the next minute it comes crashing down in a fireball caused by drugs, suicide, or teen pregnancy.

Denise walks over, sits down to watch.

BART: Today's guests are people like you. They thought it only happened to bad people. Then it happened to them.

Denise nods.

BART: If you're a concerned mom or dad, I urge you, get pen and paper handy, because you're going to learn a lot.

Denise grabs pen and paper.

BART: My first guests are the Bakers, Bob and Debbie. Bob was a member of the local school board, and Debbie head of the local Girl Scouts. Then their daughter Katie came home drunk, stoned, and engaged to a fifty year old biker. Folks, it's been a while since you saw Katie last.

BOB: That's right, Bart.

BART: Well today, we're going to bring her out here to let the healing begin. Katie?

BOB: Why you lousy little—

A series of bleeps follows these words, followed by screams and cheers from the studio

audience and the sound of a horrific fight. Denise watches in horror. Behind her, Kimmy slips in the door. She is slow, feeling sick. She walks up behind Denise.

KIMMY: What the heck are you watching?

Denise screams, nearly jumping out of her skin. She shuts off the TV.

DENISE: Kimmy, you scared me.

KIMMY: Sorry.

DENISE: What are you doing home?

KIMMY: Well, I went to first period. Puked my guts out. Went to second, puked my guts out. Went to the library, puked my guts out. Finally someone decided maybe I oughta go home before I puke again.

DENISE: Do you have a fever?

KIMMY: Nope.

DENISE: I wonder what's the--- Oh, right.

KIMMY: Yeah.

DENISE: You want some ice water or something?

KIMMY: Sure.

Denise gets up and fixes a drink for Kimmy. She gives it to her.

KIMMY: Thanks.

DENISE: So, morning sickness.

KIMMY: *(nods)* Yup.

DENISE: Stinks, doesn't it?

KIMMY: You know I've heard a lot of speeches on abstinence and why you should wait to have sex. You know what they need to do to really make girls think? Put a woman on stage with morning sickness and have her puke for ten minutes straight.

DENISE: All you had to do was ask me. I could have told you all the puke stories you wanted.

KIMMY: Did you have it?

DENISE: Oh yeah. All the books told me it would go away after the first trimester, but the second trimester came and I was still puking.

KIMMY: Bet Dad loved that.

Denise pauses.

DENISE: He was a different guy then. Not that he could handle puke. But he took good care of us.

KIMMY: You talked to him lately?

DENISE: A minute last night. Busy, busy, busy.

KIMMY: He's always busy.

DENISE: He does care about you. When you were first born, I never saw a man more in love. Made me jealous, tell the truth.

KIMMY: Really?

DENISE: Terrible thing for a mother to say, but it's true.

KIMMY: I think a lot about how I'm going to feel. It's so strange to think there's a living person inside me.

DENISE: It only gets stranger once they start moving around.

Kimmy pauses, a little alarmed.

KIMMY: They move?

DENISE: They move, they roll, they kick.

KIMMY: They kick?

DENISE: Your Dad used to call you Thumper you kicked so much.

Kimmy laughs.

DENISE: No really, he did.

Kimmy gets quiet.

KIMMY: It's gonna hurt, isn't it?

DENISE: The birth?

Kimmy nods.

DENISE: I'm afraid so.

KIMMY: Even if I go C-section?

DENISE: C-section doesn't prevent the pain. It just delays it. And prolongs it.

KIMMY: I am so not ready for this. Guess I should have thought of that before...

Pause.

DENISE: No use dwelling on the past. Nothing you can do to change it now.

KIMMY: What if I can't go to college? What if I can't give him the best life possible?

DENISE: Kim, you're not going to do this alone.

KIM: I'd rather do it alone. I didn't exactly make the wisest choice for a father... not that that was on my mind at the time.

DENISE: You still have me.

KIMMY: You sure about that?

DENISE: You're my daughter. I know I haven't always been there, but I'm human. I make mistakes too.

KIMMY: This one's not yours.

DENISE: Kim, a baby is never a mistake. If you ask me, God sent this child to wake us all up. We haven't been a family for a long time.

KIMMY: Yeah, well, we're not right now, are we? Not without Dad. Say what you want about God, but this... I can't help but feel I'm being punished.

DENISE: I can understand that. But God doesn't always work on our time schedule. He's not through with us yet.

KIMMY: You're asking for a miracle.

DENISE: Miracles can happen. He got us talking, didn't he?

KIMMY: Touche.

Blackout.

SCENE FOUR

Kimmy sits on a bench outside of school. Jake enters, carrying a rose. He sneaks up behind her and covers her eyes, holding his hands - and the rose stem - over her eyes.

