

My Play's Last Scene

A Play

by
Patrick Hurley

CHARACTERS: (In order of Appearance)

EMMA- (20s) The ingenue. Stubborn and willful, and extremely narcissistic.

HUTTON- (20s) The Leading Man. Handsome and easy going. Living for vice. He is an alcoholic, drug-addled, foodie, who is also gay.

CARLIE- (40s) The Aging Actress. Still very beautiful but really, really thin. Has been following a crazy diet for years. She is slowly unravelling.

DESMOND- (50s) The Has-Been. Is caught in an existential crisis. Depressed and uncertain. He is sullen and speaks dryly unless otherwise noted.

LAIN- (20s) The Understudy. Extremely jealous and determined. Is Hutton's understudy, and in the world of this play is unable to even stand on stage. So, he exists entirely in the audience. or at the foot of the stage.

****Author's Note:**

The speed of this play is vital. Dialogue should be quick unless noted with pauses. The play-within-the-play especially. Pauses are inserted at the only moments that the rapidity should stop.

Any time the text is in bold, it indicates that we are in the play-within-the-play.

Any Stage Direction in () is not read but is performed.

PROLOGUE :

Lights up; A scene in progress; the set is one room; there is a sofa, a table and chairs, there's a door that leads into the blackness. There is also a gun hanging on the wall. Emma and Hutton are on stage, in character, the play's last scene is happening. They kiss passionately, very dramatically, then Emma pulls away.

EMMA

Are you mad? Are you insane? Are you crazed?

HUTTON

I am none of those things.

EMMA

I am uncertain. You are impetuous. You're joie de vivre is je ne sais quoi.

He kisses her passionately; again she pulls away, this should look the same as before.

EMMA (Cont'd)

Are you mad? Are you insane? Are you crazed? Papa is in the next room.

HUTTON

I long for you. There is a deep and languid fire in the bushels of time bursting wide open the deep font of my affections.

EMMA

But papa's health is waning. He hasn't time for your mixed metaphors.

HUTTON

It is not his imperil that pulls you hither. What of our destiny?

EMMA

It's no use! I am trapped!

Carlie enters dramatically. Emma gasps. Hutton and Emma cross to opposite sides.

CARLIE

I have made sickbed vigil tea.

Carlie darts a look to Emma.

EMMA
Mother.

CARLIE
Daughter.

EMMA
Mother.

Quick, insane stare-off!

CARLIE
Yes! I have slowly steeped the steaming bags so that we may sip in solidarity to your sickly father. We will sip it to his good health. God willing.

EMMA
Mother. How is Papa?

CARLIE
He's vomiting in the sink again.

HUTTON
The sink?!

CARLIE
He refuses to vomit in the toilet like a common Bolshevik. It's one of his more endearing eccentricities. You know—

EMMA
I should check on him. This sickness may claim him yet. Poor papa!

Emma Exits.

CARLIE
Tea?

HUTTON
Please.

Carlie sets the tea down and they kiss passionately.

CARLIE
Oh, how I long for you. He is nearly dead now.

HUTTON
Huzzah! And I for you.

CARLIE
Yes, poor fool. Poor, rich fool. Poor, poor, rich, ailing fool.

HUTTON

How much money will he leave you? *(Aside)* I hope she does not see the waning of my affections for her, and the increase of my devotion toward her daughter. This is quite the dilemma.

CARLIE

Don't be common, darling.

HUTTON

(Aside) Alas, she is on to me! *(To Carlie)* But I do long to know how rich we will be.

CARLIE

As rich in heart as in pocket. After all, it is not the sum of his parts but the part of his sums that counts. His ill-fated future feeds our fortune!

HUTTON

Poets would weep at the irony of it.

Emma is heard screaming; Hutton jumps.

CARLIE

Cream or sugar?

HUTTON

What on earth?

CARLIE

It's fine. She has her father's flair for melodrama. The tea's getting cold.

He takes a quick sip.

Emma screams again.

HUTTON

Shouldn't we—

CARLIE

How's the tea?

HUTTON

Yes, it's quite adequate, thank you.

CARLIE

It's so wonderful that the house is mostly empty today. No one can hear our devious conspiracy.

HUTTON

Yes, I do enjoy being mostly alone.

Emma re-enters.

EMMA

He's gone!

CARLIE

Praise the lord! We're free!

HUTTON

We're rich!

CARLIE

Oh the weight that has been lifted. I can't tell you what a relief it is that I no longer have to pretend that I love that awful troll of a man.

EMMA

No. I meant that he's not in his room.

CARLIE

Right. Of course. I knew that.

HUTTON

How can he be gone?

EMMA

Why were the two of you—

CARLIE

What? The two of us were simply having tea. I rejoiced at the news only because I am somewhat overburdened, aren't I? It is only human, after all, to feel a sense of relief. I can't tell you how relieved I am that I don't have to be so relieved.

HUTTON

I don't understand. How can he be gone? Where is he?

Desmond enters

DESMOND

He's right here.

Dramatic music plays as he enters.

CARLIE

Oh, thank goodness! I can't tell you how relieved I am.

DESMOND

Spare me your feigned concern. I heard everything.

CARLIE

What a preposterous thing to say. I hadn't nearly said everything yet.

EMMA

Wait a minute. You were both rejoicing. Are you...? Oh dear sweet mercy!
Are you and my own mother...?

DESMOND

I'm afraid they are, cherub. I'm afraid they are.

EMMA

I will kill them!

DESMOND

Way ahead of you, Cherub.

(Desmond takes the gun off the wall.)

CARLIE

Oh for God's sake. Put the gun down. That gun isn't even loaded.
You're not going to kill anyone.

DESMOND

Or am I?

EMMA

Shoot him papa! Shoot him now!

HUTTON

Wait! Wait! I have an idea.

DESMOND

I'll hear nothing from you, you duplicitous rascal.

HUTTON

But-

Desmond crosses to Carlie.

DESMOND

How could you?

CARLIE

I was lonely. You were dying. It was an unusually hot summer.

DESMOND

Dying? It was tainted tuna. I was hardly dying.

CARLIE

How was I to know? It was really hot. You can't expect a woman to have
no needs. I have needs. I am a woman. He is a man. the barometric pressure
was exceedingly high. I have needs!

DESMOND

It's been three days.

CARLIE

Yes, well, I have urgent needs.

EMMA

Shoot them!

HUTTON

Wait! Darling-

EMMA

Don't you darling me. I'm no darling, tell him, papa!

DESMOND

You keep your hands off my daughter!

HUTTON

(Pulls Emma to the side)

But, it was all a ruse. Don't you see? It's you that I love. I was using her for the money. I wouldn't have stayed with a woman as old as she. I mean, look at her. Look at me. Look at me again. This isn't about her. Come with me. We can forget the money. We can be together. Forever.

CARLIE

Oh, I see your playing with knives today.

HUTTON

Knives?

CARLIE

You've stuck a rather large one right in my back. Clever boy. Use the old one for the older one's money, and then run away with the new one, when the old one's back is turned as she tries to coddle the older one. If I didn't loathe you entirely, I'd almost respect you for it.

EMMA

Shut up, mother. He's chosen me. Me! He wants me.

CARLIE

Yes, until you aren't the new one anymore. He's a clever boy. When she's the old one, I'll just bet there'll be a newer one to-

HUTTON

Please, I beg of you, don't take us through that again.

Hutton starts to exit and puts his hand out to Emma

HUTTON

Come. Look at the two of them. Pathetic. We can escape.

DESMOND

Don't you dare!

HUTTON

Come. It's the right choice. It's the only choice. You'll never be happy here.

DESMOND

Will you defy your father?

EMMA

I love him, papa.

CARLIE

Well so do I! there I've said it. A woman's heart is as mysterious as the sea. Breathtaking and bountiful. Deep and dark. brackish and swimming with life!

HUTTON

But I do not love you.

EMMA

Let's go! I'm sorry, papa. I can't choose you over him. There is not reasoning sound enough to believe that I cannot believe his reason sound. And I thought my place was here, but now I see that my mother is a whore. A cheap, dime a dozen quill-dipper. And so in her I can see the error of my own ways. I believed that who I was could only be the me who you wanted me to be, instead of the me who wanted to be the me that I am.

HUTTON

Well said!

EMMA

It's so simple. I've been silly. I should've left with him from the start. We are in love. And what else is there? It's everything! Goodbye. Forever! A thousand times goodbye!

Emma exits dramatically.

HUTTON

At last we're free!

Hutton exits.

DESMOND

How did this all go so wrong?

CARLIE

You can go ahead and shoot me now.

DESMOND

Did you ever love me?

CARLIE

Oh what difference does it make? People change. Feelings change. Cheese rots. Peasants revolt. We all just slowly wither into a shriveled ball of sagging skin and eventually turn to dust and blow away. Into the wind. And what a relief it must be. Free. Finally. We can't just go around living the same day over and over again. I feel...so...lost. So, just pull the trigger. I don't love you.

DESMOND

When did that happen?

CARLIE

Oh, I don't know, I guess deep down...in the truest part of myself, you've always disgusted me. I should go pack my things.

She goes to exit.

DESMOND

So...that's it?

CARLIE

What else is there?

Carlie exits.

Beat

Desmond is destroyed. He wanders the room for a moment trying to formulate a plan.

He gives up and sits; then it occurs to him; He puts the gun to his head. There is a gunshot sound effect. At this point in the pre-show Desmond will exit as Emma and Hutton re-enter. When it's performance, Desmond will cross down to the sofa and sit in silence.

End of Prologue

Setting: A theatre, nowhere special. Time: Sure.

A company of actors have been traveling from town to town for...as long as any of them can remember, performing in a play. They've traveled to more towns than can be counted, and have existed as such, with only each other. In fact, they are all that remain of this particular production. The

stage hands, the stage manager, and all but one of the understudies have abandoned ship. Therefore, whenever the actors appear on stage, it is to reset for the next performance. They move about, setting props, checking marks, fluffing pillows. Doing the work they need to do to make sure all is set for the next show. It is now post-performance and Desmond and Hutton enter from backstage, and sit contemplatively. All is silent.

until...

HUTTON

Penny for your thoughts.

DESMOND

Deterministic systems have unpredictable behavior based upon mathematical reasoning.

HUTTON

Wow. That was more like a quarter's worth, but okay.

DESMOND

I recently read an article about it. I can't seem to get it off my mind. If a drop of rain falls in Ohio, it'll end up in the Atlantic Ocean. But if the same drop of rain falls in California, it'll end up in the Pacific Ocean. The variable of distance to their respective oceans makes that clear, yes? However, which Ocean will a drop that falls directly in the middle of the country end up in? Does it come down to microscopic variables? A matter of millimeters one way or the other? Or is it chance? And why are the middle of the country raindrops so special? Doesn't it seem strange that only a select few drops of rain could be undetermined? You know what the answer is?

HUTTON

Man, there was a question in there?

DESMOND

The answer is, they all end up exactly where they're supposed to be. There's never any chance. Imagine if those drops believed they could decide which way they go. Imagine the chaos they would invite into their lives. What fools they would be. What fools indeed.

HUTTON

So that means that everything that's going to happen just happens? We don't have a say?

DESMOND

It all just goes round and round.

HUTTON

No consequences? Shit! I've been doing this all wrong!

DESMOND

So, now I know, there's really only one thing to do.

Beat. They both nod.

DESMOND

/I'm going to kill myself.

HUTTON

/I'm going to get so high. This is going to be awesome!

They both exit.

New theater. Emma enters from the audience.

EMMA

It looks exactly the same! Isn't it amazing? It looks exactly the same. No matter where we go...here we are. *(Calling out into the lobby)* Hey, I said it looks the same.

Lain also enters from the audience.

LAIN

Of course it looks the same. It always looks the same. It's always the same. How many cities before you stop saying it looks the same?

EMMA

Don't be a dick. It'll age you.

LAIN

Yeah, I wish. Maybe then I could be taken seriously as an actor.

She stares at him in amazement.

LAIN

What? Some things actually do get better with age, you know.

EMMA

Don't be ridiculous. The only thing that gets better with age are your odds of death.

Emma walks onto the stage. Lain does not. Lain is unable to go on the stage.

LAIN

So...? Is this finally going to be the town?

EMMA

Do you think?

I'm asking.

LAIN

But could it be?

EMMA

Isn't that up to you?

LAIN

Emma is not listening to him. She is in her own world.

EMMA

Yes. Yes, I think you're right. There would be something magical about being discovered in this small, dirty, stale-aired Midwestern patch of dirt. It makes me pop! Like a rhinestone, or the last good tooth in a meth heads mouth. Just think of it. Me, standing right here. Seductively.

She stands seductively.

No, no, alluringly.

EMMA

She stands alluringly.

Is there a third option?

LAIN

EMMA

And they...sitting...right there. (*She points to a seat in the audience*)
Act one, I enchant.

She enchants.

EMMA

I reel them in. Not too close. Just enough.

LAIN

I still don't understand who "they" are.

EMMA

Act two, the dance!

She dances.

EMMA

I tease them, they get a little closer! How dare you!

She rejects.

EMMA

I'm not that kind of girl.

She entices.

EMMA
Or do I? Act three, the longing.

LAIN
What does that mean?

EMMA
I'm not in act three.

LAIN
Right.

EMMA
And then, Act four, I return.

She strikes a Dramatic Pose.

EMMA
The raisin day trap!

LAIN
The what now?

EMMA
Yes! I stun!

She goes to stun. (Beat) She doesn't know how.

EMMA
And then! Then! I overwhelm! I crush! I destroy! My glorious moment brings them to their feet in such a delirious state of ecstasy, that amid the roar of the greasepaint they will undoubtedly shout, "Yes, it's her! I want her!"

*She bows.
Beat.*

LAIN
So, is that a no?

Emma snaps out of her theatrical trance and looks around her.

EMMA
I just can't get over how everything is always the same.

LAIN

Yeah, Every. Single. Time. Do you mind? I don't mind. I don't need variety. Who needs to do it standing up?

EMMA

What's that?

LAIN

Hmm?

EMMA

Are you soliloquizing again?

