

Cast:

Reeve "Junebug" McClain
Mama/Cassie
Tasha/Miss Williams
Dad/Greg
Walter/Darryl
Mr. Olsen/Ron
Reverend Ashford
Brandon

Act I

*Dream Sequence: Junebug McClain
and his father are on a sailboat.
Sound of water and light wind.*

DAD

Perfect day!

JUNEBUG

Perfect!

DAD

Wind at my back—

JUNEBUG

Sun on our faces—

DAD

Nothing but you, me and the water.

JUNEBUG

This is how I always thought it would be. How I imagined it.
No Mama. No Tasha. (he is happy, contented) Just me and you.

DAD

Good.

*Silence. Junebug and his father
enjoy the sea.*

JUNEBUG

Dad? (a beat, while his father turns to him) I don't really
like our new house.

DAD

What do you mean? It's great--

JUNEBUG

I want to move back to our old place.

Silence.

DAD

It wasn't safe there. You know that. This is a much, much better--

JUNEBUG

It was okay there. I didn't feel scared. This new place? I don't know--

DAD

Does Mama know anything about this?

JUNEBUG

No. I wanted to tell you first.

A beat.

DAD

Son, sometimes you have to give things time.

JUNEBUG

It's been three months already!

DAD

Well, that's--

JUNEBUG

It's a long time! (a beat) I don't think I'm adjusting very well.

Dad chuckles at this.

Everybody else is doing great. Mama--

DAD

She likes her new job, huh?

JUNEBUG

(nodding) She likes taking care of people.

DAD

I know.

A beat.

JUNEBUG

And Tasha. Tasha's doing really well. She's made friends already. With the old lady across the hall.

Another beat.

DAD

And you? (disbelieving) No new friends?

JUNEBUG

Nope. Nobody. Not one.

DAD

Nobody? In the whole building?

Junebug shakes his head.

JUNEBUG

They're all. OLD.

A beat.

DAD

What about school?

JUNEBUG

Not really. Just a bunch of bullies.

Teasing Laughter - "Nyah, nyah, nyah"

DAD

They can't all be bullies.

JUNEBUG

Well, there's this one kid. Brandon. But--(he shakes his head)

Brandon appears. A beat.

It's pretty bad.

Brandon disappears.

DAD

I see.

A beat.

JUNEBUG

(this is a hard subject) And then there's.

Walter appears.

Walter.

DAD

Walter?

JUNEBUG

His father just moved into our building.

A beat.

I think he might have a thing for Mama.

*He looks at his father
tentatively. Walter disappears.*

It's only because you're not around! If you would just come home and live with us, I think that Walter would--

DAD

(stopping him) Junebug.

JUNEBUG

It's just that--

DAD

(cutting him off) Let's just try and enjoy the day, okay?

*He puts his arm around Junebug,
tightly.*

JUNEBUG

Okay.

Junebug looks out over the water.

DAD

You want to steer?

JUNEBUG

Can I? Really?

Junebug crawls over to where his father is seated.

DAD

Here take the tiller. Hold it tightly-

JUNEBUG

Got it.

DAD

Go easy on her. No herky-jerky motions. You just want to steer her gently.

Junebug does so.

Silence.

You got it. You got it. (he smiles) How does she feel?

JUNEBUG

Good. Really good.

A beat.

JUNEBUG

You know what? I think I'm going to join the navy. I bet if I learned to sail well, they'd probably take me, don't you think?

DAD

(smiling) I think you could do anything you wanted.

JUNEBUG

Really?

He is pleased.

They sail quietly for a moment. The wind kicks up a bit. They both notice it.

DAD

Hunh. Looks like we might be in for a bit of a storm.

JUNEBUG

A storm?

DAD

See those clouds gathering up over there?

He points.

JUNEBUG

Yeah.

DAD

Probably should head back. You got the tiller?

Junebug nods.

Good.

As Junebug holds on to the tiller, Dad takes down the jib. The boat begins to rock. Junebug grips the sides of the boat.

I should probably go ahead and reef the mainsail too. That way it won't catch so much wind.

Junebug watches as Dad reefs the mainsail.

A large thunderclap. Junebug jumps. It begins to rain.

JUNEBUG

Wow. That was close, huh?

DAD

Yep. Sure was. It's moving in fast.

Junebug has a hard time maintaining his balance on the rocking boat. Dad is looking straight ahead.

JUNEBUG

We're going to be okay, though, right?

He looks to his father who has gone silent.

Dad, what's the matter?

His father looks at him.

DAD

I'm sorry, son. I can't do this.

Junebug's father climbs out of the boat.

JUNEBUG

What are you doing?

DAD

You'll have to bring her in yourself.

JUNEBUG

What do you mean? I don't even know what I'm doing.

DAD

You're gonna have to be the man for this one, Junebug.

JUNEBUG

I don't want to be the man! I'm only ten.

DAD

You don't need me. You can get her in. Just remember what we talked about and you'll be fine.

JUNEBUG

No, I won't!

Junebug is panicked. A beat.

DAD

Listen to your mother. Okay? Do as she says. She knows what's best. And take care of Tasha. She looks up to you.

JUNEBUG

Get back in the boat. Please. It's not safe. Come on. The water is cold.

DAD

Study hard. And don't get into fights. Promise me.

JUNEBUG

Dad, wait--!

DAD

Please don't be mad at me, Junebug.

*Dad disappears. Junebug is alone
on the sea.*

JUNEBUG

Dad! Dad! Come back--!