

2 Brothers Drinking 2 Sisters Drinking

2 plays by Stanley Rutherford

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2 brothers drinking

characters: Robin—male, late thirties
Russell—male, mid-thirties, Robin's brother

setting: A very long plank bar. Behind the bar (upstage) is a display of alcohol bottles. An array of bar stools stands in the usual line in front of the bar. Everything is very minimal, suggestive.

running time: Approximately 40 minutes.

2 sisters drinking

characters: Stephanie—female, late-twenties
Jennifer—female, mid-twenties, Stephanie's half-sister

setting: A very long plank bar. Behind the bar (upstage) is a display of alcohol bottles. An array of bar stools stands in the usual line in front of the bar. Everything is very minimal, suggestive.

running time: Approximately 40 minutes.

2 brothers drinking

Two men sit at the bar, turned away from it (i.e. facing the audience), drinking scotch, very laid back, chatting.

The two men are brothers, mid- to late-thirties. Robin is the elder by two years, Russell the younger. Russell is a pretty scruffy guy—highly unruly hair, t-shirt, three or four days of stubble, asymmetrical face, feral and charming. Robin is more buttoned-down, groomed, conventional.

Robin: Looking back... I mean, before the...a... split, and the...

Russell: They never had money.

Robin: No one had money.

Russell: I don't think...

Robin: She was always pissed.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: Always.

Russell: But...

Robin: And the bankruptcy thing...

Russell: Mentally, he was...

Robin: ...mentally he wasn't all that...

Russell: He wasn't.

Robin: The illness, the mental thing, the alcohol...

Russell: He drank.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: Couldn't stand himself.

Robin: Always blamed her.

Russell: Blamed her, hated himself, drank to forget.

Robin: Went broke, left her, dropped dead.

Pause as they drink, then...

Robin: From day one she knew his people didn't approve of her, she was suspect and she knew she was suspect and she started throwing up after every meal.

Russell: All of her sisters were fat.

Robin: And she was...

Russell: She was terrified.

Robin: I don't think you can...

Russell: She was terrified, terrified of him, terrified of life, terrified of getting fat.

Robin: If you'd been divorced, you were...

Russell: It's still that way.

Robin: But not like it was....

Russell: You're still used goods...

Robin: Pal, everybody's fucking divorced.

Russell: Speak for yourself.

Robin: Well...

Russell: I'm not divorced.

Robin: You never married.

Russell: I'm a role model.

Robin: **[Beat]** But still...

Russell: Used goods.

Robin: She knew that his fucking family didn't like, ya' know, accept her like if she'd been a fucking virgin or whatever and the fact that her first was some dickhead who stole a bunch a money from some dumbfuck...

Russell: All of her sisters were fat.

Robin: She threw up after every meal.

Russell: The world's first bulimic.

Robin: And now she's gone.

Russell: Mom, the world's first bulimic.

[They toast her]

Robin: **[Shaking his head]** He's gone, she's gone... I don't think he ever realized, I mean, married for what...thirty years and I don't think he...

Russell: Throwin' up after every meal and he didn't realize it...

Robin: I mean *we* knew.

Russell: Every meal.

Robin: I could hear her.

Russell: How could she...?

Robin: **[Shaking his head]** I don't...

Russell: Sad.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: Real sad.

Pause as they drink, then...

Robin: Therapy's helped me a lot...I know you don't think that...

Russell: I didn't say that.

Robin: It's helped me.

Russell: I know, I know....

Robin: You could use a...

Russell: I know, I know...I did once, you know.

Robin: Therapist?

Russell: Group thing.

Robin: AA?

Russell: No, no...it was a...

Robin: Sexual dysfunction?

Russell: Buddy, it wasn't a fucking...

Robin: I have a... a... s...sexual dysfunction.

Russell: **[Beat]** I don't have sexual dysfunction.

Robin: I mean, nothing really serious or anything.

Russell: It's good to talk about this shit.

Robin: That's what I'm saying.

Russell: I mean...

Robin: Yeah, yeah...

Russell: Just talk, ya' know.

Robin: It's good seein' ya', ya' know.

Russell: Yeah, really.

Robin: It's funny how you don't...

Russell: We always used to.

Robin: Time stuff, ya' know, get wrapped up and ya' forget,

Russell: This thing, that thing.

Robin: It was a...p...pre-mature ejaculation thing, and...

Russell: **[Nodding]** Lotta that goin' around.

Robin: **[Nodding]** Lotta guys have it.

Russell: It's a...lot guys have that, yeah...

Robin: It's about...trust or something.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: And an...anxiety sort of...

Russell: Performance kind of....

Robin: **[Nodding]** Yeah... yeah...

Russell: You grow out of that.

Robin: Well...

Russell: You do.

Robin: Well, I....

Russell: A lotta guys have that and then they... I mean, at some point....

Robin: I really appreciate talking to somebody about this because...

Russell: Sure.

Robin: You don't just...

Russell: Of course.

Robin: And it's not a real big kind of issue, but, you know...

Russell: We should just set a regular thing where we get together, catch up and...

Robin: You're still seeing a...

Russell: It's all over.

Robin: It sounded like...

Russell: Fuckin' over, she walked.

Robin: I knew you were...

Russell: Fuckin' walked.

Robin: ...havin' a little...

Russell: Things going along, I mean, up and down...

Robin: It's like that.

Russell: And I thought we were making some kind of progress, up and down, but, ya' know...

Robin: Kate and I are still...

Russell: It takes a lot of...patience.

Robin: She gets pissed, I get pissed, she gets pissed, I get... ya' know, it's part of the whole...

Russell: See, I always thought you and Kate...

Robin: She gets pissed.

Russell: It always seems like....

Robin: Really pissed and there's, ya' know...I mean, we fight, ya' know, yell, ya' know, I mean... it's not... I mean, like right now... separate bedrooms, ya' know?

Russell: You and Kate?

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: Jesus.

Robin: Bill Packard said that he and Meg haven't fucked in five years.

Russell: No shit.

Robin: Marriage.

Russell: And you'd think...

Robin: It's just not what you think it's gonna be.

Russell: Kristen walked.

Robin: That's tough.

Russell: I don't know...

Robin: Maybe she'll...

Russell: Sent back the earrings I got her for her birthday.

Robin: I thought maybe she was gonna be the one.

Russell: I don't want her fucking earrings, what am I gonna do with a pair of fucking earrings. Little Indian, Asian Indian beads that she liked, and I went back and bought them and then had this woman at work who makes earrings and stuff, turn 'em into long...ya' know...Jesus.
[Shakes his head, drinks]

Robin: **[Beat]** That was damned nice of you.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: I mean...

Russell: A very fucking nice gesture.

Robin: Thoughtful.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: I mean, you're not...

Russell: I'm not easy.

Robin: You're not.

Russell: I know that.

Robin: But you're...

Russell: I'm complicated, okay?

Robin: Is that a crime?

Russell: I'm complicated and I like complicated women too, okay? And Kristen was complicated.

Robin: Oh, yeah.

Russell: She was a challenge, I like that.

Robin: She talked.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: I mean...

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: Complete sentences.

Russell: Exactly.

Robin: I just met her that a...time after the...

Russell: **[Holding up his glass]** Nice Scotch.

Robin: ...and you'd said that you and she...

Russell: Ya' know I can't talk about this.

Robin: Yeah?

Russell: It's just...I just wanna keep moving and not think too much about...

Robin: This is when a...you know, a... therapeutic kind of deal can help ya' out, I mean, really, it's none of my business, but...

Russell: You're my brother.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: You're concerned.

Robin: Well, it's not a big deal, it sounds like...

Russell: It's a big deal.

Robin: Really.

Russell: I can't talk about it.

Long pause as they drink, then...

Robin: See this is what always....

Russell: Fuck off, okay?

Robin: Every time....

Russell: I said, fuck off.

Robin: You called, you said let's have a drink...

Russell: And I thought we could just...you know...

Robin: Talk.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: Well?

Russell: Just once it would be nice not to have you comin' at me...

Robin: I wasn't fuckin' comin' at you.

Russell: Every time.

Robin: It's concern, okay?

Russell: I don't need your concern.

Robin: Fine.

Russell: It's nice to see you.

Robin: Fine.

Pause as they drink, then...

Robin: Fuckin' White Sox, it blows ya' away, who'd a thought...

Russell: I'm thinking about moving.

Robin: **[Beat]** Moving.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: Where?

Russell: I dunno.

Robin: I mean...

Russell: South maybe.

Robin: South.

Russell: Arizona.

Robin: Arizona.

Russell: I've never been there.

Robin: Well...

Russell: Just something different... Mom's gone, dad's gone, I don't know, and this Kristin thing...

Robin: She walked.

Russell: Please.

Robin: **[Beat]** So...Arizona.

Russell: Dry, sun, mountains, little adobe cabin, those kinda stunted pines, I don't know.

Robin: But...

Russell: I like buildings, okay, I've always liked buildings, should'a been a fuckin' architect, like the vertical, the grids, textures, colors, the...the... interrelationships, ya' know what I mean?