LAIN

I still don't think that's a word.

Lain walks to the edge of the stage.

LAIN

I need to know if you're going to do it or not.

Emma notices the gun on the wall.

EMMA

Strange to consider that amid all the familiar, a new item should be discovered. Oh, and in that discovery the truth of all humankind revealed.

LAIN

What?

EMMA

The Gun's new. I was philosophizing. Why do you always ruin everything?

LAIN

Why do you always change the subject?

EMMA

I wasn't listening. What are you going on about?

LAIN

Emma!

EMMA

Lain!

LAIN

I can't wait through another city. I can't take another go around. I'm starting to lose it. We've been doing this for...Shit. I don't even remember. I'm losing track of time! It has to be soon. Things can't just stay the same every single day!

EMMA

Oh calm your tits. I'm sort of talking about me right now.

LAIN

I just need to hear you say that you'll help me.

EMMA

Fine! I'll help you.

LAIN

Say it.

EMMA

I just did!

LAIN

No, I need to hear it all.

Emma rolls her eyes and sighs.

EMMA

Fine! I'll poison him so that you can claim your rightful spot in this show. But only because I understand the total desire to expose oneself in Public. That may have come out wrong. I also don't really care about hurting other people. So it's a win-win.

Hutton enters from the audience holding a bottle of scotch. Emma jumps on stage and Lain moves away as if they had been caught doing something wrong. Hutton is drunk.

HUTTON

It's Chinese! Let's celebrate.

LAIN

Yeah, that's my cue.

Lain exits.

HUTTON

He doesn't have any cues. He's an under...thingy.

EMMA

Study?

HUTTON

Nah, I'm good. It's a Chinese holiday.

EMMA

Right.

Hutton goes on stage.

HUTTON

Let's pop a cork! Is that a saying? I know a few corks I'd like to pop, if you know what I mean. (*Looking around the stage*) It's all the same. It's all always all the same. It's like a country song. Four chords, three lovers, and a pickup truck! Bong! (*He says this word as if it were a punchline*)

EMMA

Bong?

HUTTON

Where?

EMMA

Gun's new.

HUTTON

I came on the bus.

EMMA

I know. We all did.

HUTTON

No, I mean...I came. On the bus. Hot driver.

EMMA

He was missing most of his teeth.

HUTTON

Hey, more room for me!

EMMA

Okay, first of all, that's just upsetting. And you're drunk, Hutton.

HUTTON

And why shouldn't I be? We live in a circle. Okay? We live in a big, stupid circle where neither sobriety nor righteousness will ever escape. Nothing matters! There's no consequence. Because of the raindrops! Right. Can't choose! We fall where we land. We land where we fall. So get off your high horse, it's much more fun to be high whores who gets off! Because, in the end, it's all a circle! And epistemologically speaking we must learn to operate inside the circle so meaningful continuity can be rightfully established! Bong! Shove that in you pipe dream and smoke it! And Happy New Year!

EMMA

It's March, Hutton.

HUTTON

So give me a dime.

EMMA

I'm going to go to my dressing room now.

Emma goes to leave.

HUTTON

What were you doing with my underthingy anyway? And who, may I ask, let him out of his cage?

EMMA

With your what?

HUTTON

What's-his-face? Is he wounded? He didn't get the part. Boo-hoo! It was me! I've been cursed with this fucking shit show that never ends. How many cities is this now, seventy? Seventy cities in fifty days. I don't do math, but that x does not equal y . X not Y . "X"-actly and Why? Oh dear god, why!?

EMMA

Some of us actually take pride in what we do. I know this may come as a shock to you, but not all of us feel as if we're trapped in some terrible existence. Some of us understand that all of our hard work and determination and...and...

HUTTON

Gumption?

EMMA

Thank you. That all of it will pay off someday. And when that day comes, some of us will become something more. Something better! Something famous. That's how we all feel. We're thrilled to be a part of something so...so glorious! And shame on you for trying to bring down the mood!

Desmond enters from the audience.

DESMOND

(Speaks completely monotone and quickly)

Oh good. There it is. Exactly the way we left it in another city. Oh joy.

He continues to talk fast as he slowly and depressingly walks through the theater, up onto the stage, and to the gun.

DESMOND

What a thrill it is to see the same thing everywhere we go. Really, just a thrill. I must mark it down in my journal. Dear diary, this day

was exactly the same as yesterday, and I can date it today, tomorrow, and always.

Desmond sees the gun on the wall.

DESMOND

The gun has arrived I see, wonderful. I ordered it on the computer. Imagine that. Ordering weaponry like Thai food. God bless America. The bullets were free with express shipping. I do love a deal. It's all about the who, the what, the when, the where, and the how, you know. It's me, it's death, it's now, it's here, it's with that gun. I am nothing if not in pursuit of efficiency. Tinkering with the notion of alleviating all this sorrow with machinery. How H.G. Wells of me! I've reached the pinnacle. I'm at the top. I can't get higher? If that doesn't fucking terrify the living hell out of you, I don't know what could! *(He starts to exit)* Oh, how I fucking hate this stupid fucking show.

Desmond exits.

Beat.

HUTTON

Yeah, I guess I have a bad attitude.

Lain rushes back in. He is not happy.

LAIN

This is perfect!

EMMA

What is?

Emma motions to be quiet in front of Hutton.

LAIN

(To Hutton)

Why are you still here?

Hutton flops on the sofa.

HUTTON

Who me? Dude, I'm barely conscious. You could make out with me right now and I would feel nothing. Hell, you could strip me naked, oil me up and Greco-Roman wrestle me all night long, and I wouldn't even bat an eye.

Beat

HUTTON

Know what I mean?

Emma goes to Lain.

EMMA

What's wrong now?

LAIN

I have no dressing room.

HUTTON

I'd make you bat you an eye. Make you bat a capital eye. Get it?

EMMA

He doesn't! *(To Lain)* What are you going on about?

LAIN

Someone has handwritten a note and pinned it to an old, cracking and really ugly cedar door that leads to a small supply closet, and the note says "Underlings" with the lings crossed out and the word studies written above it.

EMMA

Really? You didn't have to give me the whole description of the door, did you?

HUTTON

What are you saying out there in the dark, Halfling?

LAIN

Nobody's talking! You're hearing things!

EMMA

Stop it.

LAIN

But he's—

EMMA

He is.

LAIN

And I'm—

EMMA

You are.

LAIN

And we're—

EMMA

Exactly! So stop it!

HUTTON

Wow. I don't know what that was, but I am totally bored.

Hutton tries to stand up. He cannot.

HUTTON (Cont'd)

There's something wrong with this couch.

Carlie enters through audience.

CARLIE

Well so FYI, that general store across the street is not as general as they advertise. You should have seen the look they gave me when I asked them where they kept their Coriander. They don't even have yeast. How am I supposed to make my detox, colon-cleansing power sludge?

HUTTON

Carlie!

Hutton is still trying to stand up.

CARLIE

They didn't have my organic coconut water, either. In fact, the only water they do have spells water with a Y in it.

Carlie sees Hutton trying to stand up.

CARLIE (Cont'd)

What is he doing?

EMMA

Losing to a couch.

Carlie goes on stage.

CARLIE

Hutton, are you drunk again?

HUTTON

Define again. Because to my knowledge "again" implies two different occasions, and I don't remember there being an interlude. It's a new way of living. It's called unethical hedonism. It's part Indian. Dot not feather.

CARLIE

What's the other part?

HUTTON

I don't know. S and M?

CARLIE

Oh, for Pete's sake. I don't think I like this new you. Get up!

Carlie helps Hutton to his feet.

HUTTON

Careful. I'm not that kind of man.

CARLIE

Oh, hush.

Hutton finally stands, then he smiles at her.

HUTTON

Wow, girl, your ass is tiny. That's like unhealthy thin. You look sick.

CARLIE

Go to your dressing room and sleep it off. And...thank you.

HUTTON

Do you have any French fries?

CARLIE

Hutton!

HUTTON

I won't be able to sleep without French fries! I don't make fun of you for putting rooster cum on your crow's feet, do I?

CARLIE

Fine, I will get you some French fries if you take a nap.

HUTTON

Promise? And maybe a chili dog?

CARLIE

Promise. Now go.

HUTTON

(To Emma)

She's my favorite.

Hutton exits. Emma walks on stage. Emma and Carlie are now alone. They are uncomfortable.

EMMA

Hey.

Hey.
CARLIE

Long bus ride.
EMMA

Yeah.
CARLIE

I didn't mean anything when I said it.
EMMA

No, no, it's fine. I'm playing your mother, I am older. Not that old, but—
CARLIE

Yes, but implying that you're only right for parts like worn out sea hag was unkind. Forgive me?
EMMA

Don't give it another thought.
CARLIE

I just feel bad for, you know, people that are your age.
EMMA

Yeah. I know, you've said.
CARLIE

I mean, I'm sure you didn't want to reach this age—
EMMA

Yeah, it's fine.
CARLIE

So we're good?
EMMA

Uh-huh.
CARLIE

Good. That makes me feel better. You know how old people can hold a grudge.
EMMA

Emma exits. Carlie, once she realizes she's alone, deflates. She exhales, holds the back of a chair and takes deep breaths.

Okay. This show's going to destroy me. No. No. No, I'm in control.
CARLIE

(Speaks robotically; this is her mantra) You are worth something. You are worthy. You are worthy. You are not powerless. You are not a piece of human garbage. You are not a rotted out old potato. This is what you've always wanted. This is your dream, you cow! Oh god! You are still beautiful. You are...still...(She breaks) A stupid fat bitch! I'm good! I'm so ugly!

She regains her composure. And speaks as she exits.

CARLIE (Cont'd)

You are worthy. You deserve happiness. You are not a stupid fat bitch. You are not. A stupid. Fat. Bitch.

Emma enters and crosses to Hutton. Desmond exits. lights change to Performance lights. It is now a performance.

EMMA

Are you mad? Are you insane? Are you crazed?

HUTTON

I am none of those things. *(He grabs a cookie from the table and eats it during the rest of the scene)*

EMMA

I'm uncertain. You are impetuous. You are...eating a prop. Er...proper cookie? Improper. I mean. What about the tea?

He kisses her passionately. Emma spits out crumbs afterward.

EMMA (Cont'd)

Are you mad? Are you insane? Are you crazed? Papa is in the next room.

HUTTON

I long for you. There is a deep lagoon-like bushel in the bubble of time bursting wide open the deep font of my affections. *(Aside and under his breath)* God, is that the line?

EMMA

But papa's health is waning.

HUTTON

It is not his pull that perils you hither. What of our destiny? And these are really good. *(He grabs another cookie)*

EMMA

It's no...Stop that! And it's no use! I am trapped!

Carlie enters. Emma gasps. She and Hutton move to opposite sides of the stage.

CARLIE

I have made sickbed vigil tea.

They all stare at one another.

EMMA

Mother.

CARLIE

Daughter.

EMMA

Mother.

CARLIE

Yes. I have slowly steamed the steeping bags so that we may sip solidarily so, to you know, your sickly father. We will sip it in his good health. To his. So he. In fact. Gets better. God willing.

EMMA

Mother. How is Papa?

CARLIE

He's vomiting in the sink again.

HUTTON

The sink?!

CARLIE

He refuses to vomit in the toilet like a common Bolshevik. It's one of his more endearing eccentricities. You know—

EMMA

I should check on him. This sickness may claim him yet. Poor papa!

(Emma exits. Hutton takes out a flask and pours whiskey into his tea cup.)

HUTTON

Tea?

Lights change back to Normal. It is no longer a performance. Hutton goes off as Desmond enters and sits contemplatively. Hutton enters eating an entire cake. He sits and eats in silence. And then...

HUTTON

I kicked a homeless dude today.

DESMOND

These things happen.

HUTTON

He was peeing on my shoe.

DESMOND

Well, can hardly blame you then.

HUTTON

I didn't mean to kick him. I was trying to shake the pee off my shoe.

DESMOND

Naturally.

HUTTON

But I ended up kicking him.

DESMOND

Physics.

HUTTON

Like ten times.

Beat. They are both in their own worlds now.

DESMOND

I bought new bullets.

HUTTON

I got some weed from a teenager.

DESMOND

I didn't like the one's that came for free. They were too small.

HUTTON

After I kicked the homeless guy. I bought weed from a kid who was maybe sixteen. Am I a terrible person?

DESMOND

And they said they were made in Vietnam, and that just felt wrong for some reason. Isn't that strange, that I should be so picky about something like bullets?

HUTTON

I should probably feel bad, but I think most of it was just parsley. The first joint I rolled smelled like a Bolognese when I lit it.

DESMOND

Then again, it is the thing that will end my life. Why not be choosy?

HUTTON

But still, to buy alleged drugs from a child. I think he was a child, he could have been a dwarf.

DESMOND

I think tonight's the night.

HUTTON

Of course if I did buy Italian seasoning from a street dwarf, then I'm the one who was wronged. But I do feel bad about myself sometimes. But hey. Like you said, we land where we land. No say, right? Everything is going to happen the same way anyway.

DESMOND

Yes, It will be soon.

(Beat.)

DESMOND

/I'm sorry, what was that?

HUTTON

/You want to get high?

Desmond exits. Hutton stands. He is clearly ill from too much cake. (Lights change to performance. Carlie enters and the scene resumes.)

CARLIE

Tea?

HUTTON

Please.

Carlie sets the tea down and they kiss passionately.

CARLIE

Oh, how I long for you. He is nearly dead now.

HUTTON

Huzzah! So do I. (He Burps)

(They are both slightly confused by this.)

CARLIE

Yes, poor fool. Poor ailing fool. Poor rich, ailing fool. Poor rich, poor ailing, poor fool.

HUTTON

I don't know what that was. How much money will he leave you? *(Aside)* I hope she does not see the waning of my affections for her, and the increase of my devotion toward her daughter. This is quite the dilemma. Is there even anybody in the audience?

CARLIE

(Forces a laugh) O! Don't be common, darling.

HUTTON

(Aside) I hate matinees. *(To Carlie)* But I do long to know how rich we will be.

