SCENE 1

SARAH, late 40s to early 50s, sorts laundry and stuffs it into a washing machine.

TOM, mid 50s, enters. He grabs hold of her laundry basket. She looks up.

TOM
No.

SARAH abandons the machine and takes another basket, retreating to a distant part of the room to fold.

SARAH
It needed to be done.

TOM
Why don’t you let me do it?

SARAH
Do you remember how to fold?

TOM
You can sit and watch the Today Show. Or read. You’re always complaining about that stack of books by the bed you’ve been meaning to——

SARAH
I have two more loads.

TOM
Two?

SARAH
It’s nothing.

TOM
You’ve got to take care of yourself.

SARAH
I’m fine.

TOM
You haven’t sat down since we heard that you——

SARAH
Hand me that basket?
TOM
Ignoring it won’t make it get better! It’ll just weigh down on you until you—

SARAH reaches for the basket. TOM grabs it before she can. She pants a little.

TOM (CONT’D)
Let me.

SARAH
You’ll mess the whole thing—

TOM looks down at the clothes.

TOM
Didn’t you just wash these?

SARAH
You wore them yesterday.

TOM
For a couple of hours.

SARAH
They’re stained.

TOM
You’re wearing them out.

SARAH
Hand them—

TOM
You’re dying.

SARAH
You have no idea how to handle—

TOM
Dr. Su said four months. Six at most.

SARAH
One more load.

TOM
Your cancer has moved from your breast to your lungs. It’s moving and it’s growing. You’re dying, Sarah.
SARAH sits as if the wind was knocked out of her.

Inhale. Exhale.

SARAH
SUDDENLY SHIFTED.
THE RUG'S PULLED OUT AGAIN.
THE GROUND ISN'T STABLE,
LIFE MAKES SENSE AND THEN,
YOU FOLD LIKE A TABLE.
YOU FIND YOU'RE UNABLE TO MAKE THINGS ALIGN.
SUDDENLY SHIFTED,
MY LIFE ISN'T...

I ALWAYS KNEW HARD WORK,
MADE THE WORLD GO ROUND.
I HIT THE BOOKS, DID ALL IT TOOK,
TO PROVE I WAS PROFOUNDED.
I KNEW MY PATH AND CARVED THE WAY,
TO MY PICTURED SUCCESS.
FRIDAY NIGHTS WITH NOTECARDS,
AND NO ONE TO IMPRESS.
THEN I MET YOU,
YOU BROKE INTO MY LIFE.
ALL MY PLANS FADED OUT,
I WANTED TO BE YOUR WIFE.

SUDDENLY SHIFTED.
MY WALLS CAME DOWN AND THEN,
THE GROUND WASN'T STABLE,
BUT LIFE MADE SENSE AGAIN.
THOUGHT LOVE WAS A FABLE,
TILL YOU FOUND MY TABLE AND OUR DREAMS COMBINED.
SUDDENLY SHIFTED,
MY LIFE WASN'T MINE.

WE FOUND OUR OWN RHYTHM.
WE HAD A KID, THEN TWO.
WE BALANCED SCHOOLS AND SET THE RULES,
WE BID OUR LIVES ADIEU.
WE BURROWED IN MONOTONY,
AND OUR DAILY ROUTINES.
READING ALL THE ESSAYS,
AND PACKING TANGERINES.
THEN CANCER CAME,
WHAT ALWAYS WORKED JUST BROKE.
HOW CAN YOU KEEP LIVING IF,
EVERY BREATH YOU CHOKE?

SUDDENLY SHIFTED.
THE AIR'S SUCKED OUT AGAIN.
THE GROUND ISN'T STABLE,
LIFE MADE SENSE AND THEN,
YOU SNAP LIKE A CABLE,
YOU FIND YOU'RE UNABLE TO SAY THAT YOU'RE FINE.
SUDDENLY SHIFTED,
MY LIFE'S NEVER BEEN MINE.

GOD
WHY HAVE YOU DONE THIS TO ME?
GOD
WHY CAN'T YOU SET ME FREE?

YOU'VE GIVEN ME TEN YEARS,
WITH NO FEAR OR PAIN.
YOU GAVE ME WALKS AND SKIPPING ROCKS.
I WATCHED FULL MOONS WANE.
ALREADY LIVED THIS LESSON,
DO I HAVE TO AGAIN?
WHY WOULD YOU SAVE ME,
JUST TO SHIFT ME AND THEN...?
WHAT DO I DO?
CAN I DEPEND ON YOU?

SARAH finally meets TOM’s eyes. He 
hugs her close.

Lights out.