KIMMY: OW!

JAKE: Guess who?

KIMMY: Jake, you're stabbing me in the eye!

JAKE: *(pulls hands away)* Whoa!

KIMMY: I thought it was you.

JAKE: Sorry about that. *(sheepishly offers the rose)* Here you go.

KIMMY: Thank you.

JAKE: I am so glad you called. It's been weeks since we last were together, and I really thought we had a good thing going.

KIMMY: *(not in agreement)* Oh you think so?

JAKE: Yeah. *(senses the uncertainty in Kimmy)* Well... what did you think?

KIMMY: I'm not sure. We had some drinks, and then we...

JAKE: *(smiling proudly)* We made some magic, didn't we?

KIMMY: I don't know that I would call it magic.

JAKE: It was a night to remember.

KIMMY: Certainly a night I'll never forget.

JAKE: So what are you thinking? We due for an encore?

KIMMY: Jake... what do you think of me?

JAKE: Well, let me think. You're beautiful. You're a good kisser.

KIMMY: Jake, what do you think of me as a person?

JAKE: Those are personal things.

KIMMY: No, Jake... forget about my looks or my kiss. Do you care about me?

JAKE: Well, yeah.

KIMMY: As a friend?

JAKE: Huh?

KIMMY: Do you think of me as a friend, not just someone you had a fling with?

JAKE: I guess so... are you saying you just want to be friends?

KIMMY: I'm telling you that right now, I need a friend. I want you to be that friend.

JAKE: What's going on?

KIMMY: Jake... I don't know how to tell you this. I've rehearsed it in my mind a hundred times, and none of them came out right.

JAKE: Awww, are you trying to say you love me?

KIMMY: Jake, I'm trying to tell you that I'm... I'm pregnant.

JAKE: *(long pause, as it sinks into his think head)* Oh my.

KIMMY: That's all you can say?

JAKE: Sorry, Kimmy, I haven't had time to rehearse my lines like you have. (*shakes his head*) Oh my gosh. You're sure about this?

KIMMY: I have two home tests and a blood test from my doctor that all say yes.

JAKE: Wow. I need something to drink.

KIMMY: Jake, I need your help. I can't face this alone.

JAKE: Why not?

KIMMY: What do you mean why not?

JAKE: It's not that big a deal. You go to the clinic, you're in and out in a couple hours. My sister had one last year.

KIMMY: You mean an abortion?

JAKE: Yes. Don't tell me you—you want to keep it?

KIMMY: I haven't decided that yet. My youth pastor's talked to me about some local ministries that help teenage moms. He's also given me information about adoption.

JAKE: That's nice, but what about—

KIMMY: Abortion is out.

JAKE: I think it needs to be considered.

KIMMY: It's my decision. I'm going to have the baby.

JAKE: Oh that's just great.

KIMMY: Sorry, Jake.

JAKE: How can you do this to me? To force me to become a father?

KIMMY: No one forced you to have sex with me. It was your choice and mine.

JAKE: We were drunk.

KIMMY: Well, I hate to break it to you, but being drunk is not an effective form of birth control.

JAKE: Thanks for the news flash.

KIMMY: Jake, I need your help. The baby needs your help.

JAKE: Why me? Isn't there someone else?

KIMMY: You're the father. I just thought maybe you might be ready and willing to take responsibility and help me. (*she puts a hand on her belly*) Help both of us.

JAKE: (*shudders at the sight of Kimmy touching her belly*) You asked the wrong guy.

KIMMY: Jake don't say that, please.

JAKE: I'm sorry, Kimmy. I'm not ready to have a child?

KIMMY: You selfish jerk, do I look like I'm ready??

JAKE: You've heard my solution. You decide to end this, I'll help pay for it.

Otherwise... You're on your own.

KIMMY: Jake, don't leave me. I need you.

Blackout.

SCENE FIVE

A coffee shop. Jim and Don sit at a table, laptops open, phones out.

JIM: I've stated my position on this issue plenty of times. You know where I stand.

DON: Yes, I'm here.

JIM: I'm all for better funding in the schools.

DON: Jan? Tomorrow morning is good for us.
JIM: Well, there are a lot of areas that need improving.
DON: What time do we need to be at the studio?
JIM: Test scores, physical education.
DON: Five AM will work.
JIM: I wouldn't mind seeing increased funding for health-related programs.
DON: No, he will be alone this time.
JIM: Sex education for example. I'm concerned we're not doing enough.
DON: He has asked that his wife and daughter be left alone for now.
JIM: Very concerned.
DON: No, no, no trouble. The candidate is focused on this campaign, and he wants his daughter to enjoy high school.
JIM: No, I don't have an answer. But I think it's definitely worth my attention when I'm elected.
DON: Very well then, see you at five.
JIM: Look, I have another meeting waiting on me. I need to go.
DON: Yeah, we like donuts.
JIM: Thank you, goodbye.
DON: All right, Jan. Take care.

