

(Name of Project)

(Genre)

by

(Name of Writer)

Name

Address

Phone Number

Agency Information

CHARACTER NAME

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

AGE

GENDER

**SIDES FOR ALICE and TED / The Goldfish Letters / Steve Stajich**

(Note: This dialogue will be used to read for both ALICE and TED)

ALICE

(FIRM) She was... bereaved.

TED

(SHARP) A goldfish! What are they, ten cents a pound? (THEN) Right. Okay. But the act of it. I mean, you're conceding so much. That 'he's' up there, listening, that he stops all of his magnificent work... to catch up on dead goldfish.

ALICE gets up and moves about the porch.

ALICE

I did think about it. I did. But it was her idea, and why would I say "No" ? I don't mean, us talking, this. I mean.. To her. Why-- how would I say "No" to her.

TED

We've adopted a child, Al. We're her guardians. We will, hopefully, be saying "No" quite often.

ALICE

Yes, of course. But she's six years old.

TED

And childhood is... magical. Pink ponies and ice cream clouds. "Let's write God a letter..." (CHUCKLING, DISBELIEF) You put a return address on the envelope--

ALICE

She gets birthday cards, Christmas cards. She knows what a letter is supposed to look like.

TED

You promised to mail it, another lie. The postage... to God. Over a buck, I'm guessing.

ALICE

Yes, I participated in the conspiracy. You have my confession.

TED sees ALICE is getting worked up,  
and gestures that she sit back down at  
the table.

She does.

TED

Okay, fine. Then, when she's not looking, you throw it away.  
At the park.

ALICE

(SIGHS) If I had put it in a mailbox...

TED

Then you would be believing, too. That the letter would  
somehow reach it's intended recipient.

ALICE looks askance, then...

ALICE

Well, it did.

They both share an uneasy laugh.

TED

(re LETTER) This is someone who goes through the trash, in a  
public park.

TED waits for ALICE to agree with him.

ALICE

Oh. Yes.

TED

They find her letter, they take it, and then go back to their  
cave-- Are you impressed with how deeply crazy this is?

TED begins to pull the letter from the  
envelope and unfolds it, reading it.

ALICE

Perhaps we see this... not the same.

TED

But, I mean, Jesus, Al...

ALICE

Right. Well, I don't know. I guess, if it was today... I guess I would still do it all over again.

TED is surprised at her firmness on this.

TED

Well, that's another discussion. (BEAT) It seems...

TED hesitates.

ALICE

Yes...?

TED

That one could... keep a six year-old from going through the bills and tax statements...

ALICE

(FIRM) She was right there. I had the mail in my hands, I set it down. She likes to look at the catalogues, the colors... the pictures of children in sweaters and dresses. There's an envelope, she knows her name. She knows when she sees her name, Ted!

TED

Sorry.

TED resumes re-reading the letter.

TED (CONT'D)

(FROM THE LETTER) "Walter arrived safely in heaven. He's not sick anymore. He's swimming in beautiful blue water and his spirit is with me, just like it's with you." It makes your head spin, there's just so much--

ALICE

I know. It takes a lot for granted.

TED

It's our job to fill the kid up with bullshit. That's one of the 'joys of parenting'. But, some stranger, some freelance wizard.

(FROM LETTER) "Thank your Mommie for helping you to write the letter. What a wonderful Mommie she is. I picked her especially for you."

Here, TED resoundingly hits the table with the flat of his hand.

ALICE

Well, they couldn't know that Anna was adopted.

TED

Come on! We're going to fixate on that, when there's a beautiful blue lake filled with dead goldfish!

ALICE

It's just trying to be... soothing.