Robin: **[Nodding]** You should'a been an architect.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: You'd'a been a damned good architect.

Russell: Somethin's happened.

Robin: I don't think moving to Arizona...

Russell: I'm sick of buildings.

Robin: **[Beat]** See this is where I think that....

Russell: Forgive me, all right? But your problem is and has always been, and I betcha Kate will say the same thing, is that you have this really obnoxious fucking habit of telling everybody what they should be doin', and in fact, and I'll just be frank, your own fuckin' life isn't exactly what ya'd call a prime time example of human-being success and fulfillment.

Robin: **[Beat]** Well, pardon me.

Russell: I've been seein' Ma...at night.

Robin: I never claimed that I was exactly a...

Russell: Can't close my eyes but I don't see her, and the other night I didn't even have my eyes closed and all of a sudden there she was sitting there eating donuts.

Robin: Kate and I may have our little...ya' know, it's been four years, okay, and she and I...I mean it's not like it was with Gretchen, for god's sake, I mean with Gretchen, Jesus, it was two days into the fuckin' so-called honeymoon deal, and Gretchen was rollin' over, not talkin' to me...

Russell: I'm goin' fuckin' crazy, fuckin' absolutely crazy...All I can think about is Ma sitting there, practically blind, in that fuckin' rattrap of a trailer eatin' donuts, talkin' to herself.

Robin: **[Nodding]** I know.

Russell: Watching those two TVs.

Robin: **[Shaking his head]** Couldn't miss her programs.

Russell: Couldn't fuckin' see.

Robin: I don't know what else we could'a...

Russell: I tried.

Robin: I know.

Russell: I mean she couldn't stay in the house.

Robin: I know.

Russell: And, I couldn't, ya' know...it wasn't like she could'a lived with me, for Christ's sake.

Robin: Kate and I talked about havin' her...

Russell: You couldn't a done that.

Robin: ...but we kinda thought maybe...

Russell: There she was the other night sitting by the window just like she was alive, not really seein', anything, nodding away...ya' know how she just sat there nodding...eating' fuckin' donuts.

Robin: I tried to talk her into one of those care places.

Russell: No money.

Robin: We'd'a pitched in a little, ya' know, and Social Security.

Russell: And I said, "Ma, what are ya' doin', Ma?" It's just awful, and I stood up and walked over there it's like she was there but she wasn't there... I thought I saw her the other day at K-Mart.

Robin: Yeah?

Russell: Just like her, pushing the cart, pickin' up stuff, lookin' at it, readin' the labels... Jesus. **[He kind of chokes up]**

Robin: I know.

Russell: Puttin' up with his bullshit year after year, throwin' up after every meal.

Pause as they drink, then...

Russell: I have a huge reservoir of anger.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: That's what she said.

Robin: Who said?

Russell: Kristen said.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: And my huge reservoir of anger has something to do with something and I have to figure out what that something is and deal with it, she says, or other wise I let out my huge reservoir of anger on other people and for no particular reason other than I need to let out my huge reservoir of anger on somebody, and it pisses her off.

Robin: **[Beat]** I have a huge reservoir of anger.

Russell: **[Nodding]** Yeah.

Robin: Huge.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: I mean...

Russell: You're still a nice guy.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: I am too.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: I mean...

Robin: I can be an asshole.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: I can be a real asshole.

Russell: I do hair for a living.

Robin: That's hard.

Russell: You can't be an asshole.

Robin: It's a responsibility.

Russell: It's a big responsibility.

Robin: **[Nodding]** People are comin' to you...

Russell: They want to look good, they expect to look good...

Robin: And you gotta be fucking nice every minute.

Russell: I don't lose it.

Robin: No, I know.

Russell: I keep it cool.

Robin: You do.

Russell: But then the anger stores up.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: And I'm standing there smilin' away, cutting their fuckin' hair, tryin' to give them the fuckin' "look" that they think they want, being goddamn nice all day long, listening to their social-medical-emotional history.

Robin: You got some great lookin' women coming in there.

Russell: They all fuck.

Robin: Yeah?

Russell: All of 'em.

Robin: No shit.

Russell: Kristen was startin' to figure it out.

Robin: Well...

Russell: I mean, what am I supposed to do?

Robin: Fuck 'em.

Russell: She didn't wanna fuck.

Robin: She walked.

Russell: Please.

Robin: **[Beat]** They all fuck?

Russell: Most of 'em.

Robin: No shit.

Russell: They're desperate.

Robin: No shit.

Russell: And I'm safe because I do their hair.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: I'm not boyfriend material, I'm just fuck material.

Robin: And they...?

Russell: They invite me over for a glass of wine, it's always for a glass of wine, and when I show up, they open the door and they're always in something, you know... wearing high heels.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: Hair and high heels, there's something about them.

Robin: And then they fuck.

Russell: Most of 'em.

Robin: Man...you got it like so...you gotta a sweet deal there, ya' know, I mean, Jesus.

Russell: I'm miserable.

Robin: Come on, man.

Russell: Maybe Arizona.

Robin: You're making' good money...

Russell: I don't want to do hair.

Robin: ...fringe benefits...

Russell: And then I try to sleep and mom's sitting there eatin' donuts.

Pause, as they drink, then...

Robin: The thing that's different with Kate is that she...

Russell: Kate's okay.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: A really regular kinda...

Robin: She's fun.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: But she's....

Russell: You got a really great thing goin' on, you know that? ...a really nice... you, her, together, it's a nice picture.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: She's got a real attractive...

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: ... nice way of...not a whole lot of bullshit...

Robin: Well...

Russell: ...just nice.

Robin: You're not married to her.

Russell: Well, yeah...

Robin: If you were married to her...

Russell: She doesn't like me.

Robin: She likes you.

Russell: No she doesn't.

Robin: She likes you.

Russell: She puts up with me, I think, but....

Robin: No, really...

Russell: Nah, I can tell, there's a...you know...tolerance goin' on there, but it's not like she'd want to be, you know, friends with me or anything...

Robin: Well...

Russell: I'm your brother, so she....

Robin: We're really havin' a bad time.

Russell: Nah.

Robin: No really.

Russell: You and Kate?

Robin: The first years are always pretty good, I mean, there was a little, you know, friction, and stuff...

Russell: Getting' to know....

Robin: It's hard.

Russell: Kristen and I talked about living together, but....

Robin: It's hard.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: And see, Kate, it's like...she

Russell: Can I ask you something?

Robin: Sure.

Russell: You don't have to give me an answer if you don't want.

Robin: Go ahead.

Russell: I mean... I just want to ask you something.

Robin: Sure.

Russell: **[Beat]** If...a...something happened to me, you know, like something that, you know, like I couldn't work, or if I got, say, sick or something, and I didn't have any money and I had nowhere to go, and I needed a place to live, and food and stuff... ya' know? Would you and Kate take me in? Just let me live with you and, you know... support me?

Robin: **[Beat]** Well...

Russell: You don't have to say right now.

Robin: I mean... is something wrong?

Russell: I'd take you in.

Robin: Well...I mean...sure...I mean, for sort of a...short term kind of...?

Russell: No, I mean, forever.

Robin: Forever.

Russell: Like until I die.

Robin: Is something wrong? Is there somethin' goin' on that you're not telling me?

Russell: No. I'm fine. I was just wondering if, you know...

Robin: I mean if there's something goin' on...

Russell: I'm fine.

Robin: I'm your brother, okay...if you've got some kind of...condition or something.

Russell: It's all the bad stuff, that's what's goin' on...all the bad stuff, a whole lifetime of bad stuff and....

Robin: See Kate and I really....

Russell: I'm a mess.

Robin: She and I aren't exactly having a real easy time of it right now.

Russell: Everything's just blowing up.

Robin: Yeah?

Russell: You know what I mean?

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: I've kept it together all this time and....

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: And somehow...I don't know...

Robin: You just feel like you'd can't quite...

Russell: I can't sleep...it's everything...all the bad stuff, that's all that's there now...in my head, ya know? In my head the only thing that's there is the awful stuff.

Robin: I'm having a really bad time too, okay.

Russell: **[Nodding]** There's nothin' but bad.

Robin: My marriage is fuckin' falling apart and she says it's me and I don't get what it is about me that's causin' the fucking marriage to fucking disintegrate. Okay?

Russell: It's good to talk about this shit.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: I mean, ya' know...you're my brother.

Robin: And she's not sayin' shit, she's just saying our fucking marriage is fucking falling apart and it's because of me.

Russell: Jesus.

Robin: We gotta get back to seein' each other again like we used to see each other and talk and stuff,

Russell: Ever since you got married, ya' know what I mean? I mean, it's like since then that we haven't...

Robin: **[Nodding]** Yeah, yeah, yeah...

Russell: I mean, shit.

Robin: Yeah

Russell: Okay.

Robin: It's not that I haven't wanted to see you, okay.

Russell: I know.

Robin: It's just that....

Russell: Kate's a bitch.

Robin: Come on, man.

Russell: I mean she's okay, but she's...

Robin: She's my wife, okay?

