

SCENE 5: THE PARK

REAGAN sits on a park bench while TOMMY paces.

TOMMY

I just don't know what to do. I can't believe he said no.

REAGAN

Maybe he's scared.

TOMMY

You taught me to take the pen and write my story, to take initiative in my life, and I finally found it! I have a purpose. Just like Frank has a purpose! Why can't my Dad see that?

REAGAN

He probably just wants you to have a different life.

TOMMY

How do I convince him? What do I tell him? You're creative, what should my story be?

REAGAN

I guess you could tell him how much it means to you.

TOMMY

I tried that already! And he blew me off. He just wants me to work my whole life at the lumber mill, stay in Buffalo, and become the same exact person he is. It's ridiculous.

REAGAN

I'm sure he had a dream once.

TOMMY

Yes! Yes, he did! He came to America. He left Italy, his family, everything, for America. And look how much better off he is now! He has a job, a house, a family. He got to chase his dream, why can't I?

REAGAN

Maybe you should tell him that.

TOMMY

He'd probably still say no. I just don't understand. Everyone else is leaving, there's no reason I should stay home.

REAGAN

What is *wrong* with you!

Beat.

REAGAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. Really, you don't think there's anything here for you? You have siblings, your parents, all your friends. And you want to go romp around Europe and think there's no chance something bad could happen? War is dangerous!

TOMMY

You don't think we should be at war?

REAGAN

Tommy, it's a noble fight. Hitler, Mussolini, those people need to be stopped. They're doing *horrible* things. But it's not safe out there.

TOMMY

Maybe it's serious enough that I should be willing to put my life on the line.

REAGAN

Well if that's why you're going, I respect that. But...maybe I just don't want to see you go.

Beat.

TOMMY

You don't?

REAGAN

No. None of your friends would.

TOMMY

Most of my friends don't seem to care.

Beat.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

I got you this gift.

He pulls out a mechanical pencil and gives it to Reagan.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

It's this new mechanical pencil. You put the lead in it and you can keep using it, no need to sharpen.

REAGAN

Thank you.

They hug, a moment too long.

TOMMY

(trying to break the tension)

And, you know, I thought it's nice in case you ever need to go back and erase.

REAGAN

You can't change the past, Tommy.