CARLIE

As rich in heart as in pocket. After all, it isn't the sum that counts, but the count that sums.

They pause at this. And both wait for the other to speak.

CARLIE

Uh, yes, but...more importantly, when he dies...we get his money.

HUTTON

Irony! Poets love that shit!

Emma is heard screaming; Hutton tries to jump up but is too nauseated.

CARLIE

Cream or sugar?

HUTTON

What on Earth? I can't stand right now.

CARLIE

It's fine. Don't give it a second thought. Besides, she has her father's flair for melodrama. The tea's getting cold.

*He takes a quick sip
Emma screams again.*

HUTTON

Shouldn't we—

CARLIE

How's the tea?

HUTTON

Honey, if I put one more thing in my mouth I'll explode. And yes, that is the first time I've ever said that.

CARLIE

Well, I guess it's a good thing the house is mostly empty today. I mean our house. You know, the house we live in. That's the only house I would be speaking about.

HUTTON

It's okay, they know you're talking about the theater, just move on!

They both stare into the audience for a moment.

Lights back to normal. The performance is now over. Carlie and Hutton exit.

Hutton enters with a new cake, and lies on the couch. Carlie enters doesn't see Hutton and walks to an implied mirror where the audience is. And stares in horror.

CARLIE

(To herself in the mirror)

You're fat. You are so fucking fat. Why does this keep getting fatter? How am I fatter than I was yesterday? Oh, look at that angle. I look like a ball of partially proofed pizza dough. I have no good side. When did that happen? I'm the most disgusting piece of shit on earth!

(Hutton sits up.)

HUTTON

Do I smell crazy in here?

Carlie starts and moves away from the mirror.

CARLIE

Oh! I didn't see you there. I was just...meditating. Mantra, you know.

HUTTON

Who is the fairest of them all? As much as I love a narcissistic diva, this is just a little too sad for me.

CARLIE

I don't know what you mean, I was meditating! *(Completely sure of herself)* Mindful awareness! *(Completely unsure of herself)* That's a thing, right?

*Hutton grabs a chunk of cake and eats.
Carlie sits to log something in her
food journal.*

CARLIE (Cont'd)

Let's see, dried seaweed stick, 10 calories. Vaporized bacon fat... I wonder if scented air has calories? (*Notices Hutton*) Are you eating an entire cake?

HUTTON

I have low blood sugar. And you should stop caring so much. Haven't you heard? We have no say! We can do whatever we want. Make the most of it. You know what I mean? Why conform?

CARLIE

Well I didn't give myself this label. It was thrust upon me.

HUTTON

Reject it!

CARLIE

And I wasn't in a position to fight it. I mean, it may be wrong, it may make me feel like everyone's judging me, but we suck it up and do it anyway.

HUTTON

Like a three-way in church.

CARLIE

Is that Red? Velvet? (*Almost sexually*) So bad. You're naughty, aren't you?

HUTTON

It's just a substitute. I haven't gotten laid in like nineteen cities. This is just a meager standby. Like an electronic cigarette, or a non-alcoholic beer, or an empty Pringles can lined with a shirt sleeve. What? I've been doing this new thing where everything I do has to feel good.

Carlie sits next to him.

CARLIE

Can I smell it?

HUTTON

Uhh...

*Carlie puts her face right up to it and
inhales. She is almost orgasmic.*

CARLIE

Oh yeah! That's the sweet spot! Okay, now tell me what it tastes like. Slowly.

HUTTON

Are you okay? Your eyes look a little glassy.

CARLIE

It's this diet. It messes with you. Sometimes, when I pass bakeries, or donut shops, or certain gas stations, I stop and stare. I watch people eating pastries and donuts and over-cooked, off-brand churros. I just watch.

HUTTON

That's weird.

CARLIE

I download pictures of torts and cupcakes, and sometimes long Johns. And I stare at them. (*Ominous whisper*) I stare at them!

HUTTON

What the hell is a long John?

Carlie pulls a picture out of her bra and hands it to him.

CARLIE

Long and glazed and filled with cream.

HUTTON

Wait, seriously? How have I missed these? Do you just keep this picture on you?

CARLIE

It's the pressure, you know. I've been playing a vain, thinly exotic woman of nearly forty-five, but who doesn't look a day over thirty-five for so long I can't tell what's real anymore. I don't even know what age I actually am! And the diets, and the exercises, and that journal. And the impossible body image that the media perpetrates. And then my own thoughts fighting them, trying not to believe that I have to conform! I'm getting confused. It's like the signals are being crossed. I had a dream that I was raped by Twinkie the Kid! And I liked it. I liked it.

HUTTON

I might need an adult!

CARLIE

I think I might be on the verge of snapping.

Desmond enters.

DESMOND

All right, who took the bullets out of my dressing room? Who was it?

CARLIE

I am not drooling! *(She quickly moves away from the cake)* What?

DESMOND

I said...someone took my bullets.

CARLIE

Why would you buy bullets?

DESMOND

Because you can't load a gun with stupid questions!

HUTTON

Because nothing matters! We can do whatever we want?

CARLIE

Desmond, are you feeling all right?

DESMOND

Why the fuck would I be all right?

CARLIE

You seem a little down. You should take a walk. Physical activity is vitally important in maintaining a positive mental attitude! You wouldn't want to suddenly snap and start eating everything, would you!?

HUTTON

(With a mouthful of cake)

She's right. Listen to her, she definitely knows what she's talking about.

DESMOND

Are you eating that entire cake?

HUTTON

It's a high caloric substitute for sex. And it feels good.

DESMOND

Fair enough. And what are you doing? Watching him?

HUTTON

She has food issues.

CARLIE

It's not that big a deal. I just might be slipping into an unendurable darkness that is feeding on my soul. Sucking the life force right out of me. But hey, skinny jeans. Yay!

Carlie sits and stares at the cake. She is not listening.

DESMOND

I wish I could empathize. I just want my bullets back, so that I can load my gun and finally, at long last, shuffle off this spinning shit spring.

HUTTON

That's kind of beautiful, man. I don't know what it means, but I dig it.

Emma enters.

EMMA

Isn't the house supposed to be open?

HUTTON

Goddammit!

CARLIE

What's wrong?

HUTTON

I forgot where I was! It was really nice. Thanks a lot for the reminder!

Hutton exits.

CARLIE

Come on Desmond, no more gloomy face! We should go warm up.

DESMOND

I couldn't care less what anybody watching this thinks of me. Why would I warm up?

CARLIE

Because we still have a contractual obligation to pretend. Even if our lives are filled with misery and despair, there's still an audience to...you know, pretend for.

DESMOND

Yeah, it's a matinee, there'll be six people in here. And three of them will fall asleep. How did I end up like this? I played Hamlet for god's sake! Now I get offered roles that have the word cuckold in the description. As the defining feature!

CARLIE

Now, now, that's a defeatist attitude!

Carlie moves away from the cake, still eyeing it.

CARLIE

We have to stay strong. Can't let temptation break our spirits! For Jesus' sake! I'm fine. I'm not angry. It's nothing. It'll pass. Or it won't. And I'll become my mother. Won't that just be the cherry? The sweet, succulent cherry.

Desmond and Carlie exits.

EMMA

Okay, they're gone!

Lain enters the audience with a vial.

LAIN

Where is it?

EMMA

Over here.

Emma crosses to the table and picks up a tea cup.

LAIN

Here.

Lain offers her the vial.

EMMA

What is it?

LAIN

Just do it.

Lain goes to exit.

EMMA

Wait! Is it going to kill him?

LAIN

Just pour it in the cup!

EMMA

Wait!

LAIN

What?

EMMA

What is it?

LAIN

It's non-toxic.

EMMA

It's non-toxic poison? How does that work?

LAIN

I don't know, I'm not a scientist!

EMMA

Then tell me what it is.

LAIN

Let's just say it's effective.

EMMA

What is it?

LAIN

It's powdered sugar.

EMMA

What?

LAIN

Yes.

EMMA

Powdered sugar?

LAIN

Yes. (*Somewhat under his breath*) Laced with cyanide.

EMMA

Cyanide!

LAIN

Shh! Are you crazy!

EMMA

Isn't cyanide toxic?

LAIN

It's mixed with sugar.

EMMA

That doesn't negate the toxic part, you moron! We can't kill him.

LAIN

It won't kill him.

EMMA

Then you put it in.

LAIN

You know I can't. Look at me. If I could go on the stage we wouldn't have to do this, would we? Now stop pretending like you give a shit and put the poison in the cup!

EMMA

Hey, I know I come across as less than humanitarian, but I do have morals against killing.

LAIN

You smothered a cat in Cincinnati.

EMMA

She was screeching over my big scene.

LAIN

She was trapped under the stage.

EMMA

I didn't say I wouldn't kill.

LAIN

The house is opening! Would you just do it!

EMMA

Fine!

Emma pours the vial into the cup.

EMMA

Now what?

LAIN

What do you mean?

EMMA

Is something going to happen when she pours the tea into it?

LAIN

Like what?

EMMA

I don't know. Like a cloud of smoke or something?

LAIN

If this were a Disney film I guess that might happen.

EMMA

Oh okay, so we shouldn't try to take every precaution?

LAIN

Just go!

EMMA

Are you sure this won't kill him? You know I really hate that I'm the sensible one in this scenario!

LAIN

Walk away!

Lain Exits.

Lights change to Performance lights.

Emma turns and waits until

Hutton enters and stands by her.

EMMA

(Beat) But papa's health is waning.

HUTTON

It is not his imperil that pulls you hither. What of our destiny?

EMMA

I am trapped!

Carlie enters Dramatically Hutton and

Emma cross to opposite sides.

CARLIE

I have made sickbed vigil tea.

They all stare at one another.

EMMA

Mother.

CARLIE

Daughter.

EMMA

Mother.

CARLIE

I have slowly steeped the steaming bags. Sip in Solidarity. I mean, we shall sip. Yeah, sickly father. So many "s"s We will sip it to his health. Good! Dammit. Willing! God fff damn. Fuck me, This line!

EMMA

Mother. How is Papa?

CARLIE

He's vomiting in the sink again.

HUTTON

The sink?!

CARLIE

He refuses to vomit in the toilet like a common Bolshevik. It's one of his more endearing eccentricities. You know it puts me in mind-

EMMA

I should check on him. This sickness may claim him yet. Poor papa! Oh, and mother make sure you do a full and proper pour. And you should drink it all. Both of you. For papa. For his health. You should. Drink. It. All.

Emma exits slowly eyeing them. They watch as she very slowly and dramatically exits the room; Then they stare at each other for a moment.

CARLIE

Tea?

HUTTON

Please.

Carlie sets the tea down and they kiss passionately.

CARLIE

Oh, how I long for you. He is nearly dead now.

HUTTON

Huzzah! *(Looking out towards Emma)* What was that about?

CARLIE

Yes, poor fool! Poor ailing, poor fool. Poor rich, poor fool. Ailing poor fool. Poor-

HUTTON

Yeah, you can stop that. Let's just have the tea.

CARLIE

Right.

HUTTON

How much money will he leave you?

CARLIE

Don't be common, darling.

Hutton tries to speak his aside.

CARLIE

I will pour the tea!

(She fills both cups.)

HUTTON

Okay.

CARLIE

His death will fund our happiness.

HUTTON

Yeah, it's ironic.

Emma is heard screaming; Hutton jumps.

CARLIE

Cream or sugar?

Hutton takes the cup from Carlisle.

HUTTON

(Reacting to the scream) What on earth? *(He looks in the cup)* Why is it clumpy?

CARLIE

The tea's getting cold. What do you mean clumpy?

HUTTON

It looks like some kind of glue or something. Or maybe some kind of icing. Look. It's moving.

CARLIE

Maybe we should just drink the tea.

Emma screams again.

HUTTON

I'm not drinking that.

Beat. Carlisle tries to get back on track.

CARLIE

How's the tea?

HUTTON

Are you deaf? What the hell did you put in this?

CARLIE

I don't know what you mean, but I'm sure we should just...*(Trying to improvise naturally)* I mean, one needn't know if you truly, in fact,

drink the tea. What I mean is, you could...mime...it. *(She has failed and buries her face in her hands)*

HUTTON

What? Oh, right. Yes. *(He clearly takes a fake sip of tea)* Mmm. It's good tea.

Beat.

Lights change back, Carlie and Hutton exit during the following interaction.

CARLIE

I'm so sorry. I can't improvise. I just freeze! Oh, it's awful.

HUTTON

It looked like someone jerked off into that cup.

CARLIE

And then you said "icing" and my mind just wandered to all sorts of pastries and cream puffs and funnel cakes. Oh, I love those. Even though, they're generally not "iced." Is that the right way to say that?

Desmond enters distraught; He sits on the sofa. Emma enters quickly and then sees Desmond and pretends to be casual. She speaks as she looks in the audience for Lain.

EMMA

Oh, hello. Great job tonight. Really. *(Beat)* Just great. Like a hammer. *(Beat)* Nailed it.

DESMOND

Yes, I was the suck in successful.

EMMA

Sure.

DESMOND

Do you ever fantasize about your own dismemberment?

EMMA

Well, not exactly, but once I had a dream that I was eaten by a bear. My mother told me it was because I was getting fat.

DESMOND

I couldn't load the gun. Couldn't find the bullets. Maybe I subconsciously hid them on myself. Wouldn't that just be dandy and all? I sabotage myself at every turn. Made the wrong choice. I thought I could find happiness by slipping off my own skin and becoming someone

else. Jump into the ether for a quick dalliance with escape. Turns out I just ended up losing myself.

EMMA

Hey, what are you gonna do? This one time I wanted to buy a new pair of Blahniks, but they weren't on sale. Still regret that.

DESMOND

I should be dead right now.

EMMA

(Distracted, looking out for Lain)

Yeah, I had a near-death experience once. I went to a Republican National Convention.

Emma sits on the arm of the sofa.

DESMOND

What if there really isn't a way out? What then?

EMMA

My mother always said hypothetical questions lead to homosexual lifestyles. God, my mother may have sucked.

DESMOND

How long have we been doing this?

EMMA

You mean this conversation? Feels like forever.