Russell: ...but she's got this... attitude.

Robin: Well...

Russell: This superiority kind of....

Robin: Pal, I don't need you to tell me about my fuckin' wife, okay?

Russell: Nothin' personal.

Robin: I mean, it's not that she's...

Russell: She's a bitch.

Robin: Please.

Russell: I like her.

Robin: I do too.

Russell: But...

Robin: Let me handle this, okay...just let me handle this.

Russell: I thought you wanted to talk.

Robin: Yeah, but...

Russell: So I'm just trying to say a few things, sort of constructive kind of...

Robin: You are such a fucking asshole.

Russell: I know.

Robin: Really, such a goddamn fucking asshole.

Russell: I know.

Robin: You were mom's little baby, okay? You were always her little baby, and the thing that's always pissed me off is....

Russell: **[Nodding]** I was her favorite.

Robin: You could never do anything wrong.

Russell: She was always huggin' me, kissin' me...

Robin: I could never do anything right.

Russell: It messed me up.

Robin: It messed *me* up. I was the one who never got the attention I deserved and it made me really really really insecure and this is what set up the situation that I'm in right now, okay, because I'm insecure and I don't get the affection that I should be getting and I give affection, okay, I am an affectionate affectionate affectionate kinda guy, really, I like to kiss, okay, I like to kiss a lot, and I like to cuddle, and a lot of guys apparently don't do that kinda shit and, see, I'm always given' Kate little hugs and little kisses and little I-love-you's, and you'd think that she'd appreciate that, and for a while there she did, the first few months, okay, and then, I don't know...now she doesn't want me touchin' her, and I get really hurt, because I'm not just goin' for the sex thing, even though I'd like to go for the sex thing, but she never seems to want to go for the sex thing, so I figure I can go for the kiss-and-cuddle thing, and she doesn't even want that, so I'm just sittin' there pickin' my nose feelin' like a lonely rejected piece of shit.

Russell: I like to kiss.

Robin: Kate's a bitch.

Russell: She's okay.

Robin: I can't ever do anything right... I mean, I try... I mean...

Russell: I'm a really good kisser.

Robin: The other night I brought her flowers, ya' know? Yellow ones, just sort of a surprise.

Russell: That's real nice.

Robin: She didn't like 'em.

Russell: No shit.

Robin: Didn't like 'em, said she didn't like yellow and then went into a whole thing about how we'd been married for four years and known each other for five, and I didn't even know by now that she didn't like yellow for Christ's sake, and I was...what did she say? I was... unconscious.

Russell: Jesus.

Robin: Fucking unconscious.

Russell: **[Shaking his head]** Women.

Robin: What's wrong with yellow?!

Russell: See, I don't see why you've never had kids.

Robin: Ya' know...

Russell: I just always thought...

Robin: I don't want to talk about it.

Russell: ...that you and she...

Robin: I really don't want to talk about it...it's been a...a problem.

Russell: Yeah?

Robin: I don't want to talk about it.

Russell: Sure. I respect that.

Robin: **[Beat]** It's sort of has to do with the...a...

Russell: ...pre...

Robin: **[Nodding]** Pre...pre-mature ejaculation...

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: It's sort of a...

Russell: You don't have to talk about it if you don't want to.

Robin: Kate wants kids, she really wants kids, and we've, you know, I mean we've...tried.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: But no...

Russell: Things happen.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: No...?

Robin: I don't want to talk about it.

Russell: Sure.

Robin: But she...

Russell: Aren't there some sort of...therapies, ya' know, some sort of...

Robin: **[Nodding]** The squeeze method.

Russell: Yeah?

Robin: You get the woman to squeeze your thing when you're about to shoot, and then it stops the whole business, and then you're supposed to build up your, you know....

Russell: And...?

Robin: It doesn't work.

Russell: Maybe...

Robin: We took a class.

Russell: No shit.

Robin: I still just shoot all over the place.

Russell: **[Shaking his head]** Jesus.

Robin: It's messy.

Russell: And Kate...?

Robin: She gets pissed.

Russell: Maybe if you...

Robin: You always had the luck with the babes, I never had the luck with the babes, you got laid before I got laid, my little brother, two years younger, gets laid before I get laid.

Russell: **[Smiling, nodding]** Yeah.

Robin: And now you got all these fuckin' women crawling all over you...

Russell: They feel sorry for me.

Robin: Come on.

Russell: They think that...

Robin: Come on.

Russell: I don't want to talk about it.

Robin: I don't get it.

Russell: I don't either.

Robin: I mean, you're...ya' know... a nice lookin' guy, sorta.

Russell: Please.

Robin: But, I mean...

Russell: It's the doin'-the-hair thing.

Robin: Yeah?

Russell: You cut their hair and the roots of the hair have nerve endings that shoot right down directly into the vulnerability cortex and women get all...you know... they get all relaxed and open and trusting and I'm tellin' 'em how beautiful they're lookin' and they feel special and I tell them how swell they are and how beautiful their hair is and how good they smell and how they've got a really magical sexy kind of allure, and no one ever tells 'em shit like that and...you know...

Robin: Jesus.

Russell: It's mostly psychological.

Robin: And then they invite you over...

Russell: I've been getting these really bad headaches.

Robin: I don't have any friends.

Russell: ...really bad sort of sinus things goin' on, and a skin rash.

Robin: I mean, there are guys at work, but ya' know...

Russell: I can't sleep.

Robin: A lot of people really piss me off.

Russell: And I start seein' Ma standing in the corner cryin' her eyes out 'cause no body loves her, and nobody ever did love her, and she was always tryin' to be helpful, ya' know.

Robin: She's was a manipulating, pushy kinda...

Russell: I hit her.

Robin: **[Nodding]** Yeah.

Russell: I fuckin' hit her.

Robin: She could really...

Russell: Fuckin' smashed her face one day.

Robin: **[Nodding]** I know.

Russell: Jesus.

Robin: She'd piss me off.

Russell: One day, sixteen years old, just smashed her fuckin' face, bruised the whole fuckin' side of her face and I just stood there and yelled at her callin' her every nasty fuckin' awful shitty thing I could think of.

Robin: **[Nodding]** I know.

Russell: **[Tearing up]** I'm sorry, Ma.

Robin: Come on, man.

Russell: **[Crying]** Ma, I'm sorry, Ma, really, Ma, I didn't mean to hurt you.

Robin: Man...

Russell: Please, Ma, I'm sorry, I couldn't help it.

Robin: I threw that lamp at her.

Russell: I was just a stupid kid.

Robin: Her favorite fuckin' ugly lamp.

Russell: **[Tearing up again]** She loved us, man.

Robin: She loved *you*, pal.

Russell: She loved you.

Robin: Couldn't stand me.

Russell: Come on.

Robin: I was never good enough

Russell: Sometimes she just couldn't, ya know...express what she was...

Robin: I was always pissed, always blamin' her.

Russell: **[Shaking his head]** Threw up after every meal.

Robin: Got pissed at her, got pissed at him, still pissed...lotta anger, ya' know what I mean, lotta anger...

Russell: **[Nodding]** Lotta anger.

Robin: Indiscriminate anger.

Russell: **[Nodding]** ...unfocussed anger.

Robin: It's not good.

Russell: It's not good.

Robin: It's bad.

Russell: Unhealthy.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: It can kill ya'.

Robin: It can.

Russell: Fuckin' kill ya'.

Robin: **[Beat, then very hesitantly]** I'm... I'm...I'm doing this...this...12-step thing, ya' know what I mean?

Russell: **[Long beat]** 12-step thing.

Robin: They got these 12 steps...it's a good thing.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: Ya' deal with the anger.

Russell: Yeah?

Robin: Ya' study the steps and ya' talk about this shit and other people have these stories about their shit and they tell their stories and you tell your story...I'm not supposed to be drinkin'.

Russell: Yeah?

Robin: That's sort of the deal...the bottom line sort of thing is to tell stories and not drink.

Russell: I mean...

Robin: I can't talk unless I drink.

Russell: **[Nodding]** Yeah.

Robin: I mean...

Russell: ...talk...

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: Really say something.

Robin: It's just easier.

Russell: Talkin's hard.

Robin: It is.

Russell: And some guys...

Robin: The guys I work with.

Russell: You can't talk to them.

Robin: Even when you're drinkin'.

Russell: **[Shaking his head]** There's so much shit you're not supposed to do now.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: Drink, smoke, eat...

Robin: Drinkin's about the only thing I got any more.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: Ya' know what I mean?

Russell: Sports is...

Robin: Fuck sports.

Russell: Drinkin' is...

Robin: Drinkin's good.

Russell: Damn good.

Robin: Damn right.

Russell: Drinkin' is great.

Robin: I like drinkin'

Russell: I *really* like drinkin'.

Robin: **[Beat]** I love you, ya' know that?

Russell: **[Beat]** Yeah?

Robin: No really I mean it, I mean...you know...I mean...I love you.

Russell: **[Beat]** That's a...real nice thing to say.

Robin: They told me to say that in 12-step.

Russell: Yeah?

