

Phase One

written by  
Jeremy Steel

November 7, 2021  
First Draft

Made in Highland

**INT. ROOM**

Dark.

CAROL  
(from the darkness)  
Hello!...Who's there? Anyone?!

[faint clicking/booming of electrical panel snapping on]

CAROL  
(still darkness)  
I don't have any money.

[closer/bigger electrical boom/snap, electrical flicker/buzz]

The lights come to life with a quick flicker, then bright from above.

Carol turns away, blinking. She sits in a chair. The light blasts her, a table, and another chair on the opposite side of the table. It falls off leaving the very dark impression of an industrial/clinical cinder-brick wall around her.

FEMALE COMPUTER VOICE  
(speaker)  
Phase one, initiated.

Carol raises her hand to shield some of the bright from her eyes, looking for the source of the voice.

YOUNG CAROL, a female child, 7 or 8 yrs old, digital-glitch [VFX: glitch reveal] appears in the room a few paces behind the empty chair. A case hangs from her hand at her side.

Carol startles.

CAROL  
Who are you supposed to be?

Young Carol methodically moves to the table, places her case on the table, and sits in the chair. She folds her hands on the table in front of her and looks to Carol.

YOUNG CAROL  
I am you.

CAROL  
Ha, you ain't me girl!

Young Carol holds her stare briefly.

YOUNG CAROL  
Well then...

Made in Highland

Young Carol straight-forwardly opens her case which houses a very nice, orderly, selection of colored pencils, a sharpener, and one piece of paper. She places the paper in front of her.

YOUNG CAROL

I thought we'd begin with a few context questions.

She selects a few specific colored pencils.

CAROL

Context question?! What the hell are you talking about? Who are you, and why don't my legs work?! Where am I?

Young Carol takes a breath, grabs the sharpener, and impatiently snaps.

YOUNG CAROL

Where you are is here with me. Your legs don't work so you don't run away. Who I am, might best be described as you--but from the time you call the past, your memories....

She sharpens one of the pencils.

YOUNG CAROL

You should understand, this works best if you are honest and forthcoming.

She looks at the tip of the colored pencil and blows. She puts the pencil to the paper.

YOUNG CAROL

What is your name?

CAROL

(half a laugh)  
I thought you were me?!

Young Carol looks up.

YOUNG CAROL

Honest and forthcoming.

They look at each other.

CAROL

I...I don't understand any of this.

Young Carol determinedly holds Carol in her stare.

CAROL  
Carol--Caroline Ma--.

YOUNG CAROL  
(interrupts)  
No. What did your mother call you?

Beat.

CAROL  
(taking her time)  
My mother...mom...she used to call  
me Little Lyna...

YOUNG CAROL  
(drawing, sing-songy)  
Little Lyna from Carolina.

Carol's eyes squint at Young Carol. Young Carol hums. Carol looks off.

CAROL  
We lived in Carolina for some  
time, before we moved...

CAROL  
(back to Young Carol)  
I hated that name. You ought to  
know that.

YOUNG CAROL  
(drawing)  
I do. What did your father call  
you?

CAROL  
(easing a bit, smiles)  
Daddy was gone a lot, working, but  
would always come home and ask,  
"Where's my Lyna Princess?" We'd  
hug, then he'd ask me where the  
queen of the castle was.

YOUNG CAROL  
But life wasn't always a fairy-  
tale, was it?

CAROL  
(agitated, pointedly)  
My parents were good parents!

YOUNG CAROL

Is there a place between the  
immature, wanton, reckless,  
selfish abandonment of a child's  
dreamworld and the mature, wanton,  
stifled, clinical, selfish,  
controlling, tyranny of an adult's  
real-world?

Carol stares blankly, not sure of the question let alone the  
semblance of an answer.

YOUNG CAROL

Too soon...more context...what  
happened to Fluffy Ears?

Carol thinks.

CAROL

(not sure where her answer is  
landing)

Uh...I think we gave her away...I  
don't really kn--I-I don't  
remember.

YOUNG CAROL

Why don't you know? Why don't you  
remember?

CAROL

IT WAS A STUFFED TOY! What does it  
matter?!

YOUNG CAROL

Fluffy Ears mattered at an earlier  
point. What changed?

CAROL

What changed?! I grew up! People  
grow up!

YOUNG CAROL

Did your dreams grow up, as well?

CAROL

Yes, they did--

YOUNG CAROL

...or did they cease to exist in  
this new REAL-WORLD?

Beat.

YOUNG CAROL  
Is the real-world better?  
(beat)  
Is it better that my dreams don't  
exist anymore?

Carol only stares off.

YOUNG CAROL  
Do you have children in this  
world?

Carol looks down.

CAROL  
(barely audible, nodding)  
...Yes...two.

YOUNG CAROL  
And what will come of their  
dreams?

No response. Carol's eyes glisten, it's hard for her to breathe. Young Carol puts the pencils away in their place and closes the case.

YOUNG CAROL  
(blows across the paper)  
My time is finished.

She turns her drawing face-down.

CAROL  
How can I be a better person...a  
better mother?...How can I make a  
better world?

Young Carol grabs her case, stands and turns toward Carol. Both hands hold her case at her waist in front of her.

CAROL  
HOW CAN I DREAM AGAIN?!

YOUNG CAROL  
I can neither tell you of the  
choices you face, nor their  
outcome...(starts to turn,  
then)...but you now remember the  
right questions.

She slowly moves back a few paces, then digitally glitches away  
[VFX: digital glitch vanish].

Beat. Carol reaches for the drawing. She slides it to her, and flips it. She sees it for the first time. Exhale. Eyes glisten. Her hand finds her mouth.

CAROL

I remember...I remember.

We see a little girl, Carol, holding a plush bunny rabbit close to her with one arm and her other arm is in her mom's hand as she walks. Little Carol looks up to her mom longingly. The mother's upper torso is incomplete so we don't see her face.

The lights [snap] off.

FEMALE COMPUTER VOICE

(speaker)

Phase one, complete.

End.