DESMOND

I'm stuck. This is the height of my career. I've gone as far as I can go. I'm a marathoner at the one-mile marker. A race car driver in the passenger seat...A...third thing.

EMMA

But look at where we are! Don't you believe that somewhere out there, in this great big world, someone is going to see this show and say, "that's a star?"

Beat.

DESMOND

You have no soul. Would you load a gun for me if I give you the bullets?

EMMA

(In her own world)

That's a star.

DESMOND

Well, happy delusions to you. I'm going to go stare into the abyss as I try to summon the courage to remove part of my face with a firearm.

Desmond exits.

Lain enters from the audience.

LAIN

What?!

(Beat.)

EMMA

Okay? Is that it? Or are you hearing shit now?

LAIN

He didn't drink it!

EMMA

Yeah, I know. I was there.

LAIN

He didn't drink it!

EMMA

Yeah, I know. I was there.

LAIN

Well, shit!

EMMA

Yeah, I know.

LAIN

Shit!

EMMA

Yeah. I'm bored with this now.

LAIN

We have to do it again.

EMMA

Ugh!

LAIN

Yes! We do. Until he drinks it.

EMMA

You don't have to shout at me! What am I blind? Or are you deaf? Or...shut up!

Emma steps off the stage.

LAIN

Until he drinks it.

EMMA

I heard you. I really hate that you think I'm as stupid as you are!

He tries to kiss her.

EMMA

Don't. Really? Context clues. Jesus! Learn to read a room.

LAIN

You have to put it in again.

EMMA

(Trying to be funny) That's not what you said last night. *(She has failed)* Whatever. Stop irritating me.

LAIN

Kiss me.

EMMA

I just ate.

LAIN

You drive me wild.

EMMA

See a doctor. I don't have time for this.

Emma walks back on stage.

LAIN

Wouldst thou leave me so unsatisfied?

EMMA

Yep.

Emma exits.

LAIN

Right. I'll count the hours that you're away.

Hutton enters.

HUTTON

What is that terrible sound? It's rather like the screech of a dying owl.

Lain glares at Hutton

HUTTON

Crying out in anguish... "please pay attention to me!"

Hutton sits on the couch.

LAIN

You're funny.

HUTTON

I'm stoned. You're funny.

Lain starts to exit.

LAIN

(Under his breath)

You're pathetic, actually.

HUTTON

Halt, infidel!

Lain stops walking.

LAIN

What?

HUTTON

You actually halted! I've always wanted to say that. I don't know if it's your lack of success, or that sluggish way you carry yourself, but whatever it is it's kind of working for me right now. And hey, nothing matters anyway so hop on up!

*Carlie enters writing in her journal
and then she looks up.*

CARLIE

How can an herb have that many calories!? Oh. You. I wanted to be alone.

HUTTON

I wanted to be an Arabian Prince. So we both have fulfilling inner-lives. We're being haunted!

Hutton motions to Lain, Carlie waves

CARLIE

Oh, hi. Are you coming to the show tonight? I don't think the house is open yet.

Hutton laughs.

LAIN

No, I've seen it.

HUTTON

She thinks you're a stranger!

CARLIE

I'm sorry, I can't see you very well. It's dark, and my glucose levels have been causing some blurred vision. And a little memory loss. And rolling post-traumatic amnesia. All in the name of beauty. Seriously are the lights on right now?

HUTTON

And you don't have a personality, so naturally people forget who you are.

Lain storms off

Hutton laughs; Carlie composes herself.

CARLIE

Who was that?

HUTTON

It doesn't matter. What's up with you?

CARLIE

Are you high?

HUTTON

High is the opposite of low!

CARLIE

And that was the opposite of an answer.

HUTTON

Someone's a little like a male reproductive organ today...testy.

CARLIE

Sorry. I'm a little on edge. I feel like a spool of wool slowly and methodically unravelling. Like I'm on the edge of—

HUTTON

Yeah, yeah, one metaphor's good. I get it. You're like a cat without a tail.

CARLIE

I don't think that's a—

HUTTON

It doesn't matter.

Beat

She takes out a bottle of pills.

HUTTON

Ooh. Whatchya got there?

CARLIE

It's an apple cider vinegar, green tea, all-natural, ephedrine-laced, amphetamine, water-pill hybrid. They're illegal in the states, but I got a guy who gets them from a silkworm larvae food truck in North Korea. And by guy I mean someone I met on an internet dating site. Yeah, he may be trying to purchase me. I don't speak Micronesian. But the pills do wonders for my appetite.

HUTTON

I think you just managed to offend like nine cultures. You think I could have one?

Emma re-enters.

EMMA

And one more thing...oh, you are not the gentleman I was expecting.

*She chuckles at this.
No one else does.
She's pissed.
She goes to leave.*

CARLIE

Oh, Emma. Might I have a word?

EMMA

That depends. Is it a word I want to hear?

CARLIE

Do you think it would be possible for you to maybe, I don't know, learn your lines?

EMMA

What are you talking about?

CARLIE

It's just that, well, I mean I'm starting to think that it's personal.

EMMA

What is? I don't have time for you.

CARLIE

Why do you hate me?

EMMA

Do I have to pick one thing?

CARLIE

We've been doing this for...as long as we've been doing it for, and

you still don't know your lines. I mean, you keep skipping my big speech in the last scene. You keep skipping it! I'm not angry.

EMMA

Oh, I'm sorry, is my dyslexia a burden to you?

CARLIE

Oh I didn't know—

EMMA

I didn't even learn how to read until I was fifteen, so thank you for bringing that up!

CARLIE

Oh, that's...that's terrible. But bravo for overcoming that.

EMMA

Are we done?

CARLIE

Well, I guess so.

EMMA

Yeah, we are.

Emma exits.

HUTTON

Wow. Way to stick it to her.

CARLIE

I didn't realize she had a handicap.

HUTTON

Really? You can't tell she's retarded.

CARLIE

But I think she might try harder now that I've brought it up.

HUTTON

Yeah, it'll probably go perfectly next time.

*Carlie and Hutton stand get into places
Emma re-enters; performance lights.*

EMMA

How is papa?

CARLIE

He's vomiting in the sink again.

HUTTON

The sink?!

CARLIE

He refuses to vomit in the toilet like a common Bolshevik. It's one of his more endearing eccentricities. You know, it puts me in mind of a story. (*She waits. Emma stares at her waiting*) A story—

Emma cuts her off.

EMMA

I should check on him. This sickness may claim him yet. Poor papa!

Emma exits triumphantly. Lights back to normal.

HUTTON

Or not.

CARLIE

I'm sure she's trying. I'm not angry. I'm not angry. I'm not angry. I'm not angry..

Carlie exits.

HUTTON

Round and round! People suck ass.

Hutton pulls out a bag of shrooms, opens it and sniffs. Desmond enters.

DESMOND

Whatchya got there?

Hutton holds the bag up.

HUTTON

Drugs. Want some?

DESMOND

A mind altering substance meant to alleviate sorrow and temporary plug the hole of life. I mean hole as in void not complete. Let's not blur our pessimistic poetry.

HUTTON

Whatever dude, I fucking hate homonyms. I'm more of a slang guy.

DESMOND

Word, bro. Word.

HUTTON

I can't really vouch for these. I bought them off a sausage cart, and that is surprisingly not a euphemism.

DESMOND

Have you ever found yourself in an existential quandary? Where everything has lost all meaning? Have you ever been to a place where everything is fake and superficial and pointless?

HUTTON

You mean like Los Angeles?

DESMOND

I will take one of those mushrooms, please.

HUTTON

Of course. Raindrops. Am I right?

DESMOND

Yeah, I don't know what that means.

He hands the bag to Desmond who eats five of them, one after the other.

HUTTON

Holy shit! That's what I'm talking about.

DESMOND

I don't feel anything. What a bummer.

Beat.

Hutton eats a few Shrooms. They sit and wait for something to happen.

DESMOND

I'm going to/ kill myself.

HUTTON

/I've been thinking about our little talk. You know the one about the raindrops and stuff in Ohio or whatever. I know this might sound a little gay, but I want to please you.

DESMOND

You thought that would sound gay?

HUTTON

I don't mean that! I mean I have a hole.

Hutton puts his hand on Desmond's shoulder.

DESMOND

How is this getting less gay?

HUTTON

I mean, no! A loophole. I found a loophole.

DESMOND

A loophole? Isn't that a tax thing? Or what you put your shoestrings through? Like in the wood section of a symphony.

HUTTON

I don't think that's a thing.

DESMOND

I think I'm feeling weird.

HUTTON

We could get injured. If we get injured we can be freed from our contracts. If we're an injured party. See! What if that's where we're supposed to land?

DESMOND

Injured party? Wouldn't that be a sad thing to be invited to? An injured party. Welcome, what brings you here?

HUTTON

I broke my jaw.

DESMOND

Slipped on the ice.

HUTTON

Pulled a groin!

DESMOND

I was rear-ended.

HUTTON

I think we're in a different party now.

DESMOND

Injured party.

HUTTON

Think about it. We could be free.

DESMOND

Free? Where would we go? The boat that brought us here has sank. /It's a bitter pill to swallow.

HUTTON

/But what if we were supposed to land somewhere else?

DESMOND

No. No. You don't get it. The boat doesn't land. /It sinks.

HUTTON

/You're stoned.

DESMOND

It goes up your ass! The pill, not the boat. /That's why it's hard to swallow.

HUTTON

/I'm not following anything that my life is saying.

DESMOND

The only way out is through. Who said that?

HUTTON

Lawrence of Arabia? /Wait, wait, wait...

DESMOND

/The words, the words, the words...

HUTTON

is he the one on that liberal news channel?

DESMOND

The words coming out of your mouth are bluish-green. I just thought you should know. I'm going to shoot myself. The boat has sailed. And no, we don't have a say where we land! We fall where we fall!

HUTTON

Like raindrops. /On roses and whiskers on kittens—

DESMOND

/I always dreamed of becoming a king. Such beautiful dreams I once had. Infinite. Soaring. Perfect. And now, what do I have to look forward to? What do I have to show for all my passion and hard-work? Finite. Falling. Awful. I'm like an underground cult.

HUTTON

You're a Quaker?

DESMOND

Pointless!

HUTTON

You do look like you make your own clothes.

Beat.

Emma and Lain enter the audience.

LAIN

That's all I have, he has to drink it soon!

EMMA

All right, I hear you!

HUTTON

Ahoy there!

DESMOND

Ahoy!

EMMA

Oh shit! Go away.

Lain sneaks off.

HUTTON

Ahoy, because of the boat theme that our conversation has taken.

DESMOND

I was right there with you. Drop anchor, she will capsize us.

Emma goes on stage.

EMMA

What fresh hell is this?

DESMOND

The boat has a loophole that will make it sink, I can't fit the loop in the hole of my shoot and so I'm going to shoe myself. I said I'm going to shoe myself.

EMMA

Yeah, okay. How's that working out for you?

DESMOND

It's as if there's a sapper neutral force that's stopping me. Some...I don't know, unseen hand. Or I'm absent-minded and keep misplacing the bullets. I think the former's more romantic but the latter is just going nowhere. Up and up. And. Up.

EMMA

Hey, magic of the theater, right?

DESMOND

The theater is magic, isn't it? It distracts us from our mindful duties.

(Hutton Chuckles)

HUTTON

/Duties!

DESMOND

/It's magical.

EMMA

(Clearly distracted)

Yeah, super magical. It gave both of you a job. That's pretty far-fetched.

Beat.

DESMOND

I mean just look at us, we've disappeared in it. What does that make us? A work of art?

HUTTON

It kinda does. If we've disappeared, we're art. Or...rabbits, in the top hat of a giant.

EMMA

We're living our dreams. That's the beauty of it. I guess some of us are just more aware of how good we actually have it.

HUTTON

Shh! She's not really here. Look at her face, it's not attached to her head. Begone, shrieking harpy!

EMMA

Are you stoned?

HUTTON

Are you rocked? Are you pebbled? Are you sea-shelled?

EMMA

I guess that answers my question. You shouldn't take drugs.

HUTTON

Oh yeah, well you shouldn't judge, Judy. Glass houses shouldn't get stoned.

EMMA

Deep.

DESMOND

Shit. That really is deep.

EMMA

Oh my God, you got Desmond high?

DESMOND

I'm not high. I'm low. I'm lowly low. I'm as low as Sweet Chariot. Is that racist? I've had the realization that no matter what I choose. I don't get to say. I just go /round and round.

HUTTON

/We should injure each other!

DESMOND

Fuck your hole!

HUTTON

That came out wrong.

DESMOND

I mean it. Fuck your loophole. Maybe we should just run away. I can see now. It's all so clear. Like the good side of a rotting apple. It's so pretty. I'm high. I've reached the top of the mountain, and I can see the other side of it. And it's on fire!

HUTTON

Where would we go?

DESMOND

You're right, it's hopeless.

HUTTON

Wow, you blow hot and cold.

DESMOND

What little meaning there was is evaporated like dessert pudding. Putty. Paddle. Puddle. Like a paddle in the desert. Like a fortune cookie. But instead of a cookie it's a pile of shit, and instead of a fortune it's a punch in the crotch.

Beat.

EMMA

Great. Now there are two of you!

HUTTON

Shh! You're not even here, detached face lady.

EMMA

Whatever. I have to go to the gym. Some of us enjoy placating to the image society demands from us.

HUTTON

That is so sad.

EMMA

Yeah, I'm sad.

DESMOND
Why is there an audience?

Beat.

HUTTON
What?

DESMOND
Look! Are there people out there?

Hutton and Emma look into the audience.

EMMA
What did you give him?

DESMOND
We're being watched? It's a conspiracy? We're always being watched.

HUTTON
Shit. What if he's right? My mind is like a porn stars dick right now.

Beat; they stare at Hutton.

HUTTON
Literally being blown.

EMMA
How did I end up anywhere with people like you?

Emma goes to exit.

DESMOND
You don't see them?

HUTTON
She can't see them because her face isn't attached.

DESMOND
Wow.

HUTTON
What if we're in a play right now? What if this is the play, and the play is real life?