Robin: Tell people you love 'em,

Russell: **[Beat]** So...I mean, do you think you have, you know...a problem?

Robin: Drinking?

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: No.

Russell: But you're doing this 12-step thing....

Robin: I love Kate, okay, but it's hard, ya' know...

Russell: She's a bitch.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: You love her, but she's...

Robin: She's my fucking wife.

Russell: That's hard.

Robin: You don't know.

Russell: She doesn't drink?

Robin: Soymilk.

Russell: Jesus.

Robin: *She* thinks I have a problem.

Russell: **[Shaking his head]** Jesus.

Robin: Don't get married.

Russell: Ya' know I thought this Kristen thing was going to be my chance.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: Real nice feelings, we were just real comfortable.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: I was feeling real good about her, about us.

Robin: Don't get married.

Russell: And then she...one day she started getting all fussy like...

Robin: That's what happens.

Russell: I'm the same guy...

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: And at the beginning I was okay.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: What'd she expect?

Robin: This is the thing....

Russell: I can't sleep.

Robin: I know.

Russell: Everything's over, ya' know?

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: Just over.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: That's why I'm moving to Arizona.

Robin: Kate thinks she's having vaginal atrophy.

Russell: **[Beat]** Vaginal...?

Robin: Vaginal atrophy.

Russell: **[Thinks for a beat]** I don't want to talk about it.

Robin: It's a condition.

Russell: **[Shaking his head]** I don't understand that stuff.

Robin: Drying out from lack of...

Russell: All those parts, ya' know?

Robin: She says it's my fault.

Russell: Ya' start getting' technical...

Robin: She wants me to orally stimulate her.

Russell: She what?

Robin: She wants me to orally stimulate her.

Russell: Yeah?

Robin: Ya' know...tongue.

Russell: Yeah?

Robin: I just don't...

Russell: Come on, man.

Robin: There's something about...

Russell: Come on, she's your wife.

Robin: I've never been real comfortable getting, you know, that...that...

Russell: Involved.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: See, I think...

Robin: It's good to talk about this.

Russell: A lot of guys...

Robin: I can't talk to my therapist about this kinda shit.

Russell: There's a skill there.

Robin: See, I don't...

Russell: They don't teach ya' this stuff, ya' know?

Robin: Yeah, yeah...

Russell: All the shit they teach ya' and the really important stuff...

Robin: There should be some sort of instructor kinda guy...

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: ...who knows what's going on there,

Russell: And you'd get this kind of instruction in...

Robin: Grade school.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: I just feel, ya' know that...I...I'm not really a...a

Russell: You gotta relax.

Robin: Not a real...guy or somethin'...

Russell: Your whole life you've always been, you know, wound up.

Robin: **[Nodding]** Wound up.

Russell: Over-sensitive.

Robin: **[Nodding]** Just a failure, ya, know, I mean, Gretchen was never happy, Kate's not happy...

Russell: Pal, nobody's happy, that's what ya' gotta learn. Nobody.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: Nobody.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: I bought a dozen donuts last night, those Krispy Kreme kind of donuts, a variety pack, and I ate one and then I ate another one and then I ate another one, I couldn't stop, and ate every single fucking one of the whole fuckin' dozen, and then I felt like complete and total shit and went to the john, and stood over the toilet and tried stickin' my finger down my throat, ya' know what I mean, and I couldn't do it, just couldn't do it, and as I was standin' there with my finger in my mouth I looked over and there was Ma sitting there, skinny boney little thing, looking at me as sad as a person can look sad, and I started to cry, and then she started to cry.

Robin: Jesus.

Russell: I know.

Robin: I mean...

Russell: Remember the night she peed in her party dress?

Robin: Please...

Russell: All dressed up in her little party dress and she was all happy and the old man was takin' her out to dinner, the only time in their whole fucking married life that he was ever going to take her out to dinner and she was all excited and got all dressed up in her only little party dress that she never got to wear and then she peed in it.

Robin: Breaks your heart.

Russell: Just stood there smilin', peein' in her party dress, and then she burst into tears.

Robin: Bein' a woman is hell.

Russell: Then the old man started yellin' at her.

Robin: She just took it.

Russell: Year after year she just took it.

Robin: All he did was yell at her.

Russell: She just took it.

Robin: I hated her for that.

Russell: She just fuckin' took it.

Robin: Hated him, hated her for taking it.

Russell: Just fuckin' took it.

Robin: Just fuckin' took it.

Russell: Puttin' nice food on the table every night.

Robin: Throwin' up after every meal...

Russell: **[Tearfully]** Ma, I'm sorry, please, ma, we didn't mean it, we loved you, ma, please, we didn't mean it...

Robin: ... skinny little boney scared trembling little thing.

Russell: **[Crying]** We loved you, ma.

Robin: Little skinny manipulating masochist.

Long pause, Robin pours Russell more scotch, then pours himself some, they drink, then...

Robin: I used to beat the shit out of you.

Russell: Please.

Robin: I was bigger, you were the little kid...I beat the shit out of you.

Russell: You were an asshole.

Robin: We had that fort.

Russell: Ya' know...

Robin: And we'd go out there...

Russell: And you'd beat the shit out of me.

Robin: You were an annoying little bastard.

Russell: I had developmental difficulties.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: There's the world and then there's my head, and there's the shit that's goin' on in the world and then there's the shit that's goin' on in my head, and the shit that's goin' on the world is bad shit, and the shit that's goin' on in my head is even worse shit.

Robin: The 12-step people say....

Russell: Fuck the 12-step people.

Robin: Resentment is the big poison.

Russell: I've got resentment.

Robin: You're killin' yourself.

Russell: **[Nodding]** I'm killin' myself.

Robin: The higher power can help.

Russell: Can I tell you something?

Robin: Sure.

Russell: I mean, I don't want to, ya' know, hurt you or anything.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: But I just want to tell you something.

Robin: Sure.

Russell: **[Beat]** Kate called me the other night.

Robin: Kate.

Russell: Yeah, Kate.

Robin: My wife.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: She called...you.

Russell: She wanted to come over for a glass of wine.

Robin: **[Beat]** Yeah?

Russell: It was kinda weird.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: She said she wanted to talk.

Robin: Talk.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: Talk.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: What about?

Russell: I don't know.

Robin: **[Beat]** So'd you talk?

Russell: No.

Robin: Why not?

Russell: I just felt that....

Robin: Stay away from my wife, pal.

Russell: Hey...

Robin: Just fuckin' stay away from my fuckin' wife.

Russell: I don't want your fuckin' wife.

Robin: Just don't even think about....

Russell: I don't want your fuckin' wife.

Robin: **[Beat]** Why not?

Russell: I mean...

Robin: What's wrong with my wife?

Russell: It's not that...

Robin: **[Starting to breakdown]** God, I love her, she's it, ya' know, she was...I mean Gretchen...

Russell: Fuck Gretchen.

Robin: And then Kate...

Russell: Yeah, Kate.

Robin: She's the one.

Russell: She is.

Robin: Jesus, I been tryin' because she's the whole... I get up in the morning to be with Kate, go through the day to be with Kate, think about her, dream about her, live to be with her, and without her... **[He starts crying]**

Russell: **[Reaching out, comforting him]** Yeah, yeah, yeah...

Robin: I mean...

Russell: You love her.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: You gotta be with her.

Robin: She talkin' divorce, okay.

Russell: Nah.

Robin: Fuckin' divorce.

Russell: Kate?!

Robin: Divorce.

Russell: Come on, man.

Robin: I've done divorce, it sucks.

Russell: Maybe it's a phase.

Robin: She wants the house, she wants the dog.

Russell: Come on, man.

Robin: **[Still crying]** I'm not anything without her, I'm nothin', I was nothin' before I met her and then I met her and... **[he breaks down]**

Russell: Come on, man.

Robin: You don't know.

Russell: Maybe you can...

Robin: I'm doin' this 12-step thing.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: It's good, ya' know...

Russell: **[Nodding]** Deal with those resentments.

Robin: They're killin' me.

Russell: That's it.

Robin: I'm no good.

Russell: Come on, man.

Robin: I'm just shit.

Russell: You're a good guy, okay, you're a really nice guy, you're just a guy, just a regular fucked-up guy, you can't help it, I mean, come on, man, you're tryin', you're really tryin' and, ya' know, I mean...Jesus.

Robin: **[Drying his tears]** Yeah.

Russell: Really.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: It's gonna be okay, all right?

Robin: I don't know.

Russell: She'll come around.

Robin: I don't know.

Russell: It's just one of those...ya' know...

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: Really.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: Life is shit.

Robin: Yeah

Russell: Really.

Robin: Just shit.

Russell: It's not pretty.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: Bad shit.

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: Real bad shit.

Pause as they drink, Robin dries tears, blows his nose, composes himself, then...

Robin: So what in the fuck did she want, huh?

Russell: Kate?

Robin: Yeah.

Russell: I don't know, she wanted to talk.

Robin: Yeah?

Russell: I put her off, saying I had a lotta shit goin' on....

Robin: She just wanted to talk.