Both men hang up.

DON: Channel 11, five AM.
JIM: Five AM?
DON: Jim, you want to be in public life, it's going to be like this. You catch sleep where you can and spend hours on end shaking hands and waving.
JIM: Did I hear them ask about Denise and Kim?
DON: I told them you've asked for privacy. Nothing more.
JIM: Good.
DON: Have you spoken to them lately?
JIM: What's there to say? I chose this campaign over them for now.
DON: A few more weeks, it's over.
JIM: And then what? The scrutiny is not going to go away. I get elected, but what will the people think when they learned I sat on this bombshell?
DON: One step at a time. We need you in office.
JIM: You're right. I've worked too long for this.
DON: We've all worked for this. We believe in you.
JIM: Thanks.
DON: You want to go over your morning talking points again?
JIM: I can do them in my sleep.
DON: Then get some rest. You look like you haven't slept in days.
JIM: Been a little hard.
DON: I know, but it will all be worth it.
JIM: For whom?
DON: What?
JIM: Whose live will be better because I am elected?

DON: This whole community will be better. We need men who can lead, not men who will toe the party line and do as they're told.

JIM: How can a man look out for the welfare of all the people when he can't care for the few at home?

DON: Your wife and kid need you in office as much as the rest of us. Get some rest.

Don leaves. Jake enters, dressed in coffee shop uniform.

JAKE: Can I get you anything else?

JIM: No, I think we're through here.

Jake starts to take the mugs from the table.

JIM: Jake is it?

JAKE: Yes, sir?

JIM: You're a responsible kid, right?

JAKE: I suppose.

JIM: You're a working man. Your uniform's nice and neat.

JAKE: Well, I just started today.

JIM: The point is, you're making an effort.

JAKE: Yes, sir.

JIM: You learn that from your folks?

JAKE: Learn what?

JIM: The value of hard work.

JAKE: Well, my dad took off when I was four. But my mom works real hard.

JIM: Does she?

JAKE: Worked two jobs and went to school while she raised me and my brother.

JIM: You must admire her.

JAKE: Actually, she's a pain in the neck. She's always tired, always stressed, and expects us to act like perfect angels.

JIM: I see.

JAKE: Don't get me wrong. She can be nice. Christmas is awesome these days. But between you and me, I hardly know the woman.

JIM: You shouldn't be so hard on her. Being a single mom is not easy.

JAKE: I guess not.

JIM: Was she young?

JAKE: Just out of high school.

JIM: Makes it even harder.

JAKE: My grandparents never really supported her. Bunch of Bible-thumping hypocrites. They told her she should have married my dad. The man beat her up. And she didn't want him around.

JIM: Good for her.

JAKE: Yeah. He was... he was a loser.

JIM: You okay?

JAKE: Sure. I was just... thinking.

JIM: About what?

JAKE: I don't want my kid to grow up like I did. Never knowing his father. Or his mom. It's not fair. You know?

JIM: No, it's not.

JAKE: I want him to have a better life. He needs a mom and a dad. And not just living with him, but raising him, you know? Teaching him all the things I was never taught. Maybe then he... He'll have a chance at a better life. Not end up like me.

JIM: Son, you've got your whole life ahead of you. You're young. You have a job.

JAKE: My fifth job in three months.

JIM: Really?

JAKE: Yeah. I don't have a good reputation.

JIM: Sounds to me like it's past time to change that.

JAKE: Easier said than done.

JIM: But worth it. You can become a man your son will be proud to call Dad. Live a life he'll want to imitate.

JAKE: I don't have a lot of time. My girlfriend... well, she's not my girlfriend. But she's pregnant.

JIM: I see.

JAKE: Yeah, she just told me today.

JIM: Are you going to help her through it?

JAKE: Actually, I told her I wanted her to abort it. Now... well, I kind of feel like a complete jerk.

JIM: That's not a bad thing. You can turn this around.

JAKE: I don't know.

JIM: Your child needs you. *(pauses, having an epiphany)* Every child needs a father. And whatever you had going on before, that kid has to come first. No matter what it costs you.

JAKE: I can't believe I'm saying this, but I think you're right.

JIM: Why don't you give her a call?

JAKE: Right now?

JIM: Sure, use my phone.

Jim hands Jake the phone.

JAKE: Okay.

Jake dials. He looks at the screen.

JAKE: That's funny.

JIM: What's the matter?