DESMOND
Whoa...

They all stare out into the audience for a long time.

Lights change to performance lights Emma and Desmond exit Carlie enters. She and Hutton hold the moment right before Emma rushes in.

EMMA

He's gone!

CARLIE

Praise the lord! We're free!

HUTTON

We're rich!

CARLIE

Oh the weight that has been lifted. I can't tell you what a relief it is that I no longer have to pretend that I love that awful troll of a man.

(Beat.)

EMMA

No. I meant that he's not in his room.

CARLIE

Right. Of course. I knew that.

HUTTON

How can he be gone?

EMMA

Why were the two of you-

CARLIE

What? The two of us were simply having tea. I rejoiced at the news only because I am somewhat overburdened, aren't I? It is only human, after all, to feel a sense of relief. I can't tell you how relieved I am that I don't have to be so relieved.

HUTTON

I don't understand.

EMMA

Oh good, it's not just me.

HUTTON

No, I don't understand how he's gone. Where is he?

Desmond enters.

DESMOND

He's right here.

Dramatic music plays as he enters. He is slightly high and so he giggles when he hears the music.

CARLIE

Oh, thank goodness! I can't tell you how...is something funny?

DESMOND

Spare me your feigned concern. I heard everything.

CARLIE

What a preposterous thing to say. I hadn't nearly said everything yet.

EMMA

Wait a minute. You were both rejoicing. Are you...? Oh...sweet...home Alabama, are you and my mother...?

DESMOND

Yes. That they are. Or is. They were. No, is. I...I don't know.

HUTTON

(Under his breath to Emma)

Sweet home, Alabama?

EMMA

I will kill you! I mean them!

DESMOND

Oh yes! Way ahead of you, Chubby.

EMMA

Wait, what?

Desmond takes the gun off the wall.

CARLIE

Oh for God's sake. Put the gun down. You're not going to kill anyone. That gun isn't even loaded.

DESMOND

Or am I?

They all pause again.

EMMA

Shoot them, papa! Shoot them right in there lying stupid ass faces!

Hutton whispers to Emma.

HUTTON

You should really learn your lines.

EMMA

(In a whisper to Hutton) Bite me! (Then as loud and dramatic as possible)
Kill him!

HUTTON

Wait! Wait! I have an idea.

DESMOND

I'll hear nothing from you, you duplicitous slip weasel.

Beat. Again the wrong line.

HUTTON

Okay.

Desmond crosses to Carlie

DESMOND

How could you?

CARLIE

I was lonely. You were dying. It was an unusually hot summer.

DESMOND

Dying? It was tooted tin. Tiny. Tina. Tina tooted?

CARLIE

Tainted tuna!

DESMOND

That does not sound right.

CARLIE

How was I to know you weren't dying? It was really hot. You can't expect a woman to have no needs. I have needs—

DESMOND

All this over bad fish?

CARLIE

Yes, well, I have urgent needs. You gave me no choice!

DESMOND

Choice? No choice? That's because there is no choice, you dumb bitch!

CARLIE

Darling!

EMMA

Shoot them!

HUTTON

Wait! Darling?

DESMOND

No choice!

EMMA

Don't you darling me. I'm no darling, tell him, papa!

DESMOND

That's right. She's a foul little beast!

EMMA

What? No, I didn't mean—

HUTTON

(Pulls Emma to the side)

But, it was all a rose. Don't you see? It's love that I use. I was using her money for the money. I wouldn't have stayed with a woman as old as she. I mean, look at me. Look at me. Look at me again. I didn't say look at her. Come with me. It doesn't matter! We can forget this. We can be together. Forever. We could go back to being frog babies. None of these lines are right, are they?

CARLIE

Oh, I see your playing with knives today.

HUTTON

Knives?!

CARLIE

You've stuck a rather large one right in my back. Clever boy. Use the old one for the older one's money—

EMMA

Shut up, mother. He's chosen me. Me! He wants me.

CARLIE

Yes, until you aren't the new one anymore.

EMMA

I thought I told you to shut up!

DESMOND

Everyone shut up! I've just had another epiphany! There is a choice. But it's not ours to make. So it's still hopeless!

Hutton starts to exit and puts his hand out to Emma and then realizes some thing.

HUTTON

No, The raindrops, man! We're not raindrops! We're human beings!

EMMA

What the fuck are you talking about?

HUTTON

We're not raindrops!

EMMA

Okay! Who are you talking to?

DESMOND

Where do you think you're going? We can't go anywhere?

HUTTON

There is a choice. What if we could!

EMMA

Yes! I choose you!

Emma rushes to Hutton.

HUTTON

What?

EMMA

(Under her breath)

Do you want me to kill you?

DESMOND

Will you defy your father?

EMMA

I love him, papa.

CARLIE

Well so do I! there I've said it. A woman's heart is as mysterious as the sea. Deep and beautiful...and...full of fish!

They all stare confused.

HUTTON

Yeah/I think we should just go!

EMMA

/We're in love. It's everything. Goodbye!

Emma exits dramatically.

HUTTON

What the fuck?

Hutton exits irritated.

DESMOND

How did this all go so wrong?

CARLIE

You can go ahead and shoot me now.

DESMOND

Did you say your heart is filled with fish?

CARLIE

Just shoot me!

Lights change back to normal. The performance is now over. Emma re-enters. Carlie exits.

Emma, Desmond and Hutton all resume the positions they were in before the performance. They all stare out into the audience.

EMMA

This is insane! What are you looking at?

DESMOND

Now I'm the one with the pornographic mind.

HUTTON

Blown. Do you see?

DESMOND

No, I don't.

HUTTON

There must be a choice. We have to have a choice. How can we go on living?

DESMOND

Maybe we can't. Now you see my point.

EMMA

Well, I am done with whatever this is. And for the record, this awful life that you're trying to run away from, is actually the dream life of millions of people. Think about that! You have the opportunity night after night to grace these boards and be seen! We're seen. And that is all that matters. That is all. That. Matters. Clearly the text

doesn't matter because the play we started with is not the play we're doing now! And some of us tried our best to hold on to the integrity of it, but it's clearly turned into a shit show because of people like you! But soon, someone will see me and make me a star. Because they'll know that I'm the only one trying to hold on to something here! I'm the only one who cares to uphold any integrity and fucking respectability! Because I'm the only one of you ass-clowns with any real talent!

HUTTON

/Uh-huh.

DESMOND

Okay. Settle down.

HUTTON

Jesus.

Beat.

EMMA

(In a severe whisper to both of them)

It will happen!

Emma stares at them as she exits.

DESMOND

Delusional.

HUTTON

Poor girl.

DESMOND

So sad.

HUTTON

Round and round.

DESMOND

Round and round. There's really only one thing to do to get off.

HUTTON

Wrong time to make a dick joke?

DESMOND

It's so simple.

HUTTON

Right. Live every moment to the fullest! Or highest. Right?

DESMOND

It's the only thing I can do.

HUTTON

Say it!

DESMOND

Only one choice. Thank you. You've finally made me see it. I see it clearly now. Thanks for the drugs. They were a big help. It's all. so. clear.

Desmond exits.

HUTTON

That sounds ominous. Wait! Aren't we moving to a new city soon? Maybe it'll be better there. Maybe it'll all be better? We can have fun! Raindrops? Nothing? *(Beat)* Fuck this. I'm gonna keep having fun god-dammit!

He exits.

New theater! Emma and Lain enter from the audience.

EMMA

It's exactly the same.

LAIN

Of course it is. It's always the same, blah, blah, blah.

Emma walks on stage.

EMMA

I find it such a comfort.

LAIN

Is this finally going to be the town?

EMMA

He'll be sitting right there!

LAIN

How do you feel about dropping a light on his head?

EMMA

That's a star!

LAIN

It works in cartoons.

EMMA

Same old gun I see.

LAIN

Because the poison's not working.

EMMA

What are you complaining about?

LAIN

It has to happen soon!

EMMA

I have a headache.

LAIN

No. He's not drinking the tea anymore.

EMMA

Of course not, there's poison in it.

LAIN

What about all the food he eats.

EMMA

I know, right! He should totally be getting fat. Stupid asshole.

LAIN

No, I mean we should poison his food.

EMMA

Oh. Okay. I think my point was valid too.

Hutton enters from the audience.

HUTTON

There is a Weinershnitzel across the street! I think this might be the greatest place yet!

LAIN

That's my cue.

Lain exits.

HUTTON

He doesn't have any cues. Why are the two of you always... *(He gasps)*
Are you fucking my understudy?

EMMA

Don't be disgusting.

HUTTON

What? I would. I mean forget for a minute that his gigantic ears would make perfect handle bars—

EMMA

Gross.

HUTTON

-I would be fucking the dollar store version of myself. That. Would. Rock!

Hutton flops on the couch.

EMMA

You're a pig.

HUTTON

Oh, that reminds me.

Hutton pulls bacon out of his pocket and eats it.

EMMA

Is that...is that bacon? What the hell, Hutton?

HUTTON

What? Oh, I guess I'm supposed to leave it on the floor where I found it. Pork is not something you neglect to pick up, or get on, or roll around with! You're stupid sometimes.

EMMA

I'm so sick of your negative attitude.

Desmond enters from the audience.

DESMOND

Yes! This will do nicely. It's finally time! After all the round and round it's finally time. The psychotic merry-go-round is about to come to a halt! It ends. With a bang. Fuck the whimper. A bang! Oh yeah! That's the way the world ends! That's the rub. Rub-a-dub dub! Fuck this life!

Desmond exits.

EMMA

What was that about?

HUTTON

Did you want some bacon?

EMMA

Ugh!

Carlie enters from the audience.

CARLIE

There's something called "Wienershnitzel" across the street.

HUTTON

It's kismet.

CARLIE

There's like nothing else for miles. I can't eat hot dogs. They're like just globs of fatty salt. Like my Aunt Gertrudes fingers. I bloat if I don't eat at least three ounces of kale a day. And forget about it if I have to eat gluten. I'm only intolerant to gluten socially because without trends I wouldn't have a personality. I don't think I brought enough paleo-friendly tasteless foam bars. What am I going to do? Hot dogs? Who was the genius that came up with that name?

Hutton rises and crosses to her.

HUTTON

I will slap your face if you badmouth the mighty hot dog. Or anything else that sports the same shape. Am I right?

He goes for a high five.

She doesn't.

CARLIE

Some of us have to watch what we eat.

HUTTON

I always watch what I eat. Same goes for sex. That's why I keep the lights on. I always watch. I'll watch what you eat, too.

CARLIE

You smell like bacon.

HUTTON

You want to put your nose in my mouth, don't you?

CARLIE

Would you please...just...not stand so close to me if you're going to smell like that.

Carlie crosses to Emma

HUTTON

Where'd I put that can of cream cheese?

Hutton exits.

CARLIE

And while we're on the subject, may I ask you a favor?

EMMA

I guess I can't actually stop you.

CARLIE

Do you think you could stop leaving chocolates everywhere I go?

EMMA

What? They're good for you. Ever heard of Anti-accidents. They prevent accidents. And I have a dopamine deficiency. Okay? I need them. So stop trying to eat my chocolates!

CARLIE

You know I can't eat them! I'm not hangry. I'm not.

EMMA

You have serious issues.

CARLIE

I would really appreciate it. The temptation is starting to make me impaired. I'm starting to imagine scenarios only I can get out of. I had a weird tie me up fantasy about the Easter Bunny. And it did not end well for him.

EMMA

Okay.

CARLIE

Thank you.

EMMA

No, I just meant I'm done with this convo.

Emma exits slowly watching Carlie

CarlIE breathes;

CARLIE

Okay. Okay. You can do this. You are worthy. You...are...yeah. Okay. Okay. You can do this. You are...*(She starts to cry, so she breathes)* Worthy. *(Deep breath)* Werthers. *(Breath)* Caramel. *(Short breath)* Toffee. Sticky. Oh, sticky toffee pudding. Oh god!

She puts her head down to regain composure.

CARLIE (Cont'd)

Okay. You got this. You fat stupid bitch, suck it up! Okay. You got it. I can do it. I can do it.

She crosses to the table and picks up the tea tray and goes to the entryway and waits.

CARLIE

Stop it! You're good. It's good. Good and plenty. Bit-o-honey. Honey lavender ice cream. raspberry sauce! whipped cream. Stop it! You fat fucking loser!

She is suddenly in place; Lights change and we are instantly in a performance. Carlie is insanely determined!

CARLIE

I have made sickbed /vigil tea!

Hutton and Emma are startled by her outburst.

HUTTON

Ah! Shit!

EMMA

Mother?

CARLIE

Yes. But, I've forgotten those darling little butter cookies. Someone ate all of the one's I usually leave on the table.

EMMA

Mother?

CARLIE

Shortbread. Or what do you call them, Lorna Doone's?

EMMA

Mother?

CARLIE

Yes. Daughter! I hear you! I have steeped bags! Big, bold bags! In *(Looking for the line)* ...water!

EMMA

As is the custom with tea.

CARLIE

Yeah, so drink it for your daddy!

Beat.

EMMA

God willing?

CARLIE

Mmhmm. What?!

EMMA

How is Papa?

CARLIE

Oh. Yeah, sink vomit!

HUTTON

The...what?

CARLIE

Yeah, oh yeah, he refuses to... toilet vomit... like a common KitKat.

HUTTON

A what?

(Beat.)

CARLIE

Uh...Twix bar.

EMMA

Yes, papa does hate those Bolsheviks.

CARLIE

He does. He really does. Vomiting Russian peasants really chafe his bird. I don't know. I should just stop talking. But that is not happening. So. Maybe you could say something to make me stop.

EMMA

KitKats?

HUTTON

(Clearly enjoying this)

Those greedy bastards. Always demanding a fair share. Always wanting theirs. Their motto could be "break me off a piece."

EMMA

No!

HUTTON

I mean, give me a break.

EMMA

Stop!

CARLIE

Yes, the tea is getting cold.

Beat. Everyone is lost.

EMMA

I should go and check on Papa? This illness may claim him yet.

Emma exits without real purpose.