Russell: Ya' know I think I'm turning into mom, know what I mean? She's taking me over, takin' over my mind, takin' over my life, takin' over my body, like she's eating me, consuming me, I'm becoming her, really... I think I'm developing breasts.

Robin: You are such an asshole.

Russell: **[Feeling his chest]** Really, I think I'm starting to get...ya' know, glandular kind of...

Robin: Your whole fucking life, you've pissed me off...WHAT IN THE FUCK DID SHE WANT?

Russell: Man, I don't know.

Robin: **[Slamming his fist on the table repeatedly]** Fucking fucking fucking stupid fucking asshole.

Russell: **[Long long beat]** I think she wanted to fuck.

Robin: Jesus.

Russell: She came on to me once before.

Robin: I'm gonna kill you.

Russell: One of those New Years Eve...

Robin: I'm gonna kill her.

Russell: ...just started talkin' to me, running her hands kinda up and down my chest, ya' know...

Robin: I don't want to talk about it.

Russell: ... kinda slidin' her....

Robin: I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT!

Pause

Russell: Can I say something?

Robin: No.

Russell: I just want to...

Robin: SHUT THE FUCK UP!

Russell: Fine.

Pause as they drink, then...

Robin: **[Shaking his head]** I look in the mirror I see the old man.

Russell: I look in the mirror I see mom.

Robin: Same fucking sad-ass hopeless brain-dead eyes.

Russell: I'm her.

Robin: Same fuckin' loser.

Russell: My personality's disintegrating.

Robin: My whole life's disintegrating.

Russell: Mom's taking over.

Robin: Gretchen dumped me, now Kate.

Russell: I've got this constant craving for donuts.

Robin: It's good we can talk

Russell: **[Feeling his chest, shaking his head]** Breasts.

Robin: I mean, you know...

Russell: **[Still feeling]** I'm growing breasts.

Robin: There's not anybody else who, you know, has the same kind of a mutual, brother-brother, bond kinda....

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: It's good.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: It's real good.

Russell: Yeah.

Robin: Ya' know?

Russell: **[Shaking his head, feeling his chest]** Fucking goddamned breasts.

As they drink, there's a slow fade to...

Blackout

Two women sit at the bar, turned away from it (i.e. facing the audience), drinking margaritas.

The two women are sisters in their mid- to late-thirties. Stephanie is the elder by four years. She is dressed for business, well groomed, confident. Jennifer is casually dressed, despondent, and tends to slump on her stool and look away from Stephanie when she talks.

Stephanie and Jennifer are drinking, not talking, then...

Stephanie: What's wrong?

Jennifer: Whatever.

Stephanie: I mean....

Jennifer: Didn't sleep.

Stephanie: It's just...

Jennifer: Stayed out late, got home, The Mother was...you know... I don't know...

Stephanie: Ya' know....

Jennifer: **[Nodding]** I know...

Stephanie: You gotta....

Jennifer: I know...

Stephanie: I just finally said...

Jennifer: I'm trapped.

Stephanie: You're not trapped.

Jennifer: She wanted to talk, she was blasted out of her mind, she thinks the child molester down the street wants to rape her.

Stephanie: What child molester?

Jennifer: There is no child molester, she just *thinks* there's a child molester.

Stephanie: You gotta get outta there.

Jennifer: And the phone may be tapped.

Stephanie: Jenn...

Jennifer: I'm fine.

Stephanie: Getting out of there was the best thing I ever...

Jennifer: I'm fine...please...it's fine, it's just, you know...

Stephanie: I'll lend you money, really, ya' know?

Jennifer: **[Stopping her]** Please.

Long beat as they drink, then...

Stephanie: I have a date.

Jennifer: The bartender?

Stephanie: A *date*... he's a client.

Jennifer: Bad idea.

Stephanie: He's a nice guy.

Jennifer: I doubt it.

Stephanie: He's selling his townhouse, you know what I mean, and buying this very cool like modernist penthouse loft-condo kinda thing, with a sauna and like a wine cellar thing, okay, and he likes the look I'm doing to stage the townhouse and he started talking about how maybe I could like help him decorate the penthouse, and I told him that I *stage*, I don't decorate, ya' know, but I'd be happy to like "*consult*"... and so like I'm going to meet him at the penthouse for a drink and "*consultation*," and then we're going to have dinner.

Jennifer: Ya' know...

Stephanie: He's not a gorilla, okay?

Jennifer: I liked Dexter, I'll just say that, I know it's none of my business.

Stephanie: Everybody liked Dexter.

Jennifer: It's just that...

Stephanie: Please.

Jennifer: He was really...

Stephanie: He was lovely, he was nice, he was too nice, and I miss him, ya' know what I mean, really, it was fine, but I wasn't *stimulated*.

Jennifer: Hence the gorilla.

Stephanie: The gorilla is history.

Jennifer: If I had the money, I'd do this light-pulse skin treatment thing, it's better than laser, safer than a chem peel, and it gets rid of the discolorations and builds up the collagen, no brown spots, no zits.

Stephanie: Ya' know...

Jennifer: I'm starting to get brown spots.

Stephanie: You're *not* starting to get brown spots.

Jennifer: Sort of dark...

Stephanie: You don't get brown spots until...

Jennifer: It's the sun.

Stephanie: I've just decided to stop listening to anything anyone has to say.

Jennifer: Seriously, it's the sun.

Stephanie: I'm not listening.

Jennifer: They're starting to see brown spot on teenagers.

Stephanie: Sun is beneficial. I don't want to hear about it, and I don't want to hear about calcium, and I don't want to hear about soy. Okay. Do you promise? I mean, really, I'm taking the vitamin E, all right? Okay? And I drink green tea. Sometimes. That's all I can do.

Jennifer: **[Beat]** So how's the bartender?

Stephanie: I saw him last night.

Jennifer: And?

Stephanie: And what?

Jennifer: Is this, you know...I mean you're seeing quite a bit of him?

Stephanie: It's casual.

Jennifer: Casual.

Stephanie: Nothing serious.

Jennifer: And now Mr. Penthouse.

Stephanie: An entirely different thing. A completely different category.

Jennifer: You are such a slut.

Stephanie: I beg your pardon.

Jennifer: I said, "You are such a slut."

Stephanie: And what is that supposed to mean?

Jennifer: Well...

Stephanie: I don't see how you can possibly say that I...

Jennifer: I'm not listening.

Stephanie: I can't believe that you of all people...

Jennifer: You're a slut.

Stephanie: I mean, you have fucked some the grossest men and women on this planet.

Jennifer: Thank you.

Stephanie: You're welcome.

Pause, as they drink, then...

Stephanie: Can I borrow your cashmere hood thing?

Jennifer: If you'll return my satin vest thing.

Stephanie: It's at the cleaners.

Jennifer: Why's it at the cleaners?

Stephanie: I wanted to give it back to you clean.

Jennifer: Did you fuck it up?

Stephanie: I didn't fuck it up.

Jennifer: Every time I lend you something...

Stephanie: I didn't fuck it up...I wanted to clean it as a *nice gesture*. You can borrow anything of mine you want.

Jennifer: I don't want to borrow anything of yours.

Stephanie: The bartender was very aggressive last night.

Jennifer: I'm sure.

Stephanie: Very athletic.

Jennifer: Steph...

Stephanie: You are such a lesbian.

Jennifer: I'm not listening...

Stephanie: Oh, honey...

Jennifer: It's just that the intimate details...

Stephanie: He says *he's* a lesbian.

Jennifer: Everyone's a lesbian these days.

Stephanie: He said that he used to think of himself as just being a regular like straight guy with a penis, but then he realized that even though he had a penis he wasn't a regular straight guy because he has "feelings" and likes to "process" and therefore he's a lesbian like trapped in a man's body.

Jennifer: I'm not listening.

Stephanie: It pisses me off.

Jennifer: Everyone's co-opted lesbianism and now it doesn't mean anything.

Stephanie: He wants to do a three-way with me and some woman who's his tax accountant.

Jennifer: Three-ways are so last year.

Stephanie: They're too complicated.

Jennifer: Been there, done that.

Stephanie: I can never figure out what to concentrate on.

Jennifer: I prefer just me and my vibrator.

Stephanie: You are such a lesbian.

Pause, as they drink, then...

Jennifer: **[She's been studying Stephanie]** Ya' know, it is like so weird that you're half my mother and half someone who isn't the other half of me, and we have this same, you know...

Stephanie: Mother.

Jennifer: But different....

Stephanie: Fathers.

Jennifer: And our whole lives we've been like....

Stephanie: We've never been like, ya' know....

Jennifer: Close.

Stephanie: Yeah.

Jennifer: Like sisters, I mean we are sisters...

Stephanie: We're half sisters...

Jennifer: And we grew up...

Stephanie: Well, I was older, I mean, you know...the whole thing was weird...

Jennifer; You never did like me.

Stephanie: *Jennifer!*

Jennifer: Really.

Stephanie: I don't see how you can...

Jennifer: You didn't.

Stephanie: There were times when we got along really well.

Jennifer; You have *your* father's lips and I have *my* father's lips...

