

Home Is Where the Heart Is  
By Bronwen Clark

FADE IN:

INT. STUDIO - DAY

GEORGE (65) and TOM (43) are walking down the hall towards the set for Home Is Where the Heart Is.

GEORGE

. . .it's gotten to the point where they won't even leave! They live and breathe as their characters. They're mentally fragile and emotionally unstable. All I'm saying is, break the news gently, Tom.

TOM

George, I'm surprised to see you care so much.

GEORGE

Well, it's been nearly fifteen years. I think of them as kind of All My Children. Like how I thought of you before you left for corporate.

Tom smiles at George as he pushes the door open and enters the Home Is Where the Heart Is set. As he opens the door, he hears a loud crashing sound of breaking glass followed by a loud thump.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Tom enters into a bedroom and sees VIVIAN (47) standing over DAMION (50), holding a broken vase. She looks up and freezes when she sees Tom.

VIVIAN

Nick! You're back!

Before Tom can say anything, Tess (16), her boyfriend, Lucas (17), Sofia (37), and Dirk (20) throw open the bedroom door.

SOFIA

What's going on?

They see Damion lying on the floor.

TESS

Dad!

Tess runs to Damion, then turns to face Vivian, who is still holding the broken vase.

TESS (CONT'D)

What did you do to him?

Tess lunges for Vivian, but Lucas holds her back.

LUCAS

Tess, don't!

DIRK

Nick?

SOFIA

My god!

TESS

Who?

SOFIA

I thought you were dead!

TESS

Who is Nick?

DIRK

But the electrical fence... you were supposed to be dead!

SOFIA

I thought you would never come back! Dirk told me you left town to find your step-brother in Atlantic City!

TOM

No! No, I'm not back!

VIVIAN

A ghost? An apparition?

DIRK

An evil twin brother?

VIVIAN

Or maybe a clone. . .?

TOM

No! It's me, Tom! I played Nick on the show, but I'm Tom! Don't you

remember?

DAMION  
(moans)

SOFIA  
I can't believe you're back!

Sofia goes towards Tom as if to kiss him.

TOM  
Don't Sofia. We can't be together. I married someone else.

SOFIA  
What? But, we were engaged!

Sofia holds up her left hand, where the ring Nick gave her still sits.

TOM  
We weren't. It was fake, Sofia! It didn't mean anything!

Tom is interrupted by a loud scream from the living room. They all rush out of the bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

They enter the living room to see GINA (30) pointing a prop gun at Hazel (25). The living room is decorated for Tess's Sweet Sixteen. There are balloons and streamers and a large sign that says Happy Sweet Sixteen, Tess!

GINA  
You are pathetic!

HAZEL  
And you are ignorant! Did you really think Sebastian would marry you? After he found out that he is Simon's father?

GINA  
Those test results were confidential. How could you know that?

HAZEL  
A friend works at the clinic. He switched the tests so no one would know Damion is really Simon's father.

TESS  
What?

VIVIAN

I'll. . . be right back.

Vivian guiltily exits back into the bedroom.

GINA

No!

HAZEL

Vivian knew; she paid Logan to switch the tests so Damion wouldn't leave her. Carmilla is none the wiser.

GINA

You--!

There is a loud pop, like a gunshot. Hazel screams and falls to the ground, thinking Gina has shot her. As she falls down, we see Lucas has accidentally popped a balloon.

LUCAS

Did you say, Logan?

Hazel realizes she hasn't been shot and slowly gets up. Before she can respond, the doorbell rings. Dirk answers it. SELENA (17) is on the doorstep accompanied by a POLICEMAN (45). Lucas starts pacing.

POLICEMAN

Does this belong to you?

The Policeman shoves Selena in the house.

SOFIA

Selena!

Sofia runs to her daughter, who makes no similar movement.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

Where have you been?

POLICEMAN

I found her hot-wiring the minister's car--

SOFIA

Selena!

POLICEMAN

She is now classified as a P-I-N-S

DIRK  
What?

POLICEMAN  
Person in Need of Supervision. I'll have to file a---

Selena kicks the door shut on the policeman. She wiggles out of her mother's embrace and heads into the living room.

TESS  
Lucas, who is Logan? Why is this freaking you out?

LUCAS  
I just need to think for a moment. Alone. Excuse me.

Lucas exits. Selena kicks a few balloons on the ground.

SELENA  
Haven't you cleaned up this mess yet? Your party was like, two weeks ago.

Sofia walks anxiously towards Tom.

SOFIA  
Nick. . . there's something you--

TOM  
Look, could I have everyone's attention for just a moment?

Hazel and Gina notice Tom for the first time.

HAZEL  
Nick! You're back!

TOM  
No I'm not!

Vivian quietly exits the bedroom, dragging Damion by the ankles. She pulls him through the living room; no one really notices.

GINA  
Is it a ghost?

TOM  
No! Listen, just sit down, all of you, for a minute! I'm not Nick!

