

hear a documentary on tornadoes playing. Howie is confused. Something isn't right.

He gets up off the couch and ejects the tape. He examines the tape, panic starts to set in. He pops the tape back in and hits play again. More tornado documentary.)

HOWIE

What is this? Becca? Becca?
(hits fast forward)

BECCA

(from upstairs)

BEGIN

What?

HOWIE

Becca?! Becca?!

BECCA

(Coming down the stairs)

What?

HOWIE

What'd you do here?!

(Howie keeps pressing fast forward, but it's all tornadoes. He's beside himself.)

BECCA

What's the matter?

HOWIE

What is this?

BECCA

What's what?

HOWIE

The *television*. What *is* this?

BECCA

(looks to TV)

It's the Discovery Channel. The tornado program. You said you wanted to watch it. I recorded it for you. Why?

For *chrissake!*

HOWIE

What's the matter?

BECCA

It's Danny's tape. You recorded over Danny's tape.

HOWIE

(beat)

No, I didn't. *Pride and Prejudice* was on that tape. We were watching it last night.

BECCA

I switched them.

HOWIE

What?!

BECCA

I watched Danny's tape later. After you went to bed.

HOWIE

Why didn't you take it out of the machine?

BECCA

Why didn't you check to see what was in there?

HOWIE

I assumed it was the TV tape.

BECCA

Jesus, Becca!

HOWIE

It was one of the baby videos?

BECCA

No, it was the most recent, the long one. The park was on it, and Mexico--

HOWIE

How was I supposed to know you snuck down here?

BECCA

--and Christmas.

HOWIE

I thought it was the TV tape. BECCA

It wasn't! HOWIE

I know, Howie. BECCA

So it's gone. The whole thing. HOWIE

I'm sorry. BECCA

It's the only copy, Becca! HOWIE

Well, I didn't do it on purpose. BECCA

Are ya sure? HOWIE

(beat) BECCA

What does *that* mean?
(no response)

You think I recorded over Danny's tape on purpose?

I don't know. HOWIE

You don't *know*? BECCA

I should've taken it out. HOWIE

Why would I deliberately record over it? BECCA

I don't know. HOWIE

Why *would* I?! BECCA

HOWIE

I don't *know!*

(Silence.)

You took the paintings off the fridge. Danny's paintings.

BECCA

To save them. I put them in plastic.

HOWIE

And shoved them in a box.

BECCA

For safekeeping.

HOWIE

Okay.

BECCA

I didn't throw the paintings out.

HOWIE

I know you didn't.

BECCA

You think I didn't want that tape?

HOWIE

I don't—...Of course, you did. Obviously it wasn't on purpose but—

BECCA

What?

HOWIE

Maybe subconsciously.

BECCA

Subconsciously. Is this what they're telling you at group? How I'm doing things subconsciously?

HOWIE

You're trying to get rid of him. I'm sorry, but that's how it feels to me sometimes. Every day, it's something else. It feels like you're trying to get rid of any evidence he was ever here.

BECCA

(It's as if she's been slapped.)
I didn't know that tape was in there.

HOWIE

I'm not talking about the tape. Not just the tape.

BECCA

And the paintings are downstairs. In a box. You can look at them whenever you want.

HOWIE

The clothes. His shoes.

BECCA

We don't need all that stuff. Why would we keep—?

HOWIE

Your wanting to sell the house.

BECCA

We already talked about—

HOWIE

Taz. Sending Taz to your mother's!

BECCA

There was a lot going on, Howie. We couldn't deal with the dog.

HOWIE

I was fine with the dog. *I* was the one walking him.

BECCA

Well he got under foot.

HOWIE

And he was a reminder.

BECCA

Yes, he was a reminder. So what? I wanted one less reminder around here. That's perfectly normal.

HOWIE

And since you never wanted the dog to begin with—

BECCA

Oh for godsakes—

HOWIE

Well if I hadn't bought the dog—

BECCA

And if *I* hadn't run inside to get the phone, or if *I* had latched the gate—

HOWIE

I left the gate unlatched.

BECCA

Well *I* didn't check it. I'm not playing this game again, Howie. It was no one's fault.

HOWIE

Not even the dog's.

BECCA

I know that.

HOWIE

Dogs chase squirrels. Boys chase dogs.

BECCA

Are you telling me or yourself?

HOWIE

He *loved* that dog!

BECCA

Of course he did.

HOWIE

And you got rid of him.

BECCA

Right, like I got rid of the tape. I get it.

HOWIE

(losing it)

It's not just the tape! I'm not talking about the tape, Becca! It's Taz, and the paintings, and the clothes, and it's *everything*! You have to stop erasing him! You have to stop it! You HAVE TO STOP!

(She takes him in. She seems more confused than affronted.)

END