Stephanie: Well, I mean...

Jennifer; There was always some sort of....

Stephanie: Distrust.

Jennifer: Well, it was sort of...

Stephanie: Like the problem was that your father wasn't my real father but he was the only father I had but he wasn't really my father and so like, *hello*, he loved you and he didn't give a shit about me.

Jennifer: He didn't give a shit about me either.

Stephanie: He didn't give a shit about anybody.

Jennifer: I mean, Bud was...

Stephanie: Bud was creepy.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Stephanie: He scared me to death.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Stephanie: There was always something, you know...

Jennifer: He was my father.

Stephanie: Disgusting.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Stephanie: The way he, you know...

Jennifer: ...lived in his bathrobe.

Stephanie: ...and okay, I was a teen-ager, and he wasn't my real father, and he'd give me that, you know, look.

Jennifer: He'd look.

Stephanie: And it wasn't, you know...

Jennifer: Fatherly.

Stephanie: It was gross.

Jennifer: Which is why I turned lesbian.

Stephanie: Well...honey...

Jennifer: Really.

Stephanie: Come on, you were a little dyke from the...what was that, the neighbor...?

Jennifer: Patricia.

Stephanie: Ya' know what I mean?

Jennifer: We were playing fashion model.

Stephanie: Is that what that was.

Jennifer: And I am sorry, but you were always the popular one.

Stephanie: I was not.

Jennifer: And I was always....

Stephanie: I was *not* popular.

Jennifer: Like five thousand friends.

Stephanie: Those people couldn't stand me.

Jennifer: Like forty thousand phone calls.

Stephanie: They didn't *like* me, they were just friends, I mean like you hang out with them, you go to parties with them, you call them, you date them, you fuck them, but you don't necessarily *like* them. **[Beat]** And they didn't like me, I'm not someone people like, you know what I mean, I understand that, it's been that way from like fucking pre-school, whatever...

Jennifer: Stephanie...

Stephanie: *Really.*

Jennifer: Well, I didn't have any friends. I still don't.

Stephanie: People don't like me and they tell me they don't like me and I tell them the same thing and then they want to have a drink, I mean, people are only attracted to people they don't like, that's what it's all about.

Pause as they drink, then...

Jennifer: I don't understand people.

Stephanie: They're fucked.

Jennifer: I was a failure as a heterosexual and now I'm a failure as a homosexual.

Stephanie: Would you just stop this.

Jennifer: I'm serious.

Stephanie: What is wrong with you, I mean, come on, woman, you are...

Jennifer: I'm thinking about having a baby.

Stephanie: **[Beat]** You're what?

Jennifer: Thinking about having a baby.

Stephanie: Excuse me...

Jennifer: I think it would be nice.

Stephanie: I'm not listening.

Jennifer: I'm sorry.

Stephanie: You have got to get out of that house, you have got to get away from The Mother, The Mother is like totally twisted and your brain is being fucked over by the media and the baby-making industry that wants you to be nothing more than a big nipple.

Jennifer: After the thing with Deana, I realized that....

Stephanie: Honey, she was bi-polar.

Jennifer: As far as I can see everybody's bi-polar.

Stephanie: You may have a point, but....

Jennifer: I mean, I tried, you know what I mean?

Stephanie: But, honey, I don't see how having a baby....

Jennifer: May I ask you a favor?

Stephanie: Sure.

Jennifer: Would you quit calling me "honey."

Stephanie: Jesus.

Jennifer: I'm sorry, my nerves are...

Stephanie: Just because Deana was bi-polar doesn't mean that there's something wrong with *you*...you're fine, Deana was *bi-polar*, and just because Deana was *bi-polar* doesn't mean that you should have a fucking baby. I mean, the *environment*, okay, I mean,

overpopulation, okay, I mean, only the most mindless stupid brain-dead people have babies.

Jennifer: Everyone has a relationship and I don't have a relationship and I've tried and I think I'm a nice person...

Stephanie: You're a very nice person.

Jennifer: ...and I tried men and I don't understand men and men don't understand me and I tried women and I don't understand women and women don't understand me and there's supposedly this lesbian like *community* thing and they're women and they're supposed to be caring and accepting and after the horror of Maureen and the Julie crises and then the Deana thing....

Stephanie: She was bi-polar...

Jennifer: ...I joined that support group...

Stephanie: Jennifer...

Jennifer: ...and you'd think that in a lesbian support group there would be like you know, *support for lesbians*, and especially since I was like a *beginning* lesbian you'd think that some one would have some sort of, you know...

Stephanie: Empathy...

Jennifer: Understanding...

Stephanie: Helpful...tips...

Jennifer: And these women were, well, I don't know, I mean, I was like...I mean, I did not *fit in*, you know what I mean, like, I mean, ya' know, somehow you're supposed to like *fit in* somewhere, like be *accepted* somewhere, and I'm...I'm...I don't know.

Stephanie: Honey...

Jennifer: QUIT CALLING ME, "HONEY!"

Pause, as they drink, then...

Stephanie: I'm sorry, I didn't mean...

Jennifer: I'm very sensitive

Stephanie: I love you, okay, I don't mean to be...

Jennifer: It's okay.

Stephanie: I just want you to know that I care, okay,

Jennifer: I've been hearing voices.

Stephanie: **[Beat]** Voices.

Jennifer: In my head.

Stephanie: Voices.

Jennifer: *My voice, your voice, The Mother's voice, everybody's voice...all the voices from all of the conversations I've ever had.*

Stephanie: Jenn...

Jennifer: Like a history of voices, you know what I mean, in my head, and I try to shut them off but I can't shut them off.

Stephanie: Wait a minute...

Jennifer; And when I not replaying the old conversations, I'm rehearsing the new conversations, what I'm going to say, what they're going to say, what I'm going to say after they say what they're going to say, it's like driving me crazy.

Stephanie: If you could get a couple of roommates, you know what I mean, and get a little place away from The Mother.

Jennifer: She's talking about having another face-lift.

Stephanie: What's left to lift?

Jennifer: She wants us to get mother-daughter dresses and do our hair alike...

Stephanie: Jenn....

Jennifer: And she's living on a diet of jellybeans and vodka, and wanders around trying to figure out if the child molester is tapping the phone.

Stephanie: You're still seeing the therapist.

Jennifer: No.

Stephanie: Well...

Jennifer: She was just another voice.

Stephanie: I mean living alone with The Mother...

Jennifer: I'm afraid to leave, you know what I mean, I'm afraid...

Stephanie: Jenn...

Jennifer: I'm afraid for her, I'm afraid for me, I'm afraid she'll hurt herself, and even if I tried to leave I don't have the resources...

Stephanie: I'll help you.

Jennifer: You got out, I didn't get out, I was afraid to get out, and you abandoned both of us, you won't even speak to her, you haven't actually spoken to her for like over two years, okay, two fucking years, and I have to deal with her and I'm going to have to deal with her forever.

Stephanie: **[Beat]** I've been awful, I realize that.

Jennifer: I hear all of the conversations over and over.

Stephanie: I had to survive too, all right, you know what I mean, and in order to survive...

Jennifer: I suppose sleeping with Clayton, the only man I ever truly loved, the only man who ever truly loved me, was necessary for this so-called survival.

Stephanie: **[Beat]** That was really awful of me.

Jennifer: I was in love with him.

Stephanie: I was a real shit.

Jennifer: It was at a very formative period.

Stephanie: I've always felt really like terrible about it.

Jennifer: It's why I became a lesbian.

Stephanie: Jenn...

Jennifer: Not that I'm really a lesbian, I'm not really anything, I'm just a composite of other people's voices.

Stephanie: Jenn...

Jennifer: Which is why I'm going to have a baby.

Stephanie: They have these breast pump things now...are you aware of this?

Jennifer: Steph...

Stephanie: These suction cup things that clamp on your tits and it's like a fucking milking machine...Debz has one, clamps the sucker on and it pumps out her milk for the fucking kid...she's a cow, a fucking cow, do you want to be cow, is that what you want? I mean, really...a cow?

Jennifer: The thing about Clayton was that I'd never had a real boyfriend before, okay, and you'd had hundreds of boyfriends, okay, and finally I had a boyfriend, and then I find out that you are he were fucking and...

Stephanie: I was awful.

Jennifer: He was my boyfriend.

Stephanie: I was very immature, I admit that, I was very troubled and needy and I thought...

Jennifer: Men prefer your lips to my lips.

Stephanie: Jenn...

Jennifer: My lips are just not, you know...

Stephanie: You have very nice lips.

Jennifer: I have indifferent lips, functional lips...

Stephanie: Jenn...

Jennifer: And that's all men care about, lips, you can tell, walk down the street, they're checking out your lips, one guy after another, eyes locked on your lips and my lips aren't good enough.

Stephanie: They're not looking at your lips.

Jennifer: This is why I'm going to have a baby.

Stephanie: They're looking at your tits, okay, and they look at your ass, and maybe they look at your eyes, and maybe, just maybe they look at your lips, but it's not like...