I'm Tom!

GINA  
Twin brother?

TOM

No! I used to be on the show as Nick, but then I left to become a producer. The freak electric fence accident did not kill me. . . it wasn't real! I chose to leave the show! And now I'm back to tell you that the ratings for Home Is Where the Heart Is have tanked! This show is getting cancelled!

Vivian, almost to the door, drops Damion's legs in surprise.

(pause)

Everyone starts talking at once.

VIVIAN	TESS	LUCAS	GINA
<i>To Hazel</i>	<i>To Selena</i>	<i>To Dirk</i>	<i>To Vivian</i>
This is all your fault!	All that money wasted on bailing you out of jail!	All your damn monologuing!	If you weren't drunk all the time!

HAZEL  
Do not blame this on me!

TOM

Hey! HEY! Guys, maybe this is a good thing! You've got to take every opportunity available. You've only got One Life to Live.

Sofia talks as if she just received a terrible diagnosis.

SOFIA  
How much longer do we have, Nick?

TOM  
About a week, Sofia.

GINA  
No! I have made it this far and it is SO hard to stay alive in a soap opera!

TESS  
But what about Prom?

VIVIAN

We don't have anywhere to go. . .!

HAZEL

Surely there must be something we can do. . .

TOM

Really, it's not up to me. You'll go off the air next week.

TESS

It's not fair!

SELENA

Oh, come on, Tess. Like you didn't know it was coming for you. You would have been gone years ago if it wasn't for your daddy over there!

Dirk holds Tess back as she tries to lunge at Selena.

Dirk

Jeez, sis, cut it out!

Tess manages to throw a shoe at Selena. Selena leaps up and tackles Tess. Dirk steps back and the teenagers disappear behind the sofa, fighting.

TOM

Uh, should we do something?

GINA

Nah, they're teenagers. They're just Young and Restless.

SOFIA

Nick, about Selena--

Before Sofia can finish her thought, Dirk comes up to Tom and occupies his attention. Selena reemerges from behind the sofa and jumps over the back and lands on the cushions. Tess stands up, messaging her arm.

DIRK

Look, Nick--

TOM

Tom!

DIRK

---Tom, can't we work something out? I've got bonds, man, I could---

TOM  
No!

LOGAN (17) suddenly sneaks in through a window, thinking the house is empty. He is acting suspiciously, as if wanting to steal something. He is oblivious to the gathering in the living room.

TESS  
Lucas?

LOGAN  
Oh. Hey. . .

HAZEL  
Logan?

TESS  
You're twins!

SELENA  
Nothing gets by you, Tess.

LOGAN  
Oh, hey, Selena.

Logan waves to Selena. Selena waves back.

LOGAN (CONT'D)  
I was just. . .where's Lucas?

GINA  
It was you! You switched the tests!

Gina advances angrily towards Logan.

LOGAN  
Hey, I was just looking for my brother---

Gina hits Logan on the head and he collapses.

SELENA  
Logan!

Selena scrambles off the sofa towards Logan.

SELENA (CONT'D)  
He needs to go to the hospital!

DIRK  
Which one? Psychiatric? Urgent Care?

SELENA  
I don't know! Just a General Hospital!

An ambulance siren is heard outside.

TOM  
That was quick.

A Medic (30) comes in and puts Logan on a gurney. He sees Damion still lying on the floor.

MEDIC  
Should we take him too?

VIVIAN  
No. He'll be fine.

The medic shrugs and leaves with Logan.  
Selena turns to face Gina.

SELENA  
How could you!

Selena pushes her out of the window that is still open from when Logan snuck in. Selena storms off into the bedroom and slams the door. Sofia tries to talk to Tom again, still in a worried tone.

SOFIA  
Nick, Selena's not always like this. It's just, she's been acting out a lot lately. She's never really had a father figure in her life. . .

TOM  
How old did you say she is?

SOFIA  
Seventeen.

TOM  
Oh my---is she?

SOFIA

Yes! That's what I've been trying to tell you---

At this point, Tom makes the transfer into his old character Nick. He resumes his character comfortably, as if Nick was a missing part of him all these years.

NICK

I have a daughter? Sofia, we should get married! City Hall, you and me! Mr. and Mrs. Nick Brady!

Sofia is delighted. They hold hands and exit through the front door. They pass Gina, who is struggling to climb into the house through the window. Vivian resumes pulling Damion out of the house. Tess begins taking down the party decorations. Hazel sits on the couch holding her head. Dirk leaves the room, talking on his cell phone. George is seen standing at the back of the living room, presumably the side never shown on TV where doors, equipment, and crew stand. He sees Tom (now Nick) rejoining the show. He steps out of the studio.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO - DAY

George locks the stage door, sighs. The lit-up sign reading "Home Is Where the Heart Is" glimmers for one more second before it is switched off. George walks away.

FADE OUT.

THE END.