HUTTON

Are you buying that?

CARLIE

I don't. Know what I should say? I mean. How do you not eat for so long? I'm actually asking. No? You're just going to stare at me, aren't you? I need food. It's making me crazy!

HUTTON

Hey, I feel ya. This is your mad scene. *(The joke he has just made hits him and he is amused)* Get it?

Back to normal lights instantly.

CARLIE

Oh my god, I'm so sorry. I don't know what came over me tonight. That is so not like me. I just need to add another supplement bar or something. I was reading about an indigenous tribe in Papua New Guinea, I think, that all weigh under a hundred pounds. I mean, I don't idolize starvation, but they eat a corn based, oh I don't know, mush, I guess we would call it, that I've heard does wonders for your metabolism. It's called shock dieting. You can have a calorie for every pound you weigh. Why am I doing this? Why? Why? Why? Oh dear god, why!

Carlie exits.

Hutton sits on the couch.

Desmond enters and sits at the table.

Beat.

HUTTON

I called an old woman a cunt today.

DESMOND

Well...I'm sure she had it coming.

HUTTON

She was crossing the street with one of those walkers, you know, and she kept yelling at people to clear things off the road, so she wouldn't walk into them. I don't know, it was the way she said it, *(In a raspy old woman voice)* You there, yes you! Pick that up! How am I supposed to cross the street if you people won't help me! Then she looks right at me and sort of points to a beer bottle that's nowhere near her, and she says, do you think you could move that? And so I said, do you think you could stop being a cunt?

Beat.

DESMOND
She sounds terrible.

HUTTON
She was.

Beat

HUTTON
I'm starting to think I might not be the best person.

DESMOND
Don't be silly.

HUTTON
I mean, this whole we can do what we want because there's no meaning anyway kind of living, is starting to cause me to make bad decisions. I don't know if I believe that I don't have a say. I mean, we're stuck in this awful show, but why are we staying?

DESMOND
What else is there?

HUTTON
Sometimes I wonder.

DESMOND
Naturally.

HUTTON
I mean, there could be—

DESMOND
Not really.

HUTTON
But what if—

DESMOND
How could there be?

HUTTON
Shouldn't we look?

DESMOND
We can't.

HUTTON
So what do we do?

Beat.

HUTTON

/I'm going to get high.

DESMOND

/I'm going to shoot myself.

HUTTON

So, we just keep going round and round.

Carlie enters. She is merely crossing the stage Desmond and Hutton move to different spots on the stage.

CARLIE

I can do this. I can do this.

Carlie exits.

It's a new day.

DESMOND

Huh.

HUTTON

She sounds like a sad, little train.

DESMOND

A sad, hungry little train.

Desmond exits.

Emma enters.

EMMA

What are you doing out here?

HUTTON

Are you talking to me?

EMMA

Isn't there a bag of pork rinds somewhere you should be climbing into?

HUTTON

No. Why? You got some? Don't tease me with fried fat.

Carlie enters and crosses the stage again. This time Hutton and Emma switch places on stage.

CARLIE

I'm okay.
I'm okay. I'm okay. I'm okay.

Carlie exits.

It's a new day.

HUTTON

Huh.

EMMA

Go away. I need to warm up and I don't want you here.

HUTTON

What do you need to warm up for?

EMMA

I wish to be my best.

HUTTON

You think that matters?

EMMA

Yes, we should all strive to be our best.

HUTTON

No, I meant do you think warming up will make you any better?

EMMA

Would you please go away!

HUTTON

Yes, but not because you asked. Only because I don't want to be here.

Hutton exits; Lain is in the audience.

LAIN

All clear?

EMMA

Give them to me!

Lain hands her a box of donuts.

LAIN

I sprinkled it over all of them. He has to eat all of them. I didn't want to put too much on any of them, because I figured it would probably taste funny. You know, because it's poison and all.

EMMA

Got it.

LAIN

Are you sure he'll eat all of them?

EMMA

Hutton? A box of donuts, are you kidding? He once ate a dozen prop croissants.

LAIN

I know but—

EMMA

They were made of sponge.

LAIN

Oh.

*Carlie enters to walk through again.
Lain rushes out of the theater.*

CARLIE

I don't want to die. I don't want to die. I don't want to die.

EMMA

What are you doing?

Carlie suddenly stops and sees Emma.

CARLIE

What? Who? I am not! Whatever. Are those...Are those donuts?

EMMA

Yes, I was feeling generous. Oh, that's right, you can't eat them. Pity. Oh well, I'll just put them in Hutton's dressing room.

Emma goes to exit.

CARLIE

Stop!

Emma stops and turns to Carlie.

CARLIE

Now let's not do anything foolish. Okay. No sudden movements.

Carlie slowly crosses to Emma.

EMMA

What? You look insane.

CARLIE

All right, here's how this is going to go down. You are going to set that box on the table, and then you're gonna walk away. And we're never gonna speak of this again.

EMMA

Carlie, I don't have time for this.

Emma goes to exit. Carlie kind of scream-growls. Emma stops.

CARLIE

Put. The Box. Down!

Emma turns to her.

EMMA

Excuse me?

CARLIE

I'm not angry. I'm okay. It's going to be okay. I can do this. I want to keep going. I don't want to throw myself into whatever body of water that is across from the parking lot.

EMMA

That's a puddle.

CARLIE

Just give me a smell. Just one smell. Just open the box and let me smell them.

EMMA

No.

CARLIE

Let me smell your box!

EMMA

Eew! Rephrase!

Carlie grabs the box from Emma.

CARLIE

Ha!

EMMA

Hey! Give that back. You can't have those!

CARLIE

Stop! Don't come any closer, or I'll eat every last one of them! Stand back!

EMMA

Carlie, I think you've gone to a bad place.

CARLIE

Shh! Okay. Don't talk. You'll ruin it.

Carlie slowly and deliberately places the box on the table, then she sits at a chair and slowly, provocatively opens it. She looks at the donuts.

CARLIE (Cont'd)

Oh baby. Oh yeah, that's the stuff.

Carlie desperately and very disturbingly leans in and..takes a long lingering inhale.

CARLIE

Oh fuck me that is good. Oh yeah! That's the spot!

Emma crosses to take the donuts. Carlie grabs the box and hugs it.

CARLIE (Cont'd)

Back off, shit stack! These are coming with me. I need them for a little longer. Oh yes, I have special plans for you my sweet, doughy friends. Stay back!

EMMA

Carlie, you can't eat them.

CARLIE

It's not my fault. I'm in an altered state. I can't be held responsible for my actions. I have a diet pill from a pharmacist in Tijuana that says "caution, may cause drowsiness, hair loss, and psychosexual food related psychosis." Says it right on the bottle.

Carlie stands and hugging the box starts to exit.

EMMA

Carlie, put the donuts down.

CARLIE

I can't be held responsible for my actions. Easy! Stay where you are. Good. That's good. Ha-Ha-Ha!

Carlie exits running.

EMMA

Shit!

Lain is back in the audience.

LAIN

What the fuck?

EMMA

She's kidnapped the goddamned donuts. She's finally lost her mind.

LAIN

Well, get them back.

EMMA

You didn't see the look in her eyes! She's snapped! What happens if she eats one or two of them?

LAIN

I don't know, she'll probably get sick.

EMMA

How sick?

LAIN

I don't know. Go get them back.

EMMA

I tried!

LAIN

Well shit!

EMMA

Don't yell at me!

LAIN

Well shit!

Hutton enters

HUTTON

Fuck the what, yo!

EMMA

What?

HUTTON

Why are we yelling?!

Lain exits. Hutton and Emma cross into place. Performance lights.

EMMA

Are you mad? Are you insane? Are you crazed?

HUTTON

I am none of those things.

EMMA

I am uncertain. You are impetuous. Your vie la vie is viva...las...Vegas?
Ahh!

He kisses her passionately.

EMMA (Cont'd)

Are you mad? Are you insane? Are you crazed? Papa is in the next room.

HUTTON

I long for you. There is a deep and languid fire in the bushels of
time bursting wide open the deep font of my affections.

EMMA

But papa's health is waning.

HUTTON

It is not his imperil that pulls you hither. What of our destiny?

EMMA

It's no use! I am trapped!

*Carlie enters, she is clearly ill;
Hutton and Emma cross to opposite sides.*

CARLIE

I have made...*(She stops herself from throwing up)* Sickbed *(She swallows repeatedly and sighs.)* Vigil *(She gags audibly)* Tea.

HUTTON

What the...

EMMA

Mother?

CARLIE

Yeah, here take it. *(She hands the tray to Emma and wipes sweat from her brow)*

HUTTON

Are you okay?

CARLIE

Oh yes. I've steeped the bags in...shit *(She gags again and slumps over forward)*

HUTTON

I may pass on the tea.

(Beat.)

EMMA

But we're so close to the end...of the evening. I mean, I should go check on Papa! Poor papa!

CARLIE

Wait! Wait! I have to tell you a story about...*(She doubles over in pain again and sits)* Oh god.

EMMA

I'll go check on him.

Emma exits.

HUTTON

How ya doing?

CARLIE

Do me a favor, don't talk for a minute.

Carlie stays bent over breathing, trying to stop herself from throwing up. This is not silent.

HUTTON

That's pretty.

Emma screams.

HUTTON *(Cont'd)*

What on Earth!

CARLIE

It's a little better.

HUTTON

All good.

Emma screams again.

CARLIE

You still shouldn't talk.

HUTTON

(As fast as humanly possible)

We've got about three seconds to reveal that we're in love and counting the minutes for the old man to kick it so that we can have his money and live happily ever after.

CARLIE

We're counting the minutes.

HUTTON

We're so in love!

CARLIE

Yeah, I think we're up to speed!

Emma enters.

EMMA

Papa is gone!

CARLIE

Oh/ thank god!

HUTTON

/Right on the money!

CARLIE

What?

EMMA

No. I mean. What?

CARLIE

I rejoiced at the news because of you know...I'm sorry where is he?

EMMA

I said he's gone!

CARLIE

Right?

HUTTON

Huzzah!

CARLIE

Right?

EMMA

You're free!

CARLIE

Where is he?

EMMA

He's gone!

HUTTON

Huzzah!

Right. Oh god! Who? **CARLIE**

What? **EMMA**

He! **HUTTON**

That's helpful! **EMMA**

Oh, right. I'm free! **CARLIE**

Hutton laughs. Then stops. Silence.

Emma exits; Lights back to normal.

Oh my god, it's karma. That's what this is. I ate six donuts. Six! **CARLIE**

Oh my god. **HUTTON**

I know, isn't that disgusting. **CARLIE**

No, I mean you had donuts and you didn't tell me? **HUTTON**

Emma enters.

What the fuck is wrong with you! **EMMA**

I'm sorry. I don't know what came over me. I think it was from the donuts you gave me. **CARLIE**

Gave you? Are you serious? What is...? You have sprinkles in your hair! **EMMA**

I may have rolled around with one or two of them. **CARLIE**

Carlie pulls a sprinkle out of her hair and eats it.

EMMA

Don't eat the...oh god!

HUTTON

Seriously, where are these donuts?

CARLIE

But then I threw them out.

EMMA

You what?

CARLIE

I stared into the sugary face of temptation, and I failed. I'm a failure. A deep-fried, maple glazed failure.

HUTTON

They were maple glazed? Why would you waste that! Skinny bitches are the worst!

Hutton exits.

EMMA

You best keep your eyes open. That's all I'm saying.

CARLIE

I generally do. Donuts. Those tempting little "o's" Did you know that my name is just one "o" away from being a calorie?

Emma literally can't respond.

Desmond enters

DESMOND

What on earth is the matter?

CARLIE

I ate donuts.

DESMOND

You were green from a donut?

CARLIE

I've been so healthy for so long, I think my body rejected it.

EMMA

That's what you get. Next time, stay away from my donuts!

DESMOND

While we're on the subject. The gun is loaded, so just be careful with that.

EMMA

As a grown adult, I shouldn't have to tell you to respect other people's things.

CARLIE

I already said I was sorry.

DESMOND

Hello? Bullets? Anyone? Don't mess with the gun?

EMMA

Yeah, yeah, we know.

CARLIE

You know, while we're on the subject of respecting others. Maybe you could LEARN YOUR LINES. How about that?

EMMA

I beg your pardon? Are you making fun of my disability again? My eyes are so bad I had to wear corrective lenses, and because my eyes used to bulge out like a frog, the lenses were attached to a special helmet. I had to wear a helmet until I was twelve. So thanks for making fun of me and my handicap! Do you have any respect for other people?

DESMOND

So, as long as we all know that the gun is now loaded. Good.

Desmond exits.

CARLIE

What do your eyes have to do with memorizing a script?

EMMA

How am I supposed to memorize it? Rub it on my face and hope it sticks?

CARLIE

I feel like you're not respecting what I'm saying. And seeing as how I'm hungry enough to eat your face clean off your skull—

EMMA

Hey, it's not my fault you're fat.

Pause.

CARLIE

Did you just...did you just...am I to understand that you just—

EMMA

That's right, I said you're fat. And so you are. Fat, fat, fat!

Pause. Carlie closes in on her.

Oh, it's on. CARLIE

Yeah, it is. Fatty. EMMA

You don't want to fuck with someone as hungry as I am. CARLIE

Don't you mean as fat? EMMA

I'm going to destroy you. CARLIE

What? You gonna sit on me? EMMA

Destroy. CARLIE

Do your worst. EMMA

My worst is exactly what I'll do. CARLIE

I can't wait. EMMA

Well, you'll have to, because I have to take a nap. The sugar crash from six donuts is quite harsh. CARLIE

I'd sleep with one eye open if I were you. EMMA

Seriously, don't mess with my sleep. I get really dark under my eyes. CARLIE

Yeah, I know, I thought you had tea bags there when I met you. EMMA

You will pay! CARLIE

Cash or credit?! EMMA

Beat. Carlie can't think of a comeback.

Learn your lines.

CARLIE

*Carlie and Emma exit opposite sides.
A moment later re-enter opposite sides of
their exit. Hutton enters. Performance
lights.*

How is papa?