Jennifer: I always looked up to you, you know what I mean, I always thought you were cool and beautiful and everyone loved you and so I'd try to say the things you said and use the expressions you used, and wear the same clothes you wore and do my hair the way you did your hair, and use the same color lipstick and I copied your mannerism and that was when I started hearing the voices.

Stephanie: Do we have to talk about this now? I'm sorry, I don't understand why all of a sudden we have to deal with...

Jennifer: Well, you didn't call.

Stephanie: Well, I...

Jennifer: I called and I said call me and you didn't call me and it's been like you know two weeks, okay, two and a half weeks.

Stephanie: I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, okay, I'm sorry, I was busy, okay, it wasn't like...

Jennifer: I mean am I like bottom priority, you know what I mean, like oh, whatever, no big deal, get to her maybe next year?

Stephanie: I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, okay, I'm sorry...I'm always sorry, I'm sorry for every fucking thing there is for me to be sorry for.

Pause as they drink, then....

Stephanie: Can we start over?

Jennifer: No.

Stephanie: I thought we were getting along really well.

Jennifer: We weren't.

Stephanie: I mean, we don't see a lot of each other, but I thought...

Jennifer: I slump, okay, I know that, and I'm going to develop a hump, and men look at my lips and they don't like my lips and then they look at my teeth and my teeth are yellow.

Stephanie: You're teeth aren't yellow.

Jennifer: I have yellow teeth.

Stephanie: Go away.

Jennifer: I *do*.

Stephanie: Like, *absurd*.

Jennifer: Like, *yellow*.

Stephanie: I've been doing this tooth whitener stuff, little strips that you put on, and I think that's it...

Jennifer: You've got great teeth.

Stephanie: I beg your pardon.

Jennifer: I've always thought you had...

Stephanie: I mean, *yellow*.

Jennifer: They're not yellow.

Stephanie: I mean, *stained*.

Jennifer: The voices are really awful, it's all arguments, and I'm always having to defend myself because I'm so stupid, and I try to say something sort of you know like smart, but I say something dumb and then I say something dumber, and I'm getting a hump.

Stephanie: The bartender has a brother, kind of a quiet, normal, no-big-deal kind of guy, you know what I mean, and the bartender and I were talking about maybe we could, you know, get you and the brother together...

Jennifer: I fucked the bartender.

Stephanie: **[Beat]** You what?

Jennifer: I fucked the bartender.

Stephanie: My bartender?

Jennifer: Matt.

Stephanie: You fucked him?

Jennifer: He fucked me, whatever.

Stephanie: Matt, my bartender?

Jennifer: He's my bartender too, all right.

Stephanie: He didn't tell me that he'd....

Jennifer: He doesn't know I'm your sister, we fucked.

Stephanie: You slut.

Jennifer: If you hang around until closing time he'll fuck you, he'll fuck anybody, and as far as I can tell that's what men are all about—they'll fuck anything, and if they don't have anything else to fuck they'll fuck each other.

Stephanie: I'm hearing voices.

Jennifer: I told you.

Stephanie: I mean, it's like...

Jennifer: They're louder at night when you're trying to sleep.

Stephanie: I taught you to swim, okay, I taught you to ride a bike, okay, I taught you about eyeliner and tampons, I mean there were times when we were really like close...I mean, who else have you been fucking?

Jennifer: Dexter.

Stephanie: My Dexter?

Jennifer: Well, I mean, you dumped him.

Stephanie: Well, I mean, are you right in line for my discards?

Jennifer: Yeah.

Stephanie: I mean...

Jennifer: Dexter was a fabulous fuck.

Stephanie: I'm hearing voices.

Jennifer: He wanted to suck my toes.

Stephanie: Wait a minute.

Jennifer: He told me that he likes being, you know, submissive, and one of the things he really loves to do was suck toes.

Stephanie: Dexter?!

Jennifer: ...and, you know, I mean, whatever...

Stephanie: He never sucked my toes.

Jennifer: A lot of guys like to suck toes, I mean, really, it's like a big thing now, there are toe-sucking clubs...

Stephanie: I thought you were a lesbian.

Jennifer: Which means you can do anything you want with anybody you want any time you want. Lesbian means "fuck you" in every gender.

Pause as they drink, then...

Stephanie: **[Tentatively]** I...I feel like the voices are...they're...

Jennifer: You can't shut them up.

Stephanie: ...the sound of my voice explaining something I said, justifying something I did, apologizing for something I did but didn't mean to do...

Jennifer: It's always the things you regret, you know what I mean.

Stephanie: The embarrassing, horrible...

Jennifer: ...and even if what I did was really okay, somebody takes it wrong and then they accuse me and I have to clarify...

Stephanie: ...I have to defend...

Jennifer: ...and I'm always wrong and they're always right...

Stephanie: I'm a horrible person.

Jennifer: I'm a stupid person, it just astonishes me how stupid I am, you know what I mean.

Stephanie: Me too.

Jennifer: Just, you know, my mind is full of....

Stephanie: Shit.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Stephanie: Stupid shit.

Jennifer: I mean, I don't read.

Stephanie: I don't read.

Jennifer: I watch, you know...

Stephanie: Stupid shit.

Jennifer; And my brain is like...

Stephanie: Little.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Stephanie: Limited.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Stephanie: And all that's in there is...

Jennifer: I mean it is like empty....

Stephanie: Well, I mean trash...

Jennifer: I've decided not to wear any kind of makeup any more because it just clogs up your pores and I don't believe what they say about it not clogging up your pores, because there's no doubt that it *does* clog up your pores and one of the areas where I disagree with you is about makeup.

Stephanie: Pardon me.

Jennifer: You are far more pro-makeup than I am.

Stephanie: I am not *pro*-makeup.

Jennifer: Part of your attempt to have a bold-faced lifestyle.

Stephanie: A what?

Jennifer: A bold-faced lifestyle.

Stephanie: I mean, I am trying to achieve a level of professionalism, but I mean, you know...

Jennifer: The Mother says you're a social climber.

Stephanie: Pardon me.

Jennifer: She says you're ashamed of us.

Stephanie: I'm hearing voices.

Jennifer: I mean, I understand, I'm ashamed of us too,

Stephanie: *Toe sucking clubs?*

Jennifer: The Mother and I saw a program and there are these private clubs and all these guys go there and there are girls there who are, you know, toe prostitutes, and these guys pay big money to have toe-sucking sessions with them.

Stephanie: Dexter's a toe-sucker?

Jennifer: So's the bartender.

Stephanie: I mean...

Jennifer: A lot of men are overwhelmed having to be like dominant all the time and a lot of men are trying to be more, you know, like *passive*, and there are whole Web sites devoted to toe-sucking with how-to information and chat rooms for toe-suckers and ways to, you know, meet up and stuff.

Stephanie: The bartender?

Jennifer: He can get my whole foot in his mouth.

Pause as they drink, then....

Stephanie: It was very hard on me to try to be, you know, sort of a role model for you, I mean, I understood that I was supposed to...

Jennifer: I just wanted you to like me.

Stephanie: I was older and...

Jennifer: I worshipped you.

Stephanie: I mean, how do you think it felt to have you copy everything I did, follow me around, say what I said, do what I did...

Jennifer: Some people just aren't meant to succeed, I'm one of them, I know that, I can't compete, I know that, and everybody else competes, and I have had to go through life with a constant acne-pimple condition and low self-esteem, and now I have brown spots.

Stephanie: Jennifer...

Jennifer: And I'm getting a hump.

Stephanie: Listen to me...

Jennifer: I was so embarrassed when I started to develop breasts that I wanted to hide them and the other girls were out there with their chests all stuck up in the air and I just wanted to die and I started slumping over hoping that my breasts would just go away and then I kept on slumping and now I'm getting a hump and there are a lot of other women just like me and it's all because we were too ashamed to show off our tits.

Stephanie: **[Beat]** Clayton came after me, all right, I didn't go after him, he hit on me, do you know what I mean, he called me, and I was like, look, okay, you're going with my sister, and I can't....and he was like, and I tried, okay, and he was...

Jennifer: It's okay. **[She's avoiding looking at Stephanie]**

Stephanie: No, it's not okay, and I told him it wasn't okay, and he was... look, you don't realize, it's like, my father, all right, did I even like know my father? No, I did not know my father, he was like gone before I could even like think or whatever, and it was like me and The Mother and then it was me and The Mother and Bud, and then it was me and The Mother and Bud and you, and like forever I was the inconvenient evidence of Bad Marriage Number One...look at me, will you please just look at me?

Jennifer: **[Still looking away]** It doesn't make any difference.

Stephanie: *Look at me!*

Jennifer: I don't want to look at you.

Stephanie: Do you think I had any self-esteem? Fuck self-esteem. Everybody's so fucking gotta-have fucking self-esteem, and all I could think of was to get the fuck out of there, really, and so I didn't have any self-esteem, nobody fucking cared if I didn't have any self-esteem, I had to like just deal with everything...

Jennifer: Steph.

Stephanie: *Look at me!*

Jennifer: **[Long beat, and then looking at Stephanie]** I'm going to have a baby.

