

Script Excerpt from BROKEN

© by Juanita Rockwell 2014
All rights reserved

(Lights up on some kind of empty space, the world seen through Lorraine's eyes. We see YOUNG LORRAINE, a lovely woman in her twenties, sitting up in bed and wearing a stylish outfit circa 1963.

Perhaps Nat King Cole's Sweet Lorraine is playing.

We are in the mind - and sometimes the body - of OLD LORRAINE, a woman in her eighties who has had a stroke. Her experience of language, time, and memory are a bit wonky. For the most part, the performer as Young Lorraine speaks to the audience, and as Old Lorraine, she speaks to the other characters.

People, props, set pieces, costuming, etc appear only as Lorraine sees them. Sometimes they are as she wishes them to be, sometimes not.)

YOUNG LORRAINE

This is how I look. In my mind, I mean. Well, frankly, it's how I looked in 1963. But this is how I see myself, since the stroke. And always in this very outfit - a favorite of mine, Thankfully. I know I have great-grandchildren But it's still a shock if I catch myself in the mirror and there's some old woman looking back at me with a bad wig, candy pink lipstick and hideously sensible shoes. They haven't all dressed me with such aesthetic disregard, but without a mirror, I can't even tell which ones have taste and which don't. I don't blame Harry for hiring the ones with no sense of style. I suppose their awareness of couture isn't as important as whether they can operate the Hoyer Lift or administer my dizzying array of meds.

(HARRY enters as a handsome man in his 20s,
in a WW II officer's uniform.)

YOUNG LORRAINE (Continued)

Oh he doesn't look like that either.
In fact, he never did. Harry was never what you'd call a
handsome man.
This is the how my first crush - Mac - how he looked /
after he came back from overseas.
I was just a kid and thought he was magnificent.
I haven't thought about him in years, but here he is.

(Harry speaks at Lorraine from a distance,
without waiting for a response.)

HARRY

HOW ARE YOU DOING, LORRAINE? LO? YOU ALL RIGHT? SLEEP OK?
THAT'S GOOD. YOU HUNGRY? I BET YOU'RE HUNGRY.

YOUNG LORRAINE

He thinks because I had a stroke, he should talk louder.
Maybe if I close my eyes that will turn down his volume a
bit.

(As Lorraine shuts her eyes, her body sinks
down and she becomes OLD LORRAINE. Now
Harry's lines are at a normal volume.)

HARRY

Nicole just got here, she can bring you some soup.

OLD LORRAINE

Well, frankly, odin peeder bobble bodledizzle, bubba...
(Lorraine thinks she's saying "Well frankly,
I'd prefer Boeuf Bordelaise, but..." She
knows it's not quite right.)

HARRY

(getting the gist of it)

Ok ok - I got it!
I know she's no great shakes as a cook, but please, just a
little soup?
I know you don't want any of that NutriCrap, but they still
won't let you eat solids, so soup is what's on the menu.
Let me go talk to her, maybe we order in some egg drop/.
You like Chinese.

(As Harry exits, Old Lorraine sits back up and becomes Young Lorraine again.)

YOUNG LORRAINE

Nicole's in her first year of nursing school.
A good heart - Not a good cook.
For me, the kitchen was where I was truly myself.
I used to say:
"If you're alone in the kitchen and you drop the lamb, you can just pick it up. Who's going to know?"
Wait, that wasn't me, that was Julia Child.
Nicole is no Julia, but my grandson Theo, he's a sous-chef at Ciel Bleu and a wonder in the kitchen.

(THEO enters in a chef's apron, crosses to the now Old Lorraine. We can see they adore each other.)

THEO

Hey there Mega-Momma...
Why don't I whip up a tartine? Smoked trout, egg, and horseradish? I smoked the trout myself this weekend and we just put these on the app menu - they were a smash.

YOUNG LORRAINE

That sounds delightful, dear.

THEO

Great, comin' right up.

(Theo exits as Harry enters, stands distant.)

HARRY

Good morning my sweet!
Everything copasetic up here?

YOUNG LORRAINE

Morning? What happened to evening and night?

HARRY

(not hearing/understanding her)
You hungry? Dr. Patel says we've really got to get some nourishment in you, ok? How about a smoothie?
(We hear his next lines as Lorraine hears them, but he's very serious, telling her "You have to eat something. Understand? Or Doctor Patel will insist on a feeding tube.)

Cuba tabble eenie sumple. Anderstankle? Ober Tocka Puddle
wimpy sissle nodda feeby tooble.

(He exits.)

YOUNG LORRAINE

It's very disconcerting when he does that.

(The actor playing THEO enters as NICOLE,
maybe with a purse or fashionable jacket.)

NICOLE

Hey Mrs. H!

How's my bestie?

You are lookin' fine!

(Touching up Lorraine's hair or makeup)

YOUNG LORRAINE

(apologizing to the audience)

Oh sorry - This is actually Nicole.

These days SHE looks like my grandson, too.

NICOLE

Just wanted to let you know I'm outta here.

Gotta hit up the library.

See you Tuesday, sweetie!

(Harry enters, still speaking at a normal
volume but a little too insistent and
precise - to make sure she understands - and
Lorraine shifts into "Old" mode)

HARRY

Nicole's Leaving, Lorraine.

Her Shift Is Done, But She'll Be Back Tuesday.

*****END OF EXCERPT*****