

BED REST

Scene 1

[white stage. Eerily white. Hospital white]

[10-15 hospital beds, on wheels, cover the stage. They create a playing space for the actors. Our 5 actors are named the following: Alice, age 11. Nancy, age 81. Judith, age 55. Bartholomew, age 25. The Doctor, age inconsequential]

[ALICE, NANCY, JUDITH, and BART are laying in their respective beds, strewn about the stage. None of them touch the ground during the duration of the play]

[ALICE wakes up, starts walking on top of the beds, solving the labyrinth to get to NANCY's bed]

ALICE

Grandma, Gramma. Grrraaaammmaaaa. *[shaking NANCY awake]*

NANCY

Oh, oh. Yes. I'm Yes. I'm awake. Alice darling, what time is it? What are you doing out of bed?

ALICE

I've been dreaming again.

NANCY

Come here, little one. Close your eyes.

[ALICE does. NANCY cuddles her, keeping her safe and warm through the night. JUDITH wakes up aggressively, curling into a ball and sitting upright. She frantically reaches for the button on her hospital bed that administers more pain killers. She finds it, and finds release. She sinks back into bed.]

B E D R E S T

[morning comes. The patients produce means of entertaining themselves. Books, handheld games. ALICE makes a paper plane out of a torn out page of newspaper and flies it around the maze of beds. Afternoon comes. The patients nap, they see their doctor one at a time. Evening comes. Visiting hours. The patients are all visited by a family member or a loved one, ALICE's mom is busy, but so eager to see her. She is loving and full of energy and youth. NANCY sees her oldest son, a man about 50 years old. He brings her flowers, which she sets on an adjacent bed. JUDITH is visited by her husband and young twin boys. All are joyous reunions. No one visits BART.]

[night comes. The patients resume their sleeping positions. ALICE wakes up, and starts making her way towards NANCY. But trips on the sleeping BART.]

BART

Ow, Jesus! What is your problem?

ALICE

Owwwww! That hurt.

NANCY

[groggily] I'm awake. What's going on?

BART

Alice was running again. Like we haven't told her not to about a *million* times!

ALICE

Brother tripped me!

BART

I didn't trip you? How could I trip you? I wasn't awake.

B E D R E S T

[JUDITH wakes with a start, trying to find her painkillers, finds them, then looks to everyone else.]

JUDITH

What are you all doing up?

[everyone stares blankly at JUDITH for a moment]

NANCY

Alice tripped.

ALICE

Brother TRIPPED MEEEE!

BART

I was fully unconscious and DON'T call me *brother*.

NANCY

[to JUDITH] Are you okay? Should we call the doctor?

ALICE

Brother brother brother brother brother brother brother brother

JUDITH

I'm fine. I'm used to it. Alice?

[ALICE stops, looks to JUDITH]

Will you leave Bartholomew alone?

ALICE

You're not my mom.

JUDITH

Oh, I know that. Do you?

ALICE

I just call you momma. I know you're not. I'm not stupid.

NANCY

B E D R E S T

You've really got to stop doing that. You'll get in all kinds of trouble with your folks.

ALICE

My family's not *here*. *[to everyone]* You are.

NANCY

They're here when they can be.

ALICE

Who cares. Grandma, can I sleep with you again?

BART

You really shouldn't be sharing beds.

ALICE

SHUT UP BROTHER I'M TALKING TO GRANDMA

JUDITH

You really need to be quiet dear, we don't want to wake anyone else up.

ALICE

YOU'RE NOT MY—

[BART kicks the bed that alice is standing on, knocking her over]

AA

[Everyone sits in silence for a moment, waiting to see if someone comes in. once the coast seems clear, they all take a collective sigh of relief. As soon as they prepare to go to bed, the piercing fluorescent turn on in full force, blinding the patients. They moan out in pain as the doctor enters]

DOCTOR

Is everyone okay in here? Janel said she heard something from this ward.

[everyone nods and shakes their heads in unison, both answering for 'being okay' and 'hearing something']

B E D R E S T

JUDITH

We're find. Alice just... was having a nightmare.

ALICE

No I wasn't! I don't have nightmares, I have DREAMS.

DOCTOR

Do you need something to help you sleep?

NANCY & JUDITH

No!

NANCY

I just let her sleep with me, it's no problem. She sleeps fine over here.

DOCTOR

You really shouldn't be doing that. Weakened immunity doesn't mix well with child germs.

BART

[reading his book now, half under his breath] That's what I said.

DOCTOR

Bart, have you been sleeping well these past few nights?

BART

Yeah.

[BART places his book over his eyes like a sleep mask]

DOCTOR

Alice, I want you to take this. *[they hand alice a pill in an aluminum wrapping]*

[to everyone] You'll be okay for the rest of the night?

[everyone nods their heads, and hums in agreement.]

[the DOCTOR exits, and the bright lights go back off.]

[Everyone lays down in silence. After a beat]

ALICE

B E D R E S T

I don't have nightmares.

NANCY

We know, honey.

ALICE

I have *dreams*.

BART

[face still covered by the book, muffled] Bad dreams?

ALICE

NO! Noooooooooo!! *[she stands up and kicks BART]*

BART

Hey, HEY! *[putting his foot down]* Stop it.

JUDITH

Alice, honey, did you take your pill?

ALICE

The package is too thick.

NANCY

Bring it here, I got it.

ALICE

[contemplating, and then] I want brother to do it.

BART

I've already died and this is hell.

NANCY

I can do it, bring it here.

ALICE

Brother TRIPPED me, so he has to open the pill.

BART

B E D R E S T

For the last time, nobody tripped you.

[ALICE stands over BART, waiting.]

Give me the pill.

[ALICE hands it over, BART opens it, and hands it back. ALICE swallows it instantly.]

ALICE

[running away] Thanks, brother.

BART

[mostly to himself] Not your brother.

ALICE

Gramma, can I sleep with you?

NANCY

Of course, dear.

[ALICE cuddles up next to NANCY. Everyone gets into bed, ready to sleep again.]

ALICE

[quietly] I don't have nightmares.

NANCY

I know. I know.

Scene 2