Stephanie: You're not going to have a baby.

Jennifer: I might be pregnant.

Stephanie: You're not pregnant

Jennifer: I might be.

Stephanie: I'm not listening.

Jennifer: I was at the Rite Spot and had, you know, like too many tequilas and this guy was sitting there, the saddest man I've ever seen in my life, like staring down into his drink and he had, well, let's say, I mean, he was ugly, okay, I mean, sort of a lumpy, kind of soft and doughy guy, and one eye was sort of, you know, off-kilter, and there was something about him that...he was just so sad. And I started talking to him and he was like not real comfortable because, you know, like he was not the kind of guy that women ever talk to, and I kept talking to him and he started to relax a little, talking about himself and it was like total loneliness, I mean, he had a dog, okay, and he talked a lot about his dog, and he

was kind of sweet, you know, I mean, I started to really kind of like him because he was so self-conscious and awkward, and at one point I touched him, just, you know, sort of a touch, and he started to cry and it was like so sad, and I moved closer to him, and put my arm around him, and he kept on crying, and I told him that I'd like to meet his dog, and so he took me back to his place, and, I don't know, we talked to the dog a lot and the guy and the dog were like a beautiful thing together and then I started to cry and then the guy started to cry and then he and I started to, you know, like kiss a little bit and then I slipped my hand into his shirt and the guy got like all crazy with excitement and we got into a really long make-out kind of thing, and he told me that he'd never had any contact, you know, like with a woman, and then we were like on the floor rolling around, and we got out of our clothes and it's not like he had a nice body or anything, he had a really pretty disgusting body, but he turned me on and we...you know, did the whole thing and I came and he came and then he burst into tears and I held him and he cried, and I put on my clothes and kissed him good-bye and told the dog that it was nice to meet him, and then I left and I don't know the guy's name and I don't know if I'll ever seen him again, and I think it was maybe the best sexual experience I've ever had in my life.

Stephanie: **[Beat]** And?

Jennifer: I might be pregnant.

Stephanie: By him.

Jennifer: Yeah.

Stephanie: You're sure.

Jennifer: The only people I've slept with lately are women and toe-suckers.

Stephanie; **[Beat]** You take the pill.

Jennifer: I stopped.

Stephanie: Why?

Jennifer: I wanted to get pregnant.

Stephanie: You really are dumb.

Jennifer: I thought maybe you'd be happy for me.

Stephanie: I'll pay for an abortion.

Jennifer: Steph...

Stephanie: I've got some money, I was going to go to Cancun, but I'll give it to you and you can get it taken care of.

Jennifer: I don't want to get it taken care of.

Stephanie: But Jenn...

Jennifer: I really feel sorry for smart people, you know what I mean, I mean there are all these smart people and they have to keep being smart and convincing the other smart people that they're at least as smart as they are or even smarter than they are, and they have to think about everything and read about everything and it's really a lot better I think, really a lot better, just to be, you know...dumb.

Pause as they drink, then...

Stephanie: Have you...I mean...you've missed a period?

Jennifer: **[Thinking]** Not really.

Stephanie: What do you mean, "not really."

Jennifer: Well...it was sort of a...a little one.

Stephanie: Jesus.

Jennifer: I mean, I don't know...I just have that feeling.

Stephanie: When did you sleep with the guy?

Jennifer: There's just a feeling you get, and I have...

Stephanie: *When in the fuck did you sleep with the guy?*

Jennifer: You don't have to get all nasty about it.

Stephanie: Well, I mean, Jennifer, okay, I mean, all right, you slept with the guy and how long ago was that, and have you had a period since then, even a little one, okay?

Jennifer: Well, I really quit taking the pill a long time ago...

Stephanie: I'm hearing voices.

Jennifer: ...and, I don't know, I mean maybe I'm not *technically* pregnant but there's kind of a, you know, *full* feeling you get, and I mean, okay, maybe I'm *pre*-pregnant or something or I'm in a particularly fertile period and, you know, if the right sperm came along...

Stephanie: Jennifer, how could you possibly raise a baby? Please, tell me that. I mean, you know...

Jennifer: I would love the baby.

Stephanie: You and The Mother would love the baby, and you and The Mother would raise the baby, is that the pretty little picture we see?

Jennifer: The Mother's dying.

Stephanie: Jenn...

Jennifer: That's why I called you.

Stephanie: I really don't think...

Jennifer: They found a spot on her lung, they found a whole lot of spots on her lung, they found a whole lot of spots on both of her lungs, and it's untreatable and she's got about three months or four months or five months or maybe six months to live and that's why I called you, and you didn't call back.

Pause as they drink, then...

Stephanie: She's lying.

Jennifer: She's not.

Stephanie: It sounds just like something she'd...

Jennifer: I talked to the doctor.

Stephanie: Like the "brain tumor" she had...

Jennifer: I saw the x-rays, **[Beat]** It's hopeless.

Pause as they drink, then...

Stephanie: Is she doing some kind of, you know...treatment?

Jennifer: She's going through all of her clothes, pulling out every dress, every skirt, holding them up, trying them on, talking about having them "updated" and going on a cruise after she has the facelift, and then she spends an hour doing her eyebrows, going on about how women don't "do" their eyebrows any more, and in the forties and fifties women "did" their eyebrows, and what a tragedy it is that now women just "ignore" their eyebrows, and eyebrows set off a woman's eyes like a frame and are one of the sacred secrets of a woman's sexual power. **[Beat]** Do you realize how

horrifying it must be to be who she is and to be trapped inside of that person forever?

Stephanie: Jenn...

Jennifer: She's crazy, I've always known that, she's a drunk, I've always known that, she's delusional and pathetic, I've always known that, and if you know all of that and understand all of that, then it's easy to be with her and love her.

Stephanie: **[Beat]** I've been drinking too much.

Jennifer: Me too.

Stephanie: I mean...I don't know...

Jennifer: Sometimes it's the only thing you can do.

Stephanie: I get lonely, I want to...

Jennifer: ...drown out the voices...

Stephanie: ...wipe out all the fucking thoughts...

Jennifer: Steph?

Stephanie: Yeah.

Jennifer: I don't want to see you any more.

Stephanie: Jesus, Jennifer, I mean, come on...

Jennifer: I'm serious.

Stephanie: We're sisters.

Jennifer: What does that mean?

Stephanie: Well, I mean...

Jennifer: I just don't want to see you.

Stephanie: I'll help, okay, come on, I'll come over, I'll talk to The Mother, I'll be nice to The Mother, we can go out to lunch or something, drink or something, I don't know.

Jennifer: She doesn't want to see you.

Stephanie: Jesus.

Jennifer: Steph?

Stephanie: I mean, come on...I've been going to call her, I think about calling her...

Jennifer: She's going to die and I'm going to have a new life, and I don't want anything to do with the old life and that includes you.

Stephanie: Come on, Jenn...

Jennifer: I haven't really had a life, and once The Mother dies...

Stephanie: Honey, get a job, okay, please get a job...

Jennifer: I asked you not to call me "honey."

Stephanie: ...just a little part time job, something that'd get you out of the house, something that would get you, you know, I mean...

Jennifer: You're just like The Mother, you sound just like The Mother, "Honey, get a job, Honey, go talk to the nice therapist."

Stephanie: I'm just trying to help, okay?

Jennifer: That's what The Mother says.

Stephanie: I am not The Mother.

Jennifer: The same voice, the same insinuations...

Stephanie: I am *not* The Mother.

Jennifer: ...but with your father's lips.

Stephanie: Maybe *I'm* the one who needs *you*, did you ever think about that?

Jennifer: I'm hearing voices.

Stephanie: Maybe *I'm* the one...

Jennifer: I'm not listening.

Stephanie: We're sisters, all right, I mean, you know, *sisters*... it doesn't mean we have to like each other.

Jennifer: I want to have a baby.

Stephanie: I don't have anyone either, all right? You know what I mean...I mean, it's not like there's someone I'm close to, okay, someone I love, and you and I...**[she starts crying]** I don't know what I want, I mean, how do you know what you want? Really, what are you supposed to want? Can you tell me that, huh? Everybody

always wants what they don't have...why in the fuck don't we just fucking want what we have?

Long pause, as Stephanie calms down, dries her eyes, and Jennifer drinks, then...

Jennifer: **[Touching her breasts]** I think my breasts are getting bigger.

Stephanie: Jenn...

Jennifer: **[Holding her breasts]** I really love my breasts now

Stephanie: Can we be...friends, or, you know, I mean, look, come on...you'll call me in a couple weeks, you'll want to borrow something, I mean, how many nine million times have we quit speaking to each other, you know what I mean...*we're sisters!*

Jennifer: I'm drinking too much

Stephanie: I'm drinking too much.

Jennifer: I'm hearing voices.

Stephanie: I'm hearing voices.

Jennifer: I'll always be hearing voices.

Stephanie: **[Beat]** Jenn? ... **[She looks at Jennifer and holds out her hand...then after a long beat Jennifer slowly takes it. They hold hands. They look at each other, then, still holding hands, they each look away.]**

Blackout