SLOW FADE

(The lights rise on JAMES, standing on a barren center stage, holding a wilted flower)

James: (*singing)*

It's a slow fade
When you give yourself away
It's a slow fade
When black and white are turned to grey
When thoughts invade
Choices are made
A price will be paid
When you give yourself away
People never crumble in a day…

A year ago I never saw myself here. No one ever does. I was happy. I had a beautiful wife. I had a high-ranking job at a prestigious law firm. Everything was just perfect. (*beat*) Then the very thing I had been praying for came to pass.

(Light fades on JAMES as he walks off stage. A light shines on KATE on stage right. She is holding something behind her back)

KATE: Hey James! I need you to come in here for a second.
JAMES: (*from offstage*) Hold on, I'll be right there.
KATE: This really can't wait.
JAMES: *(offstage)* You're going to need to give me a few more seconds.
KATE: *(anxiously)* James! Come on!
JAMES: *(offstage)* Would you like me to come out naked?
KATE: What if I said yes?
JAMES: *(walking into KATE's light. He is carrying a baseball mit*) Luckily for you and the rest of the world, I'm dressed.
KATE: Where are you going?
JAMES: The ball game, remember?
KATE: (*smirking*) Oh, that's right! That's fine; so long as you're able and willing to bring another person to the game next year.
JAMES: Honey, it's guys' night out. I promise I'll try to bring you to the next game.

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KATE: Not *me*.
JAMES: Then who? Don't tell me your brother's coming into town.
KATE: No.
JAMES: Good, because if I have to hear one more time about his strange obsession with Windex, I might just snap.
KATE: No, I'm not talking about him. I'm talking about…

(*KATE looks down at her stomach. JAMES takes a while to realize what she is indicating, then instantly grows eagerly excited*)

JAMES: (*surprise*) No! No way! You're really –
KATE: Pregnaunt! And I have a feeling it's a boy!
JAMES: You just feel it?
KATE: Yup. Get that mini-mit ready. We're going to have quite a talented short-stop on our hands.
JAMES: *(taking it all in)* I mean, are you sure?
KATE: You don't trust a mother's instinct?
JAMES: I just can't believe it. *(he smiles)* I'm gonna have a son! I'm gonna have a son! *(shouting)* YOU HEAR THAT WORLD?! I'M GONNA HAVE A SON!
(KATE laughs at his exuberant exaltations and exits. JAMES walks back to center stage)
KATE: James Donovan, you're going to wake up the whole neighborhood!
JAMES: *(runs to KATE, puts his arms around her, and kisses her)* Then let them be awoken.
KATE: *(smiles)* I know this means a lot to you.
JAMES: We're going to be a full family now. You, me, one girl, and one boy.
KATE: I'm just as excited as you are.
JAMES: Hey babe.
KATE: Yes?
JAMES: I love you.
KATE: I love you too. *(she leans in, gives him a kiss, and releases from their embrace)* Now get going to your guys' night. Don't be too crazy, okay?
JAMES: You got it.

(KATE exits)

JAMES: *(to audience)* We were going to have a baby. A boy. Confirmed by the doctors. Saturday, July 15th. Kate was so excited. I was ecstatic; exuberant. I wanted a boy to carry on the family name, you know? There's a special bond a father and son share. It's written in the blood. He'll grow up to be the spitting

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