EMMA

He's vomiting in the sink again.

CARLIE

The sink?!

HUTTON

He refuses to vomit in the toilet like a common Bolshevik. It's one of his more endearing eccentricities. I believe—

CARLIE

I should check on him. This sickness may claim him yet. Poor papa!

EMMA

*Emma exits. Carlie tries not to let it get
to her, but she is clearly frustrated. She
forces a smile.*

*Then Emma re-enters and the scene
happens again.*

How is papa?

EMMA

He's vomiting in the sink again.

CARLIE

The sink?!

HUTTON

He refuses to vomit in the toilet like a common Bolshevik. It's one of his more endearing eccentricities. I believe it's his stubbornness that—

CARLIE

I should check on him. This sickness may claim him yet. Poor papa!

EMMA

Emma exits. Carlie is more frustrated.

*Then Emma re-enters and the scene
happens again.*

EMMA

How is papa?

CARLIE

(Clearly upset)

He's vomiting in the sink again!

HUTTON

The sink?!

CARLIE

He refuses to vomit in the toilet like a common Bolshevik. It's one of his more endearing eccentricities. You know I believe it's his stubbornness that I fell in love with first!! *(Beat; Carlie looks to Emma who is distracted and so she confidently begins)* It reminds me of a story-

EMMA

I should check on him. This sickness may claim him yet. Poor papa!

Emma exits.

CARLIE

Son of a bitch!

Carlie exits; Lights back to normal.

HUTTON

We need to go to the Wienerschnitzel? If life is going to harsh my mellow to this degree, we fucking need hot dogs!

DESMOND

We can't.

HUTTON

We can. It's right across the street. And this show is actually worse! It's getting more unbearable. I thought diving into all my pleasures would make it better. I was deceived. Fucking raindrops! Why do they have to fall at all? Why can't they just stay in the clouds? Where it's safe and fluffy.

DESMOND

We have to make it to the ocean, don't we?

HUTTON

I can't swim, so...I'm just going to keep getting high.

DESMOND

You know all that shit you smoke, and huff, and inhale, and sniff, and frost, and dip in various sauces...

HUTTON

And have sex with.

DESMOND

It's all just a distraction. Someday, it'll be you with the gun in your mouth.

HUTTON

That's a little dark, isn't it?

DESMOND

You were always my favorite.

Desmond exits.

HUTTON

Hey, but...we could totally smoke some...weed. Oh. Shit. Has he been talking about actually killing himself?

*Hutton sits and ponders
Lain enters the audience.*

LAIN

He's right, you know.

HUTTON

What? Who goes there? Oh, look at that it's just my shadow. Get me my needle and thread, so I can get him back in place!

LAIN

I mean about the gun in your mouth?

HUTTON

Why? You got a gun you want to put in my mouth?

LAIN

God. No!

*Beat.
Lain has an idea.*

LAIN (Cont'd)

I mean, unless...

A wonderful idea.

LAIN

Would you...you know?

Lain has a terrible, wonderful idea.

LAIN

Would you...With me?

Hutton stares at him and contemplates this.

HUTTON

Pass.

LAIN

What? Why?

HUTTON

Not interested. You're not really my type.

LAIN

You once had sex with a hand puppet.

HUTTON

Hey, you leave Sock Efron out of this! That was a misunderstanding about proper hand placement! Besides, I appreciate a well-defined jawline. What have you got?

LAIN

I'm human.

HUTTON

Barely. Honey, look at you. Look at me and then look at you.

LAIN

Whatever, I wouldn't do it anyway.

HUTTON

Oh, you think so?

LAIN

Yeah, I know so.

HUTTON

What are you twelve?

LAIN

You started it.

HUTTON

Why don't you finish it?

Pause as they stare at each other

LAIN

What do I get out of it?

HUTTON

Oh, you'll get plenty.

LAIN

Please! I just ate.

HUTTON

How about a matinee. Maybe two?

LAIN

You'd let me go on?

HUTTON

I get off, you get on. Tit for tat. Quid pro boner.

LAIN

Gross.

HUTTON

Or you can go back into your cupboard and wait for Little Bear to bring you to life.

LAIN

Two matinees, and one Friday night.

Beat.

HUTTON

Deal.

LAIN

Okay. And it's Omri.

HUTTON

That's your name? Oh, now I just feel bad.

LAIN

No. Omri brings them to life, not Little Bear. And how do you not know my name!?

HUTTON

What you're saying to me right now is very boring. Also, I don't want to see your face. So...make like a Japanese roadside vendor and bonsai.

LAIN

Uh-huh.

HUTTON

I have desperate measures to accomplish! Yes, fucking you is included in that list. But...lack of goods makes options impossible. Desperate. Oh yeah, this is not going to go well.

*Lain, not sure if he's won, exits.
Hutton pops a handful of pills.*

*Hutton walks over a door as Emma enters;
Performance lights.*

Hutton is completely stoned.

HUTTON

Whunk.

EMMA

Lower your voice. Are you mad? Are you insane? Are you crazed?

HUTTON

Those are all the same thing!

EMMA

Well, what am I to think?

He goes to kiss her, she pulls away.

EMMA (Cont'd)

Don't. Not while papa is in the next room.

HUTTON

But I got...bushels, you know. I want your bushel. Eew. Do you have like a big bushel? I mean what are we talking here?

EMMA

We must be strong. Surely he will recover from this awful sickness and then we can fly from this place.

HUTTON

I wish I could fly. I want to be Peter Pan when I grow up.

He grabs her by the shoulders.

EMMA

Ouch!

HUTTON

Don't you see! Can't you see!

EMMA

See what? Let go of me!

HUTTON

We can't fly, dummy. The world is round. How can you fly?

EMMA

I'm blind to such truths! You know I can only be spoken to in small lies. It's like a handicap.

HUTTON

No, that's a line from an earlier scene you retard! My desires? That's the font of no return.

EMMA

No, you mustn't speak ill of father.

HUTTON

Wow. You are making no sense!

Carlie enters with a tray of tea.

CARLIE

I've made tea.

HUTTON

Woo, tea! Let's get all up on that! Tea is the bomb!

They all pause and stare at one another

EMMA

Mother.

CARLIE

Daughter.

EMMA

Mother?

HUTTON

You're both right.

Carlie puts the tea on the table

EMMA

How is papa?

CARLIE

He's vomiting in the sink again.

HUTTON

Sick! Your pops is dope, yo! That is not the line.

CARLIE

He refuses to vomit in the toilet like a common Bolshevik. It's one of his more endearing eccentricities.

EMMA

I should check on him. This sickness may claim him yet. Poor papa!

Emma exits.

CARLIE

Little bitch. I mean, tea?

Carlie pours tea.

HUTTON

No.

CARLIE

No? What?

HUTTON

What?

Carlie puts the tea down and kisses him.

CARLIE

He's nearly dead. Now.

HUTTON

He actually is. Shit, he really is. Oh my god! I hadn't seen it. I was too busy trying to eat and smoke and sniff and ooze. I don't know if I meant that last one. He's going to kill himself!

CARLIE

It's almost too perfect. He dies, I inherit.

HUTTON

But it's all so clear. The raindrops. I get it. I get it. I have to save him!

CARLIE

Oh yes, we can! *(She slaps him in the face)*

HUTTON

What the fuck?

CARLIE

His death funds our happy lives, remember. Poets would weep at the fucking irony! Any of that terrible shit ringing a bell? Are we back on the same page, fuckwad!?

Carlie sits and sips her tea.

CARLIE (Cont'd)

I'm not angry.

Emma is heard screaming.

Did you hear that? CARLIE

Hutton is distracted.

What? HUTTON

CARLIE
(Very angry)
The scream! Did you hear the scream?!

HUTTON
Sure.

CARLIE
(Very sweet)
Oh, don't pay any attention to that. She inherited her father's flair for melodrama.

HUTTON
Yeah, okay.

CARLIE
(Angry again)
Sit down, for god's sake!

Emma is heard screaming again.

CARLIE (Cont'd)
Cream or sugar?

HUTTON
I don't feel safe.

CARLIE
The tea is going to get cold.

Hutton picks up his tea and stares at it.

HUTTON
Should I be worried?

CARLIE
Drink it.

HUTTON
I don't want it.

CARLIE
Drink it!

HUTTON

I don't like tea! Why are you so mean to me?

CARLIE

Drink the fucking tea, or I'll break your kneecaps.

Beat; Hutton puts the cup down.

HUTTON

You need to chill.

Emma rushes in.

EMMA

He's gone!

CARLIE

/We're rich!

HUTTON

/We're rich!

CARLIE

Really? Now you're going to say the right thing? I mean Huzzah!

Beat.

EMMA

No. He's not in his room is what I meant.

(Beat.)

CARLIE

Right. Of course that's what you meant why would you mean something else?

HUTTON

How can he be gone? What do you mean?

EMMA

I mean he's gone. /What did you mean you're rich?

HUTTON

/Yes, where do you suppose he could be?

Beat.

CARLIE

I don't know which...of those...two things to answer.

HUTTON

I said. Where. Do. You. Suppose. He. Could. Be!?

CARLIE

I DON'T KNOW!

Desmond enters.

DESMOND

I'm here?

EMMA

Papa!

*Emma rushes to him and hugs him;
Emma and Desmond exit. Lights back to normal.*

Carlie pulls beef jerky out of her pocket and starts eating.

CARLIE

Fucking ridiculous!

HUTTON

What are you eating?

CARLIE

Beef jerky. Want some?

HUTTON

I'm good, I have some in my back pocket. Listen, I'm sorry about tonight. I don't think I've ever been that high before. I don't remember the last ten minutes of the show.

CARLIE

Well, fuck 'em. It was a memorable curtain call, though. I have to say it was the first time I saw someone take a piss on stage in lieu of a bow.

HUTTON

I thought I was in the bathroom. How's the jerky?

CARLIE

I've never had beef jerky. It's like meat flavored shoe leather. Which is strangely not a dealbreaker. I've decided to do this thing where I eat something new every day. And I have three rules, it has to be canned, homogenized, or have been a cow at one point.

HUTTON

Good for you.

CARLIE

I mean, I'm not gonna wear a label I didn't even put on myself. You know what I mean?

HUTTON

You're preaching to the choir.

CARLIE

I will not become what someone else wants me to be! Not anymore! And if that means eating beef jerky and jerking beef, that's a saying right? Then by god I'm gonna do it!

HUTTON

Hey, like I always say, when life get's on ya, just get off.

CARLIE

Join me?

Carlie offers Hutton some Beef Jerky. He just stares at it.

CARLIE

What?

HUTTON

I don't think I want any.

Beat.

HUTTON

Isn't that strange?

CARLIE

More for me.

Carlie and Hutton get up and switch places, this is to indicate that it's a different night.

CARLIE

Have you seen Desmond tonight? He's acting really strange.

HUTTON

I know. I'm worried about him. He read an article awhile back and he got really depressed.

CARLIE

Well he's not depressed now. He's smiling and singing *Raindrops keep fallin' on my head* over and over like some kind of crazy person.

HUTTON

I think he's going to kill himself.

CARLIE

Oh okay. Let's just jump that shark. Why would he want to kill himself? We're all so fucking happy here.

Emma enters.

EMMA

What are you losers doing?

HUTTON

Up to now, fondling recalling the time I had pubic lice.

EMMA

Hutton, isn't there an illegal substance somewhere you should be inhaling?

HUTTON

For the last time, marshmallow fluff is not illegal. And what you saw was very personal, and I don't want to talk about it.

EMMA

You're going to die with your diet, you know that right?

HUTTON

Actually I thought I'd go for slow death by engaging in small talk with a proletarian. Nice weather, huh? What's new with you?

EMMA

I stopped listening halfway through whatever train wreck of a sentence that was.

CARLIE

Do you think Desmond is really going to kill himself?

HUTTON

I had an epiphany on stage tonight.

CARLIE

Oh. That reminds me.

Carlie exits.

HUTTON

She's going through some personal stuff.

EMMA

Why aren't you eating anything?

HUTTON

I'm going through some personal stuff. I think I may have to stop the drugs and alcohol too.

Carlie enters with a bottle.

CARLIE

I've got Absinthe!

HUTTON

I didn't mean today. Clearly.

EMMA

I can't drink that.

HUTTON

So don't. Anyway, my epiphany.

CARLIE

I didn't bring glasses.

Carlie drinks from the bottle.

EMMA

I can't drink it from the bottle.

CARLIE

So don't.

HUTTON

Hello! My epiphany!

EMMA

What?

HUTTON

I've been seeking pleasure to alleviate the emptiness that encompasses the lonely hours of my life because we end up where we end up. We don't have a choice. But do we? I mean, do we?

Beat.

EMMA

Shut up and drink.

They pass the bottle back and forth. Emma takes the bottle, hesitates and then drinks a lot. Lain enters the audience and watches. Desmond enters and drinks. They all finish the bottle and then they all sit in silence for a moment. Time has passed and they are all drunk.

DESMOND

Oh, I used to be like you. I used to come up with schemes, plans, illegal black market dealings. Russian espionage. A UPS worker and a homemade pipe bomb I fashioned out of a stale rigatoni noodle. No. Nothing works. Because the thing we're escaping from is inescapable. What we turn into. It's not so pleasant. And the irony is that we don't really want to escape. We just want change.

CARLIE

I'm hungry.

DESMOND

You're eating.

CARLIE

I know it's ironic.

EMMA

I don't understand why you're all so negative.

They all burst out in laughter.

EMMA (Cont'd)

I mean it. Hey, I mean it. Don't you know that any day now someone very important is going to see this show? We could all be famous soon.

CARLIE

Oh my god. You don't really believe that, do you?

EMMA

Only with every fiber of my being. From the bottom of my soul. Totally and completely.

HUTTON

/Yikes.

CARLIE

/Wow. That's fucking grim.

EMMA

Hey. I don't like this new you. Okay, it's more off-putting than you realize.

DESMOND

Isn't the house opening soon?

EMMA

I can't drunk! I mean I'm going on! I mean. Shit! I'm talking crazy! What if he's here tonight?