JAKE: Kimmy's number. It's already programmed in your—

Jake and Jim look at each other, realizing what's going on. Jim takes the phone.

KIMMY: *(on phone)* Hello?

JIM: Kim? It's Dad.

KIMMY: Yeah?

JIM: I'm coming over. You and Mom going to be there?

KIMMY: Sure. I suppose.

JIM: I'll be bringing a guest. See you soon.

Jim hangs up.

JAKE: Mr. Vanover... sir... I...

JIM: Jake?

JAKE: Yes, sir?

JIM: What do you say we go to my house and take care of our babies?

Jim gives him a pat on the back. Jake smiles. Blackout.

SCENE SIX

With the lights down, a TV Announcer is heard.

TV ANNOUNCER: In a stunning development, candidate Jim Vanover pulled out of his hotly contested race this morning, citing personal reasons. Campaign advisor Don Hendrix refused comment, but a statement released later in the day by Vanover said, quote, "I love this community and thank those who supported me in my effort to lead. But I have a higher obligation, as we all do, to family. My family needs me most at this time, so that is where I intend to be."

Lights up in the kitchen. Kimmy and Denise, dressed for church, enter. Kimmy carries a baby carrier with a baby in it. Denise carries a diaper bag.

DENISE: Oh that silly hat. It just keeps fallin' off your little head.

KIMMY: It's too small, Mom.

DENISE: It's the hat your father wore at his christening, and it's the hat my grandson will wear.

KIMMY: It's kind of girly.

DENISE: So is your father when it comes to spiders. Besides, he wears it so well.

KIMMY: He wears everything so well. Such a handsome guy.

Jim enters, dressed in a suit.

JIM: Thank you, Kim. That's so nice of you.

KIMMY: You look handsome too, Dad. Not THIS handsome, but great.

DENISE: I just spoke with Laura. She and Alan have to be at their church this morning, but they'll meet us for lunch afterwards. I think Sean's going to be at the church.

KIMMY: He said he was. Jake'll give him a hard time if he misses.

JIM: You did tell him not to wear sneakers, right?

DENISE: Jim, don't give him such a hard time if he does.

JIM: Someone's gotta teach that boy how to dress.

KIMMY: Daddy, as far as Jake has come the last year, you really shouldn't give him such a hard time.

DENISE: Looks like the diaper bag is low. I'm going to go grab a few extras.
KIMMY: I'll do it. I need to grab another outfit anyway, in case he messes this one up.
JIM: With what we paid for that outfit, he better not.
KIMMY: Dad, stop.
JIM: I'm teasing.

Kimmy and Denise exit. Jim sits down to talk to his grandson.

JIM: So, big day, huh? Your family's making a special promise to you. We're going to raise you the way the Lord would want us to. I know I'm a politician, but I'm not gonna lie to you: we're gonna mess it up. But we're not gonna give up on ourselves or you.

There's a knock at the door. Jake enters in a suit and sneakers. Jim stands up, looks him over.

JAKE: Mr. Vanover.
JIM: Hello, Jake.

Jim looks straight down at the shoes.

JAKE: Everything okay?
JIM: Jake, you look terrific in that suit.
JAKE: Thanks.
JIM: How's the job?
JAKE: It's work.
JIM: And school?
JAKE: Not bad. I might make Dean's List.
JIM: Yeah? Good for you. I'm proud of you. You tell Kim yet?
JAKE: No, I'm saving it for a surprise. Don't want to jinx myself either.
JIM: I know she appreciates all you do for them.
JAKE: I love her, Mr. Vanover. Not saying I'm ready to get married, but...
JIM: You take your time with that. Ask her when you're for sure.
JAKE: Yes, sir.
JIM: And always remember, he comes first.
JAKE: Absolutely.

Denise and Kimmy enter with diapers and a baby outfit.

KIMMY: There you are. All set?
JAKE: Ready when you are.
DENISE: Ready, Jim?
JIM: We in a rush?
DENISE: We promised Mrs. Krieger we'd pick her up on the way.
JIM: I forgot about her!
KIMMY: Dad! She was so excited when we invited her.
JIM: I know, I know. But we're gonna have to fly to make it.

They all start walking out the door. Jim goes first, then Denise.

KIMMY: Can you believe it's been a year since she lost her son?

JAKE: Has it only been a year?

KIMMY: I know. Feels like forever.

JAKE: I know we'll never forget him.

KIMMY: Jake?

JAKE: Yes?

KIMMY: Don't forget your son.

JAKE: Right.

Jake walks to the baby carrier and picks it up.

JAKE: Come on, Adam. Let's go.

Kimmy and Jake exit with the baby. Blackout.