CARLIE

What? It's two in the morning! chill your twat, slutback. *(Beat.)*
That's not a thing, is it?

DESMOND

It is not.

CARLIE

Did you know that my name is an anagram for eclair. Makes you think,
doesn't it?

EMMA

About what?

Hutton notices Lain.

HUTTON

Hey. Hey, what's my shadow doing up here. Somebody moved the rock.

LAIN

I heard you all talking.

EMMA

And?

CARLIE

Yeah, you don't belong here.

HUTTON

Well that's a little harsh. Besides, he's not so bad.

EMMA

What? Why would you say that? *(She gasps)* Oh my god.

HUTTON

What?

EMMA

Have you...? Have you...?

HUTTON

What? Plundered his depths!

LAIN

Dude!

HUTTON

Yeah, you can't call me that.

EMMA

Plundered his depths?

HUTTON

What? It's a cute euphemism.

LAIN

I would like to go on record and say that my depths have never been plundered.

EMMA

Did you fuck him?

HUTTON

Oh come on, how about a little class?

EMMA

Class? You once referred to my vagina as a bear trap!

HUTTON

That was funny. And why do you care if we did plunder.

DESMOND

Because they're lovers.

Desmond points to Emma and Lain.

Beat.

CARLIE

Eew! Is that true?

LAIN

Why would you say eew?

CARLIE

Sorry. I was just picturing it.

HUTTON & DESMOND

Eew!

LAIN

Okay, that's enough.

EMMA

We are not lovers.

DESMOND

Of course you are. You're not exactly quiet about it.

EMMA

You misunderstood what you were hearing.

DESMOND

Give it to me harder, you stupid, little faggot.

HUTTON

Wow. That may have been coming from my room.

LAIN

No, that's what she calls me. What do you think that does to my ego?

EMMA

Oh grow up! You were the one that wanted to poison Hutton.

CARLIE

What?

LAIN

Are you crazy?

HUTTON

Poison?

EMMA

He poisoned your tea on stage.

LAIN

That's a lie.

HUTTON

That's why it looked that way.

LAIN

She's the one that put the poison in the tea. It was her!

EMMA

Oh real nice, Judas!

LAIN

Me? You were the one that said I tried to poison him!

EMMA

We are so over!

DESMOND

Is the tea still poisoned?

EMMA

And it was you that poisoned the donuts.

CARLIE

The donuts were poisoned?

HUTTON

What the fuck is wrong with the two of you?

CARLIE

You ruined a donut? Isn't that a crime in some parts of this country?

HUTTON

Why would you want to poison me?

EMMA

Are you that stupid? You can't figure it out?

HUTTON

Well those are two separate questions, so--

CARLIE

What else is poisoned? Did you poison the absinthe?

EMMA

No, you opened it in front of me.

CARLIE

I don't know the extent of your sorcery! I don't know how good you are at this.

DESMOND

Not very. Hutton eats everything and they weren't able to poison him. I'd say that's like a new level of incompetence.

LAIN

Yeah, I get it. I'm not good at anything.

HUTTON

I don't know, I'd rank you pretty high on the whiny little bitch scale.

LAIN

It must be hard to just have everything!

HUTTON

What the fuck do I have?

LAIN

I hate you. You don't even know how lucky you are. All of you. Night after night, you get to get up there and do something. You get to be something. I have to sit backstage and watch! I have to pretend I'm doing something. And you, you greedy fucks, it's not enough for you, is it?

EMMA

Could you stop being so dramatic.

CARLIE

Seriously, how the fuck would you know how hard it is to be us. Crawl back into your hole and die!

Beat

CARLIE

Sorry, was that too far? I was just trying to read the room, you know.

LAIN

Nevermind.

Lain goes to exit.

DESMOND

Wait a minute.

LAIN

What?

DESMOND

You...you're jealous? Of us?

LAIN

I'm sure that'll give you a good laugh for months. I'm glad my pain is so funny.

Lain exits.

Beat

HUTTON

It never occurred to me that my desperation could be someone else's dream. That's the most depressing thought I've ever had. Why would anyone want to end up like this?

Beat.

CARLIE

So...? We should probably get ready for the show tonight.

HUTTON

(To Emma)

You tried to poison me?

EMMA

Is it really that surprising?

HUTTON

You know what, that is a very good point. Look at all of us.

CARLIE

What have we turned into?

Beat

They all stare at one another.

DESMOND

Exactly what we're supposed to be. *(Singing)* Raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens...

Desmond exits.

HUTTON

It's going to be tonight.

CARLIE

What is?

HUTTON

It's all gonna go down tonight.

EMMA

Eew. Is that like a gay sex thing?

HUTTON

Stop talking. I mean it is. But that's not what I'm talking about. I have to come up with a plan!

Beat

EMMA

Hey. You know what would be a real hoot?

HUTTON

Using outdated expressions?

CARLIE

Talking until people want to strangle us?

HUTTON

True dat.

CARLIE

Word.

EMMA

You know what, forget it! I was going to say, we should go out there tonight and do the best show that we've ever done. You know, as a sort of reminder to all of us why we fell in love with this life in the first place. I just thought that would be nice.

Beat

CARLIE

/You tried to poison him.

HUTTON
/Fuck off.

EMMA
I hate you both.

CARLIE
Besides this is pretty much the worst show of all time.

EMMA
Whatever! Quit.

CARLIE
What?

EMMA
If you're so unhappy, quit!

CARLIE
Yeah, and then no one will ever hire me again!

EMMA
I doubt that would be the reason why! You're just afraid to walk away.
This is your whole life. You wouldn't be anything without it.

HUTTON
She's right.

CARLIE
Hey!

HUTTON
We land where we land because we're afraid to land somewhere else.

EMMA
I don't know what that means, but if you're agreeing with me, I'm
willing to go along with it.

HUTTON
That's it! It's so simple!

CARLIE
I don't know what anybody is talking about anymore!

HUTTON
Cue the final scene!

*They quickly get into performance positions
as lights change to performance lights.*

HUTTON
Where is he?

(Carlie and Desmond enter.)

DESMOND
He's right here.

CARLIE
Thank the maker!

DESMOND
Please! Spare me your feigned enthusiasm, I heard everything.

CARLIE
What a preposterous thing to say. I hadn't nearly said everything yet!

EMMA
(To Hutton)
Are you and my mother...?

DESMOND
That's exactly right. He and your mother...?

Beat; Then Emma screams.

CARLIE
Okay, so that's new.

EMMA
I will kill the both of you!

DESMOND
Way ahead of you!

Desmond takes the gun down.

CARLIE
Oh for god's sake! You're not going to shoot us!

EMMA
Shoot them, papa. Shoot them both.

HUTTON
Wait! Wait! I have an idea!

EMMA
Shoot his privates off, papa!

CARLIE
Yes, give him one in the chin, darling.

EMMA

What does that even mean?

CARLIE

Oh shut up! "Shoot his privates off?" Who wrote that line? I've never liked you.

EMMA

I'm no darling! Tell him, papa!

CARLIE

Nobody's even listening to you.

DESMOND

I don't know where we are?

EMMA

Oh, so what's new!

CARLIE

Really? You have no room to talk, missy! You and your stupid screaming!

EMMA

Shoot him, papa! Shoot them both!

DESMOND

I wish I could.

HUTTON

Wait!

HUTTON (Cont'd)

What are we doing to each other? We're sick. We're all sick.

Hutton should cross down and Take Emma's hand, but he doesn't.

EMMA

(To Anyone)

What are you going on about?

CARLIE

Can't we just get through this?

HUTTON

No. I don't think we can.

DESMOND

What the hell is happening! What about them?

Desmond motions to the audience

HUTTON

It doesn't matter. Let them see it all!

DESMOND

I don't know what that means!

EMMA

He's probably getting ready to flash them! He's trying to ruin the show! Do you see what he's doing. Saboteur! My big break. I'm a star!

CARLIE

What?

EMMA

I don't know anymore. I'm starting to think that this might have been a big mistake.

DESMOND

You have to stop this. There's only way out.

EMMA

No! We have to keep going! Darling?

Desmond looks at the gun in his hand.

HUTTON

No. There's another way. We can leave.

EMMA

Oh, like she'd leave with you after she finds out that you and I are the ones who are really in love.

HUTTON

No one's talking to you.

DESMOND

But this is the best way. It'll finally be over. The disappointments, the empty future. The loneliness.

HUTTON

But that's the problem. You haven't thought it through. You can end this, sure, but then you can't start something else.

EMMA

Are you seriously going to try and run away with my father! /I knew you were sick but I guess I just hoped that our love meant more to you than that! Oh, how I hate you!

CARLIE

/(To someone in the audience) Sorry about this. We've been doing this show for a really long time. These aren't the playwrights words. We lost those a long time ago.

Beat.

CARLIE

I like your shoes.

HUTTON

We've been doing this for so long, we didn't see. There's another way. We can leave.

DESMOND

And go where?

HUTTON

Where we're supposed to go. This isn't where we land! This isn't it. We do get a say.

Hutton walks off the stage.

EMMA

Yes, I will run away with you!

Emma wants to go to Hutton, but doesn't.

DESMOND

We can't just throw everything away. We don't even know if there's anything for us on the other side of those doors.

HUTTON

Maybe there's not. We might never know for sure.

After a pause, Emma tries to get back on track

EMMA

Oh my god, you seduced my father! Holy, sweet Fuck steaks!

CARLIE

She's so professional.

EMMA

My mother and my father! Not even the Greeks stooped so low!

CARLIE

Okay. Give it a fucking rest!

HUTTON

Will the two of you shut up!

DESMOND

What are you doing?

HUTTON

Put the gun down. And walk out with me.

CARLIE

Wait, what?

EMMA

Mother!

Beat; They all stare at Emma.

EMMA (Cont'd)

I don't know what's happening.

DESMOND

I have to do this.

Desmond points the gun at himself.

HUTTON

No, you don't! We've been so caught up in the world we live in, we forgot there's anything else outside of here. But we can go. We can find it. And even if it's worse than this. It's not this! It can't end here!

CARLIE

Find it? Like there's anything to find. what if it's too late?

EMMA

But you said you loved me!

CARLIE

Can somebody shut her up!

DESMOND

I can't go.

HUTTON

You can.

EMMA

I can't believe you're ruining my show!

DESMOND

Where will we go?

EMMA

How could you? My own...father?

HUTTON

Anywhere. We can be free.

CARLIE

(Mostly to herself)

We can be free.

Hutton extends his hand.

HUTTON

Come on.

CARLIE

We can be free! He's right. Oh my god. We have to get the fuck out of here!

Beat

DESMOND

What?

CARLIE

You don't want to die. You just don't want to live. Let me continue. You don't want to live like this! And I don't want to diet! I want to eat. I want food. I want cake and meat and beer! I want shit deep fried and served on sticks with sauces that have ingredients in them that are banned in most civilized countries. I don't want to be thin and healthy! I want to have high cholesterol, and wear stretch pants and have to rent one of those motorized carts because I can't stay mobile through an entire grocery store like a fucking American! I don't want to live like this! And who the fuck would want to live like this? Nothing is real, everything is...something else. And nothing changes! We're not ourselves. Desmond, think about it. Starting over. Brand new. Clean slate. Isn't it at least worth a try? We don't have to be the we's that we thought we were supposed to be. We can be the we's that we's supposed to be.

HUTTON

Yeah, listen to her, she definitely knows what she's talking about.

Beat; Desmond puts the gun down.

CARLIE

This isn't me. This is only the me that I thought I was supposed to be instead of the me that I am! it's so simple.

EMMA

That's my line!

HUTTON
/Shut up!

DESMOND
/Shut up!

CARLIE
/Moron!

Desmond and Carlie walk to Hutton.

DESMOND
But...I've lost so much time.

CARLIE
You haven't. We haven't. We've just misplaced it.

HUTTON
So? Let's go find it. Come on!

DESMOND
But.

CARLIE
Or do you want to go back to life like her?

*Desmond, Carlie, and Hutton stare at Emma
alone on the stage.*

EMMA
I will finish this show alone if I have to! So help me god! And it
will be the best show they've ever seen!

DESMOND
What if we just end up in another terrible show that never ends?

CARLIE
We can always shoot ourselves.

DESMOND
I guess that's true.

Hutton starts to leave.

HUTTON
Come on. This fucking play doesn't work anyway. I mean would it have
killed them to hire a dramaturg.

Desmond and Carlie start to follow.

EMMA

What the fuck!? Why is this happening? No, no, no. No, this is not happening! I need the god damn understudies to the stage! Right fucking now!

Lain enters the audience and goes up to Hutton.

HUTTON

Well, I guess it's all yours now.

LAIN

I've always dreamed—

HUTTON

I know.

LAIN

Thank you.

HUTTON

I wouldn't count my chickens...

Lain rushes on stage and the stage lights go to black. A light stays shining on Hutton, Carlie and Desmond as they turn toward the exit.

DESMOND

Why didn't we think of this before?

HUTTON

We weren't ready. It's all about the timing.

CARLIE

Raindrops.

DESMOND

What?

CARLIE

I read this article awhile back...

DESMOND

No shit? Are you kidding?

HUTTON

That's crazy!

CARLIE

You know about the raindrops?

HUTTON

I fucking own the raindrops.

DESMOND

Why don't we talk about something besides the raindrops. I'm tired of the raindrops. Pick a new topic.

CARLIE

Okay, like what?

They all slowly exit as they continue.

HUTTON (Cont'd)

I shut a door in a ladies face today.

DESMOND

I'm sure she provoked you.

HUTTON

She totally did! It was one of those buildings that have two sets of doors, and I held the first one open for her, and she didn't even say thank you. I mean she looked right at me and didn't even smile, so when we got to the second door, I rushed in front of her, you know, like I was going to get it for her, but instead, I walked through it and slammed it shut behind me. It hit her in the face.

CARLIE

Good. She sounds awful.

HUTTON

Some people are so fucking rude.

DESMOND

Tell me about it.

HUTTON

I felt a little bad.

CARLIE

Naturally.

HUTTON

But I would do it again.

DESMOND

Of course.

CARLIE

No regrets...

End of play.